

In This Issue

“Get in the Game”
Hits a Grand Slam

A World of
Opportunity

Spotlight on
SAS Alumni

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER



DEAR FRIENDS,

Philadelphia Futures takes very seriously its obligation to be transparent in all that it does, and we are always looking for effective means of conveying to our funders and friends the importance and impact of their support. In this issue, we are proud to share our results for 2008–2009. I am delighted to report that we have much to celebrate — all 47 of our high school seniors in the Sponsor-A-Scholar Class of 2009 are heading to college this fall, and our intensive efforts in the college retention area over the last several years are starting to show results. In 2009, we will have the largest number of students to receive their college degrees in any one year, and our potential college graduation rate continues to climb.

We also are pleased to highlight the adventures of a number

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FUTURES

Fall 2009



An Oasis of Stability & Achievement

Since the founding of Philadelphia Futures 20 years ago, the organization has been an oasis of stability and achievement. Year in and year out, we have produced strong and measurable results, despite the many challenges that confront our students in their homes, schools and neighborhoods. And 2009 has been a record year for us.



The SAS Class of 2009, pictured with their Philadelphia Futures SAS Coordinators, were honored at the Annual Sponsor-A-Scholar Graduation Celebration.

Thirty-eight Sponsor-A-Scholar students will receive their college degrees in 2009 from a range of colleges and universities including Gettysburg, Dickinson, Penn State, Temple, Millersville, Dartmouth and Drexel. **This is our largest cohort of students to receive their degrees in any one year.** Many already have jobs lined up and one of the Dartmouth graduates (there are two) is now attending Yale Law School.

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Philadelphia Futures and members of the 2008 World Series Champion Phillies proved to be a winning combination at our annual fundraiser — “Get in the Game.” Pictured (from left to right) are: Phillies First Baseman and Event Co-host Ryan Howard; Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) Student Ralph Alexis, currently a freshman at Haverford College; SAS Student Myrline Gillot, currently a freshman at Penn State University; and Phillies Centerfielder and Event Co-host Shane Victorino. See full story on page 6.

Expanding Horizons

Among the qualities Philadelphia Futures hopes to develop in our Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) students is the confidence and desire to embark on new adventures. To that end, the organization supports our students in taking advantage of every opportunity that presents itself along the way. One of the options offered to our students by the colleges they attend is the chance to spend a semester studying abroad. An increasing number of SAS students are capitalizing on this alternative — carving out their own unique, life-changing experiences around the world.

Since Amber Nichols was a little girl, she dreamed of visiting Mexico. Amber attends Dickinson College — one of Philadelphia Futures' partner colleges. Last semester during her junior year, her dream came true. The Psychology major, with a minor in Spanish, spent five months studying at the Universidad Autonoma de Queretaro. Amber took four courses — all taught in Spanish. She lived with a host family that spoke only Spanish. She was completely immersed in the culture, and quickly became fluent in the language.

The decision to study abroad was not an easy one for Amber. "At first, I had my doubts," she reveals. "To me, Dickinson was abroad. Mexico was like nothing I was accustomed to in any way, shape or form. I saw things I never thought I would see in my life, like the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon in Teotihuacan. It was breathtaking. I learned so much about why people think the way they think, and why they do things differently. I see everything in my own life more clearly now."

Following her graduation in May of 2010, Amber plans to attend graduate school to earn her Master's degree in Psychology. She hopes to become a therapist and work with bilingual families. ***"I've gone from one of the worst high schools in Philly, to one of the most prestigious colleges, to studying abroad," says Amber. "It's amazing!"***

Sandra Gillot, a Political Science major at Gettysburg College — also one of Philadelphia Futures' partner colleges — spent spring semester of her junior year in Belize, Central America. She participated in a full-time internship at the National Council on Ageing, where she embarked on a community project that analyzed how the country's elders were treated within their respective cultural groups, and by society as a whole.

Stability & Achievement

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Forty-three percent of the SAS Class of 2005 have already received their degrees and an additional 35% are still enrolled — resulting in a potential college graduation rate of an extraordinary 78% for this Class.

