

**Directions**



Steve & participants take a stroll around Minneapolis airport during our 1st stop of Trip USA

My name is Esteban "Steve" Ramos. I started at FYI back in 1999 as a Public Allies intern, and have gone up the ranks to become Associate Executive Director, responsible for all programming related to youth here at FYI.

In our last edition we spoke about the excitement generated by the completion of our brand-new, four-story building. The building is a testament to the growth of the organization, which wouldn't be possible without all of your support. However, within the midst of the excitement there has been a transition at a programmatic level to prepare for such a milestone. In this edition we hope to illustrate the effectiveness of FYI as we grow.

For example, we have moved our veteran staff into new roles. Our very own JoAnn Santiago is now the Administrative Director, and Dahlia Perry is FYI's Nutritionist and Parent Coordinator.

Today, we have 6 front line workers who are being trained and cultivated to be our new generation of staff. Of course, with growth there are growing pains, but I must say that during my eight years at FYI, this has been our most solid and structured program year.

So please enjoy this edition and look for new developments and growth moving forward. Once again, THANK YOU for your continued support of our efforts and remember that none of this would be possible without our collective commitment to the organization.

Sincerely,  
Esteban "Steve" Ramos  
Associate Executive Director



Everyday when I come to work it gives me a wonderful feeling of gratefulness to know that I am doing what I like to do. I not only get to prepare a healthy meal for our participants, but I also get to interact with them on a daily basis. It makes my heart smile to hear -"can I have more food", or "it could use a bit more salt". It doesn't really matter, what matters is that they are getting nutritious food.

Dahlia Perry  
Parent Coordinator & Nutritionist



"If you want to keep someone really happy, say it with some good food from Mc Dahlia's Cafe."  
Ziandry Peralta, age 18

My name is Jiovanny Ojeda, I'm 11 years old. I've been in FYI for two years now. This year has been the best ever for me. I've done 314.5 hours of community service so far, and because all the great things FYI has exposed me to, I plan to continue coming. My favorite service activity is sprucing up gardens, because I know I'm helping Washington Heights look beautiful.

But what I like the best is the new  
"McDahlia's Cafe."  
The food is **WOW!** Always tasty and fresh.



**FYI's 7th Annual Community Action Heroes**

On May 10th, Fresh Youth Initiatives hosted the 7th Annual Community Action Heroes Award Ceremony & Benefit at our new youth center. This years honorees were:

- \*Fern Hertzberg, Arc Ft. Washington Senior Center
- \*Carol Strauss, Travel Four
- \*FYI's Graduating Seniors
- Angela Abreu, Gena Heyward, Joffre Peralta
- Rachel Alvarado, Ruben Perez & Ziandry Peralta



Carol Strauss speaks from the heart



Associate Executive Director Steve Ramos Awards Graduating Senior Joffre Peralta

**Mission** To support and encourage the efforts of young people in Washington Heights/Inwood to design and carry out community service projects, develop leadership skills, fulfill their potential and realize their dreams.

# FYI's SAY WHAT SAY WHAT !



Fighting childhood cancer. One cup at a time.

Fresh Youth Initiatives  
505 W. 171 Street  
New York, NY 10032

Thank you!

Another Thanks!

2/22/2007

Dear JoAnne and Fresh Youth Friends,

Thank you for raising money for childhood cancer by hosting your own Alex's Lemonade Stand. We are touched by your commitment to helping the cause.

Our daughter Alex was just four years old when she announced her plans to open a lemonade stand in our front yard to benefit "her hospital". She raised \$2000 through that first lemonade stand back in July of 2000 and we thought she could never top that! Needless to say, Alex truly believed that she could do more and went on to raise almost \$1 million for childhood cancer before she passed away in August of 2004.

Alex lived each and every day with a positive attitude and the hope that she could help find a cure for childhood cancer. Your participation in Alex's Lemonade Stand has been a meaningful and valuable contribution towards realizing her dream. With your help, Alex's Lemonade Stand has now raised over \$10 million for childhood cancer research.

Every day we feel the loss of Alex's beautiful life, but her legacy lives on as we continue to work towards helping all children who need a cure for childhood cancers. We receive countless calls and emails from parents whose children are currently being treated for incurable cancers and they urge us to continue pursuing Alex's mission. Donations to Alex's Lemonade Stand have already made it possible for more children to benefit from new cancer treatments.

We are proud of Alex and very committed to continuing her dream of finding a cure for childhood cancers, one cup at a time. We truly appreciate the time and energy that you so generously devoted to hosting a stand. Thank you for your support of Alex, her dream, and Alex's Lemonade Stand for Childhood Cancer.

Graciously yours,  
Joy and  
Liz Scott

Great work group... and questions!



Youth Leaders Rachel & Yampiero actively support childhood cancer research through Alex's Lemonade Stand.

Alex's Lemonade Stand  
533 E. Lancaster Avenue, #414  
Wynnewood, PA 19096

phone 610-649-3034  
toll free 866-355-1215  
fax 610-649-3038

www.alexlemonade.org



## PULSE Group from Indiana Visits New York

We both greatly enjoyed our trip to NYC. Steve did a great job of incorporating both service work and site seeing in the city. He not only made our trip educational but inspirational as well.

Wow, FYI is an amazing organization! Not only is your facility incredible, but it is filled with people compassionate about helping others. The entire FYI staff made us feel at home. They spoiled us with food, drinks, fun but most of all friendship.

We enjoyed interacting with the kids and left inspired by the work they do. FYI was more than what we could have imagined. We are most appreciative to FYI and Steve Ramos for their time and friendship, and we will always look fondly upon our experiences with them while in New York City.

