

Many people make this program work

To paraphrase a common saying, it takes a community to sustain Andover A Better Chance.

Over the scholastic program's 43 years, that support has come from a broad spectrum of local residents, businesses and institutions. And we always need more volunteers.

The community as a whole has stood behind the nonprofit program since its beginning in 1967, when Andover's Town Meeting voted by a wide margin to welcome ABC students tuition-free into Andover High School.

Each year, ABC scholars receive a fine preparation for college from the excellent Andover High School faculty, administration and staff. This is why they are here.

Andover ABC's role is to broaden these scholars' academic experience with opportunities to develop their social and intellectual skills and sense of self-potential. Much effort is needed to keep this ambitious program running. That's where so many others become involved.

Several teachers and other knowledgeable residents tutor our six scholars. Dozens of volunteer drivers are on call to transport our students to never-ending local activities, enriching ABC trips to Boston and other sites, and to public transportation centers for trips home. Institutions, civic organizations and a core of volunteers have stepped forward:

- Latitude Sports Club, the Merrimack YMCA and Greater Lawrence Community Rowing program make their facilities available under special arrangements.

- Phillips Academy issues students IDs that admit them to certain activities.
- The Andona Society and Quota International of Andover have funded arts activities and college visits for ABC students....(continued inside)



Local volunteers power the A Better Chance program. Here, Tony and Carey Adams (foreground) help Housing Committee chairperson Susan Connolly (left) and senior Darée Colon, house student president, arrange a dormitory room.

President's message: ABC scholars inspire volunteers



Mary E. Pritchard

This fall, Andover A Better Chance is exploding with tremendous energy, momentum and talent.

Our new House Committee is tackling a wide variety of projects in "this old house." Our Communications team is propelling us towards better use of digital technology as well as exploring new paths of community outreach to raise our visibility. And, our new

and returning ABC scholars are flocking to expanded relationships and activities with community organizations and institutions. The ABC program is humming on all cylinders!

The ABC House, built in 1810, is a beautiful, historic house, but it requires constant upkeep. Skilled volunteers Tony Adams and Bruce Letwin were joined over the summer by new board member Susan Connolly, who must have been a property manager

in another life. Due to their efforts, the basement no longer floods, the bathroom vents work, the plumbing doesn't leak, the stairs are repaired and much more.

Free Christian Church and South Church also have provided expert work crews for a Day of Service in November. In addition Dave Meldrum, our volunteer computer technician, has made major improvements that save us money while improving Internet access for the household.

Similarly, energy is percolating with our renewed efforts to build a more effective and comprehensive communications plan. Carey Adams, a new Friend of ABC, has joined forces with board members to increase our outreach and visibility in the Andover community via the Internet and social media. In addition, new board member Nancy Vogler will strengthen our relationship with the high school and its PAC (Parent Advisory Council) in her role as AHS Liaison....(continued inside)



ABC Board Members

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 Erlinda & Joel Parks
 Jennifer & Dan Pond
 Catherine Giles &
 Scott Stecher

More news/photos at
 AndoverABC.org

NEW TO ANDOVER ABC

Mary Pritchard, a member of the Board of Directors for three years and a leader in student enrichment, has succeeded Amy Joyall as president. New as vice presidents are Mark Connolly and Mary Beth Nason; and Louise Valleau is now secretary.

The following have joined the Board of Directors: Susan Connolly, technology services executive and parttime handygal; Jackie Hesketh, who brings sales/marketing experience; Kate Lamanna, tutoring agency owner; Joanne McConaughy, teacher (K-12) of wellness, science and social studies; Aiko Onishi, third-grade teacher at the Pike School and former resident assistant at Andover ABC; Beth Prawdzik, art studio owner; and Nancy Vogler, a nurse who helps provide healthcare to our program and is involved in drama programs at Andover High.

New "host parents" Carlo and Tamara Cadet are paired up with 9th-grader Abigail Awodele. Jim and Patty Gillette have remained with the program to host junior Monique Espinoza, while David and Brenda Bryan have returned to host 9th-grader Jazzare Mays.

New ABC scholars

Andover A Better Chance welcomed three new scholars this school year.

Monique Lopez Espinoza entered Andover High as a junior from Garden Grove, CA., after spending two school years in an ABC program in Eden Prairie, MN. Granddaughter of an Orange County sheriff, she is considering a career that combines teaching and psychiatry, possibly working with prison inmates.



Monique Lopez Espinoza

"I always wanted to be a cop," she notes, "but it would be physically hard because I'm less than five feet tall."

Monique enjoys writing poetry and short stories. She is competing this fall in a Greater Lawrence Rowing eight-person shell, worked backstage in an AHS musical and also likes to cook.

Abigail Awodele, who was born in Nigeria, is one of two 9th graders to join Andover ABC this fall. Her parents brought her and her five brothers to the U.S. in 2004 seeking better schools and now live in Bridgeport, CT. The older of her brothers are pursuing careers in engineering, pharmaceuticals and surgery.



Abigail Awodele

"My family and I chose [Andover ABC] for a better education and new experiences so I can go to a better college and have a wonderful and successful life," she says.