One hundred percent of the Sponsor-A-Scholar Class of 2009 graduated from high school, and are attending college this fall. We have much to celebrate with this Class. Two students are attending Gettysburg College and two are going to Drexel University, all on full scholarships through Philadelphia Futures' partnerships with these schools. Since we sent our first class to Gettysburg in 2001, 16 students have graduated and another 11 are currently enrolled. We have four students previously enrolled at Drexel. Two students from the Class of 2009 are now at Temple and five are at Penn State with "last dollar" scholarships provided by the Brook J. Lenfest Foundation. They join 16 Lenfest Scholars previously enrolled at these two schools and 12 who have received their degrees.

This year, we also are sending two SAS students to Ivy League schools — one to Princeton and one to Penn; a third student is attending Haverford College. The student attending Princeton is the recipient of a Leonore Annenberg Scholarship, which provides full tuition and room and board, as well as a computer and a stipend for living expenses. Philadelphia Futures identifies and evaluates candidates for the Leonore Annenberg Scholarship and School Funds Award, and we were honored that an SAS student was selected.

Also very exciting this year, **we received a gift of \$100,000 from Townsend Press, a loyal friend of Philadelphia Futures, to be used for scholarship aid for members of our High School Class of 2009.** Nine students were selected to receive Townsend Scholarships in amounts of \$2,000 to \$20,000. These funds will be used to fill the gap between the student's financial aid and the cost of attendance, making it possible for these students to attend the college of their choice.

We are fortunate to have the support of our many loyal corporate, foundation and individual partners who truly understand the importance of our critical mission. Together, we are leveling the playing field so that low-income, first-generation-to-college students can realize their dream of college and career. Our students' accomplishments are grounded in our donors' generosity and unwavering belief that — with resources, support and opportunities — children raised in poverty can achieve academic and professional success, and for this we are deeply grateful.



Amber Nichols overlooks San Miguel del Allende, one of many places she visited during her semester in Mexico.



Sandra Gillot explored artifacts found in an ancient Mayan cave during her semester in Belize.



Felice Thompson swam in Iceland's Blue Lagoon during her study abroad experience, based in the UK.

Sandra learned upon her arrival that she was the only student participating in the Belize Study Abroad Program that semester. She was not daunted in the least; her preparation throughout the SAS Program, and her diverse group of friends at Gettysburg, allowed her to feel very comfortable meeting new people and adapting to her surroundings.

Her host was a woman who owned a small bed and breakfast, where Sandra lived during her stay. When she was not working on her community project, Sandra took the opportunity to visit the various districts of Belize and the surrounding islands. She went sailing for the first time, and visited a Mayan cave, where she swam and rock climbed through remnants of the ancient civilization.

Sandra plans to return to Belize after college graduation in 2010, unless she and her friends decide to travel to South Africa for the World Cup — so many decisions to make before Sandra enters law school next fall. ***“As I told my mom, I have my passport now,” says Sandra. “There are no excuses. I’m ready to go.”***

Felice Thompson, also a Psychology major at Dickinson, spent spring semester of her junior year studying in the UK. It was the first time Felice had been on a plane. She took four

courses at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, located two hours from London, and shared a flat with seven other students from around the world. During her stay, Felice explored Europe — visiting London and enjoying a week in Paris. She spent another week in Iceland as part of her university course in sustainability science.

“I had read about other countries, but never had the opportunity to visit them,” says Felice. “This experience has changed me. I am not afraid to venture out to do whatever it is I want to do in life. I can travel outside of Philly, even to a different country, and be just fine. I feel fortunate to have done something that a lot of people don’t get to do. I feel like I’m more interesting as a person.”

Following her college graduation, Felice hopes to enroll in a post-baccalaureate pre-med program, and plans to become a nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant. She credits Philadelphia Futures for its impact on her life. ***“I know I made the grades, and I put in the time and dedication, but without Philadelphia Futures, I would never be experiencing all that I am,” says Felice. “It may sound like a cliché, but now I know that the sky is the limit.”***

Celebrating Milestones

On June 10, 2009, Philadelphia Futures celebrated the achievements of 85 Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) students as they marked their graduation from high school and college. More than 350 guests gathered at the Pennsylvania Convention Center to honor 38 graduating collegians and 47 graduating high school seniors — all of whom have beaten the odds against them.