Nick & Luc Heffner

**HONESTLY**, the main reason I started coming to FYI was because I needed to make community service hours for school in order to graduate from JHS. But, once I got to know everyone, I got really attached to them and felt like they were all my family. It feels great to know that I have lots of people I can come to with my problems and get advice. I also like the fact that not only FYI cares about the young people they work with, but they care about the community we all live in as well.

"That's FYI"

Eric Perez, Age 13

## Other additions to the FYI Family

As a new staff member at FYI, I have been welcomed into the family with open arms by the staff and young people. I feel fortunate to work in such a great environment full of love and support. My experience thus far has been great; from participating in community service activities to the Scatico retreat. I enjoy working here. I want to thank the staff for their support, patience and encouragement. I want to thank the young people, because of them it is easy for me to come to work every day.

- Jackeyssi Benitez



Jackeyssi, Jeremiah and Massiel

I have worked with many youth organizations, but nothing compares to FYI. The daily energy offered by the youth and staff is definitely out of this world. What I like the most about FYI is that it has become like a second home to me. The first year on the staff has been a wonderful learning experience. I'd like to thank FYI and all the young people for opening their doors and allowing me to become part of this family.

-Massiel De La Rosa

Upon graduating from Ramapo College on May 2006, I found myself a professional home at FYI. My experience at FYI has been a challenging but productive one. While learning to work with young people, I've had to integrate myself into the FYI tradition and create my own spin into service projects and the whole reason behind what we do.

Alongside my colleague Nadya Encarnacion I had the opportunity to put together one of FYI's biggest events, called the Sleeping Bag-A-Thon. Because of the youth and staff members support the event was a huge success! I want to thank everyone for the great experience I am having here at FYI. This is truly one big happy family.

-Jeremiah Roman



TRIP USA 2007 "Iowa"



FYI's & ROCCS

Special thanks to all our Host Families in Creston Iowa, the YACCS, 4H, HELP, ROCCS, Clover Kids, Trolley Drivers, Big Will & Mr. Larry and last but not least the planning committee at the DEKKO Foundation. This was by far the best USA Trip ever. We greatly appreciate this unforgettable opportunity. Hats off to Suzanne Johnston who was amazingly incredible. We couldn't have picked a better place to explore the world.

During Trip USA I had a lot of fun, it was really different from New York. There was a lot of cattle on flat lands, you couldn't see tall buildings anywhere. This was my first time staying at a total stranger's house, but "trust me" the whole trip was an amazing learning experience. Mainly because everyone in Creston, Iowa were wonderful, loving and caring. Special Thanks to my host Family, The "McCaans".  
Crystal Galan, age 10

FYI at a glance!



FYI Participants Celebrate Different Cultures During The Holidays

- During the month of December, FYI held its annual winter celebration at the ARC XVI Fort Washington Senior Center. Unlike celebrations in previous years, participants and staff put together presentations based on different cultures and their holidays that are celebrated around this time of the year. Participants got a chance to learn about the origins of the Three Kings Day, the meaning behind Kawanzaa, and what the different symbols mean during the Chinese New Year. At the Winter Festival, participants got to show off their knowledge with a play and presentation for each culture they had researched.

Jose & Robin tending to the cattle at the Angus Purdums Farm



Gena & Steven at their best!

Ready, set 1, 2, 3, ...



Self Defense workshop May 2007

Hats off to all of our volunteer mentors, without them all of this could not have been possible!

- Vernaliz Gonzalez
- Devin Bush
- Charinna Zaragoza
- Dahlia Perry
- Rachelle Martins
- Brenda Carranza
- Erica Pessa.



Good Job everybody!  
JoAnn Santiago

Alongside my colleague Massiel De La Rosa I have worked diligently to improve one of FYI's most important components. With the move into our new home and developmental growth, FYI has re-structured our Mentor Program into a **group mentoring program**. Currently we have 20 active members who have faithfully committed themselves to new experiences and exploration opportunities. This has definitely taken a turn into being our best year ever.



Mentees celebrate National Mentors Day

To learn how you can become a mentor and help make a difference in the life of a young person, please contact 212-781-1113 or visit [www.freshyouth.org](http://www.freshyouth.org)

The month of October was the first month of our regular scheduled programming. The theme for this month was geared towards the arts & music. Participants worked really hard on creating paintings, a video and a musical play. As part of FYI's new enrichment activities these groups presented their master pieces to parents and peers with a culminating celebration for their great efforts. In my opinion, October started off the program year in a very exciting way.

Staff Member Carlos Cepeda



Jiovanny Ojeda, age 11 reading his poem



**Fresh Youth Initiatives**

505 W. 171 Street  
New York, NY 10032  
(212) 781-1113  
Fax (212) 781-1151  
www.freshyouth.org  
info@freshyouth.org



A child's smile -Priceless!

Please help us continue to offer programs for FYI participants who want to serve the community. FYI need the resources to reach out to many more young people, and we can't do it without your support and help.

- I would like to help with a donation. Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_. \$1,000, \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50, \$25
- I'd like to make an in-kind donation. Please contact me.
- I can't help financially, but I'd love to volunteer my time. Call me.
- I would like to stay on FYI's mailing list.



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**Fresh Youth Initiatives**

505 W. 171 Street  
New York, NY 10032  
(212) 781-1113

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• "Taking Responsibility" is published by Fresh Youth Initiatives  
• Postage donated by Cessy and Richard Rubinson • Layout by JoAnn Santiago