During the ceremony, Philadelphia Futures presented its “Hats Off to You” Awards — acknowledging outstanding, sustained contributions to the organization — to The Glenmede Trust Company; Albert E. Piscopo, President, The Glenmede Trust Company; the law firm of Pepper Hamilton; and Janet G. Perry. Each of these recipients recognizes the power of education to transform lives, and has taken bold and decisive action as a result.



The \$10,000 Lincoln Financial Group/Delaware Investments Scholarship, awarded each year to an exemplary member of the SAS high school graduating class, was presented to Tamika Oliver. Tamika is now attending Bloomsburg University.

In a newly established tradition, Philadelphia Futures presented the first annual “On Your Way” Awards to Dickinson College Graduate Valbona Kambo and Dartmouth College graduate Damaris Walker. This Award recognizes students who distinguished themselves by a successful college career, and who have a plan for the next step in their journey. Valbona has been accepted into a

management trainee program at PNC Bank, and Damaris has entered Yale Law School.

Philadelphia Futures also recognized mentors and sponsors, parents and guardians, donors and funders, school representatives, college partners, and the Board of Directors, for their significant roles in contributing to the success of the Program. Several SAS students and alumni joined in the presentations, sharing their own experiences and offering personal notes of appreciation. Following the formal program, guests enjoyed a dinner reception, where the celebration continued well into the evening.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAS Alumni

As Philadelphia Futures approaches its 20th anniversary, we take great pleasure in watching the students we have served take their place in the world. Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) students are graduating from college, starting professional careers, and obtaining their graduate degrees. They are teachers, social workers, engineers, nurses and materials managers. They are getting married, taking cruises and buying their first homes. SAS alums — now 313 strong — demonstrate what we firmly believe: that with hard work and encouragement, and a strong network of personal, academic and financial support, low-income, first-generation-to-college students can and do achieve. They are living the American dream.

In this issue of *Futures Features*, it is our privilege to share with you the stories of three SAS alumni — two alums who have been in the working world for quite some time, and one who graduated from college this past spring.



Gwendolyn Bell, SAS Class of 2005, was recognized during the 2009 Sponsor-A-Scholar Graduation Celebration for her graduation from Bloomsburg University.

Profile: Gwendolyn Bell, SAS Class of 2005

As a youngster raised by her grandmother in North Philadelphia, Gwendolyn Bell always knew she wanted to go to college. In her freshman year at William Penn High School, Gwendolyn approached her guidance counselor to ask how to find the resources she would need to make her dream a reality. The counselor gave her an application for the SAS Program.

Since that moment, Gwendolyn has taken full advantage of every opportunity available. During high school, she was completely committed to the SAS Program, attending after-school classes, workshops and club activities. She forged an extraordinarily close relationship with her mentor, Rebecca Diederich and Rebecca's husband Tom. When Gwendolyn's grandmother became too ill to care for her, Gwendolyn lived with the Diederiches. "They are more than my mentors and my friends," says Gwendolyn. "They are my family."

Gwendolyn was admitted to Bloomsburg University, where she continued to capitalize on every opportunity. She traveled to Austria, Germany, Hungary and the Czech Republic through the university's study abroad program. She was a Board of Governors Scholar and a member of the Financial Management Association, the Black Cultural Society and the International Economic Society.

Gwendolyn's involvement with Philadelphia Futures has fostered in her a tremendous passion to give back — she dreams of helping students with limited resources to find their way to education and independence. At Bloomsburg, she participated in the Harrisburg Partnership, serving as a mentor and role model to college-bound students. Back at home, she spent a summer as a staff intern for the William Penn Charter High School Summer Program, where she tutored students in math and technology.

In May 2009, Gwendolyn graduated from Bloomsburg with a BA in Business Economics. While she ultimately hopes to carve out a career in urban planning, she's currently employed as a management trainee at The Hertz Corporation. She has her own apartment outside of Philadelphia, and is thrilled to be living independently, working in a job she enjoys, and paying her own bills. "It's hard," she says, "but it's wonderful."

Philadelphia Futures and the Diederiches remain a big part of Gwendolyn's life. "Having Philadelphia Futures by my side every step of the way through high school and college inspires me to some day do the same for someone else," says Gwendolyn. "Thank you, Philadelphia Futures."



Latifa David, SAS Class of 1996, returned as a guest speaker at the 2009 Sponsor-A-Scholar Graduation Celebration.

Profile: Latifa David, SAS Class of 1996

Latifa David spent part of her childhood living with an aunt in Alabama, and the other part living with an aunt in Philadelphia. She was 12 when she realized that a college education was her way out of the poverty she had become all too accustomed to, and away from an environment where negative influences

far outweighed anything positive.

She found Philadelphia Futures as a student at Simon Gratz High School. And in Philadelphia Futures, she found the guidance she desperately needed. "For me, Futures was about having the support of people who had my best interests in mind," says Latifa. "I didn't have that at home. At Futures, there was always someone to listen to me — to redirect my energy. It was very powerful."

After what she describes as “a few twists and turns” along the way, Latifa graduated from Temple University in 2003 with a bachelor’s degree in Secondary Education. She immediately secured a position as an English teacher at Murrell Dobbins CTE High School in Philadelphia. Latifa remains at Dobbins, where she also serves as the cheerleading coach. She purchased a home in Germantown, and volunteers her time with Teenshop, an initiative that seeks to uplift and empower teenage girls.

In May 2009, Latifa celebrated two significant achievements. First, she earned her Master’s degree in Education with a Reading Specialist Certification from Cabrini College, where she held a 3.88 GPA. Just a few weeks later, she was presented with the prestigious Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching by the School District of Philadelphia.

Latifa credits her love of teaching to the influence of her high school English teacher, Marcia Pincus. “Mrs. Pincus has always known that there is not a deficiency in inner-city students,” she explains. “But the standards are so low, that the students don’t know how to reach up. Mrs. Pincus showed us how to reach up.” Latifa wants to do the same for her students. She hopes one day to become a principal.

This past June, Latifa served as special guest speaker at the SAS Graduation Celebration. “Now that we are on the other side as college graduates and professionals, it’s our turn to give back,” she states. “Futures is so very special. They help students who not only need the help — they truly deserve it. It’s our job as alums to do something for Philadelphia Futures, because Futures has done so much for us.”



Curtis Redding, SAS Class of 1995, served as a member of the discussion panel at the 2008 Sponsor-A-Scholar Annual Conference.

Profile: Curtis K. Redding, SAS Class of 1995

When Curtis Redding entered his freshman year at Strawberry Mansion High School, he was living in a homeless shelter with his mother. He learned about the Sponsor-A-Scholar Program through his friends — all SAS students. In his sophomore year, Curtis showed up at an SAS event, introduced himself, and asked for an interview. He knew instinctively that education was his only ticket out of the life he had come to know.

His high school guidance counselor told him to apply to Community College. Philadelphia Futures told him to aim much higher. Curtis applied to Penn and Haverford. He was accepted to both.

In 1999, Curtis graduated from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania with a BS in Economics. He continued his graduate studies at Penn, and in 2005, completed a dual Master’s program with one degree in Urban Studies, and a second degree in Social Welfare and the Nonprofit, graduating with distinction.

For the last four years, Curtis has been employed with Deloitte Consulting as a Senior Consultant in Technology Integration. He’s currently living in Mechanicsburg, helping to build a comprehensive workforce development system for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

He has devoted his vacation time to world travel. Since studying abroad in Spain during his tenure at Penn, his travels have included Italy, France, Egypt, Malta, Amsterdam and the UK. He recently returned from a Mediterranean cruise, and is planning his next excursion to China or Japan, or perhaps Dubai. It is his hope to “hit every continent.”

Curtis continues to be an active member of his college fraternity, and is committed to community service through his involvement with numerous organizations. He is most enthusiastic about his sustained connection to Philadelphia Futures, where he is now a mentor, a sponsor, and a donor.

“I know I would not be where I am today without the SAS Program, the organization, the people who surrounded me when I really needed that support,” says Curtis. “I wasn’t the perfect kid. I am blessed to have had people cross my path who checked me when they knew I could do better. I have lost childhood friends along the way by doing the right thing. I’ve had to make some hard choices for myself. It has not been easy.

“My SAS mentor — Alex Talmadge — was phenomenal,” says Curtis. “The first thing I wanted to do when I was able, was to do the same for someone else.” Curtis remains very close to Alex and to the staff at Futures, and returns on an ongoing basis to serve as a guest speaker or “whatever they ask of me — anything I can do.

“Today,” says Curtis, “I am blessed to be where I am. I’m in a good place financially, I love what I do for my job, and I’m able to give back when I can.” A shining star in every possible way, the most extraordinary thing about Curtis is that he sees himself as completely ordinary.



A Striking Success



A record crowd of more than 400 guests filled North Bowl to capacity on April 30, 2009, when 2008 World Series Champions Ryan Howard and Shane Victorino co-hosted Philadelphia Futures' annual fundraiser, "Get in the Game." The bowling and billiards tournament paired competitive teams, sponsored by individual donors and businesses, with team captains including Ryan, Shane, several of their Phillies teammates, and more than a dozen local celebrities. Also lending their support were Event Co-chairs Daniel Fitzpatrick, President and CEO, Citizens Bank, Eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey; David Montgomery, President and CEO, The Phillies; and Arn Tellem, President, WMG Management.

At this year's event, 26 bowling teams and eight billiards teams participated for prizes including highest team score, highest individual score, and best team spirit. Guests enjoyed Pack Wars — a very lively trivia game, the opportunity to have their photo taken with the World Series Trophy, and silent and live auctions featuring one-of-a-kind sports memorabilia and experiences. Auction items included the opportunity to meet Ryan and Shane before a game, and "The World Series Iconic Set" — a baseball mitt autographed by Carlos Ruiz and a ball signed by Brad Lidge, replicating the mitt and ball used in the final game of the 2008 World Series.

In addition to meeting Ryan and Shane at the event, guests mingled with Cole Hamels, Raul Ibanez, Lou Marson, Jamie Moyer, Jimmy Rollins, Chase Utley, Senior Vice President



SUPPORT CORNER

HATS OFF TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Since the last issue of *Futures Features*, many individuals, businesses and other organizations have generously contributed to Philadelphia Futures. Our thanks to:

Foundations: Clanel Foundation; The Hamilton Family Foundation; The Patricia Kind Family Foundation; The Brook J. Lenfest Foundation; Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation; The Philadelphia Foundation; David E. Retik and Christopher D. Mello Foundation; The Wasserman Foundation

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Other Organizations: Eagles Youth Partnership; Penn State University; Rosemont College; Temple University; University of Pennsylvania

Individuals and Family Foundations (\$500 or More): Robert Aglira; Carol Christensen; Dorothy and Robert McCabe; Christina Mills; Marilyn Sanborne; Sheila and Melvin Schweiger in Honor of Brad Jacobson

WELCOME TO NEW SAS SPONSORS

Class of 2012 Anne Abel; Diane and George Davis*; Sponsorship in Honor of Daniel Fitzpatrick; Hayes, Inc.; Sponsorship in Honor of Ryan Howard; Sponsorship in Honor of David Montgomery; Neil Oxman* in Honor of Melissa Grimm and Azsherae Gary; Sponsorship in Honor of Arn Tellem; Sponsorship in Honor of Shane Victorino

* Has sponsored previously in the Program

Greening our Communications

Over the next several months, Philadelphia Futures will be implementing new avenues of e-communication and discontinuing paper mail for those of our constituents who have access to internet services. Please watch for further announcements about this waste-reduction and revenue-saving initiative.

and General Manager Ruben Amaro, Jr., and Phillies Broadcaster and Former Phil Gary Matthews. Mayor Michael Nutter and Temple Men's Basketball Head Coach Fran Dunphy also participated as team captains, as did several members of the local broadcast media community from 6abc, CBS 3, NBC 10 and Comcast SportsNet. On hand to serve as MC was Philadelphia Futures' very good friend Scott Palmer, Director of Public Affairs, The Phillies.

Capturing first place honors in this year's bowling tournament was the team from Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, captained by 6abc's Jamie Apody. Placing second was the team from Brown Brothers Harriman & Co., captained by Ryan Howard. In the billiards tournament, Pepper Hamilton took first place, followed by Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll in second. Sunoco won the award for Best Dressed Team, and The Glenmede Trust Company took home the prize for Best Team Spirit. Paulette Coney from Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll had the highest individual female bowling score, while CBS 3's Doug Kammerer was the highest scoring male bowler.

This is the ninth year that members of The Phillies have hosted Philadelphia Futures' annual fundraiser. "Get in the Game" 2009 raised over \$150,000 for the Sponsor-A-Scholar Program, to surpass the \$1 million mark in funds raised for the organization by members of the Phillies. Philadelphia Futures salutes the 2008 World Series Champions for once again making our annual fundraiser a striking success!



WELCOME TO NEW SAS MENTORS

Class of 2010 Ron Dempsey; Dan Leifield*; Anne Sullivan

Class of 2011 Jobey Hollinger; Heather Holloway; Catherine Malia; Michael Phillips; Claire Robertson-Kraft; K. Catherine Roney; Ruth Rovner*; Sadeeka Scott; Alison Seponara; Sonja Strahm; Jason Steffensen

Class of 2012 Melissa Englund; Lisa Marie Heyward*; Joanna Holbrook; Deborah Horne; Jillian Inge; Tiffany McMaster; Carol Purfield; Katie Shovlin; Shannon Southall; Davis Washburn

* Has mentored previously in the Program

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

Philadelphia Futures is pleased to announce the appointment of Hope A. Comisky, Partner, Pepper Hamilton LLP, to our Board of Directors.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Philadelphia Futures extends our sincerest gratitude to ARAMARK Corporation for graciously underwriting the Fall 2009 edition of the *Futures Features* newsletter.



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The Future is Yours to Give

If you participate in the **United Way** campaign this year, please remember that you may designate all or part of your gift to Philadelphia Futures, **Donor #7391**. We hope you'll also encourage your co-workers and friends to support our organization through the United Way. **Thank you!**



PHILADELPHIA FUTURES

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Our Mission

Philadelphia Futures prepares students from low-income families to enter and succeed in college by providing mentoring, academic enrichment, college guidance and financial incentives. Working with volunteer mentors, donors, and school and college personnel, in direct services to students, in partnerships with educational institutions, and in advocacy activities in the broader community, the organization seeks to increase the percentage of Philadelphia graduates prepared for higher education, while simultaneously reducing the institutional barriers to their academic success.

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER *continued from page 1*

of our collegians as they reach outside their comfort zones and seize every opportunity presented to them. And, what better way to demonstrate the impact of our donors' support than to feature the stories of three of our alums as they establish their careers and take their place in the world.

But as we celebrate the past year, we recognize full well the economic challenges that the organization will face in the coming year. As we go to press, the Commonwealth's budget has not yet been adopted, and the revenue we receive from our corporate donors through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program is in serious jeopardy. Other sources of funding also are threatened. We are leaving no stone unturned in our search for funding and we are confident that with the support of those who know us well, we will be able to continue to provide the services our students so greatly need.

We are very fortunate to have extraordinary friends in our corner. I am delighted to announce an exciting and meaningful opportunity that has just been presented to us. John Langan and Judy Nadell, two loyal and generous funders, have made a challenge grant to Philadelphia Futures to encourage others to help us weather this economic storm. John and Judy hold our mission close to their hearts. They believe deeply in the fundamental fairness of equal access to quality education, and we are honored by their trust in our ability to make a difference in the lives of our students. John and Judy will match, dollar for dollar, any new or increased contribution up to a total of \$50,000. Details on the challenge will be announced shortly, but I wanted you to be aware of this opportunity to "double" your gift to Philadelphia Futures as you plan your charitable contributions for the coming months. I am hoping that we will blow the doors off of this challenge.

Finally, since joining Philadelphia Futures over nine years ago, we have sent 488 Sponsor-A-Scholar students off to college. This month, I am taking my own son to school. Let's see how I do with this one.

We are energized by the hope and promise of the new school year. If you are in the neighborhood, please stop by; we would love for you to see us in action.

My warmest regards,

Joan C. Mazzotti