This fall Abbi was in Andover High's production of the musical "Rent." Long-term, she would like to study at Harvard or a university in England. She has her sights set on becoming a cardiologist and treating people suffering from poverty, war and other crises in Africa and elsewhere.

Jazzare Mays, the other entering 9th-grader, comes from New Haven, CT. Her favorite courses are math and science – not what you hear from most 9th-grade girls. "It's something that comes to me easily," she explains.



Jazzare Mays

She also hopes to put Harvard on her college application short list. This fall, taking a diversion from a long-term interest in dance, she has joined the color guard of the AHS marching band.



Many people make this program work (Continued from page 1)

To monitor the students' health while they are away from their families during the school year, we have the physicians at North Andover Pediatrics to thank. For many years, Andover Pediatrics has taken good care of our ABC scholars. This year new board member Nancy Vogler also fills in as house nurse, so it made sense to combine forces with her husband, Dr. Mike Vogler. And Dr. Megan Evans, in addition to her medical role, signed up to tutor our seniors in anatomy next semester.

At the ABC house on Main Street:

- Volunteers pitch in to keep the 200-year-old building safe and sound, with up-to-date computing and other amenities that students need. A grant from TD Bank's charitable foundation funded recent computing upgrades.
- Bill Perkins and Maureen Smith from Free Christian Church and Ron and Candy Dann from South Church mustered expert work crews for Day of Service projects in November that focused on winterizing, roof repairs and basement projects.

- As part of this effort, John Ward, a licensed home inspector, and Dan Harrington of RH Northrup have inspected the ABC House for critical repair needs.
- Andover High student Adam Jones completed his community-service requirement by assisting with home repairs.

Additional residents, business people and others such as Sara and Bob Knapp, hosts of a fall ABC reception help our program at fundraising events, local activities... even work projects.

Providing a home away from home for the ABC students in Andover are the host families that make each student part of their activities several days and evenings each month. The 26 volunteer members of the Board of Directors, in addition to directing the program, individually help the students enjoy new experiences and confront new challenges during their sojourn in Andover.

In other words, it's definitely the community that sustains this program.

Alumni news

Vanessa (Monroy) Canas, AHS '04, Colgate '08 - Vanessa lives in NYC and is a research coordinator at Weill Cornell Medical College. She says she's working hard and plans to apply to medical school.

Ivelisse (Ramos) Christian Vega, AHS '04, Fordham University '08 - Ivelisse majored in sociology/anthropology. Currently back in Brooklyn, her hometown, she works in the Alumni Relations Office at St. John's University assisting with the planning and post-event follow up of alumni and student center events. She plans to start coursework in January toward a master's in Criminal Justice and Leadership. Ivelisse was married on the beach in Tulum, Mexico, in 2003 and has one child, Tyler Joseph.

Lydia Bailey, AHS '07 - Lydia is a senior at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA and will receive a Bachelors in Business Administration in May 2011. She is a HR/MIS minor currently working as an HR trainee at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and as a Temple Human Resources intern. She is also president of Temple's chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management.

Nacasi Green, AHS '07; Loyola (Maryland) '11 - Nacasi is majoring in global studies (minor in international business), is president of the Caribbean Students' Union and also works. An intern last summer at the World Trade Center Institute, she heads to Brazil and Chile in January for a study program.

Thanks

Andover A Better Chance is grateful for major contributions from local Foundation M, Fairview Capital Partners, South Church and West Parish Church. They have helped keep our program vibrant during the past year's recession.

Contributions, which are tax-exempt, will reach Andover ABC at P.O. Box 212, Andover, MA 01810. Stock donations and contributions made in someone's memory are welcomed.

President's message: ABC scholars inspire volunteers

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This fall, we have also seen new developments with our health care providers. The physicians at North Andover Pediatrics, headed by Dr. Mike Vogler, have welcomed our students to their practice. He and his wife, Nancy, a nurse, have already made several house calls.

We are fortunate to have psychologist Lani Peterson join us in an advisory role. Lani brings an exciting new dimension to our program; we are grateful for her wise counsel.

But it must be said that all of our energy and momentum for this year comes from the extraordinary group of scholars we have in the house. These six young women are an inspiration. They do the heavy lifting: leaving their homes, their friends and their neighborhoods to reach out for this life-changing educational opportunity. Please consider joining us, bringing your talents and energy to create a better chance for these courageous students.

Mary E. Pritchard

ABC is going digital!

If you want to get the next ABC newsletter by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to Louise Valteau at lvalteau@verizon.net.



Refreshments stand at Art in the Park raised ABC scholars' expense funds. Filling orders are (front, from left) Henrica Bresil, Darée Colon, Felicia Reyes and Abigail Awodele.

Elizabeth Roldan: ABC alumna stays connected and gives back



Elizabeth Roldan

"My time at Andover was life-changing," states Elizabeth Roldan, AHS '00. "It broadened my opportunities in life."

Now back in her hometown, New York City, and well into a professional career after a successful education, Roldan has begun to reconnect with Andover

ABC and other alumni. She also has decided to begin giving back financially to the program.

"I have kept in contact with my host family [Sandy and Don Hitchens] and have recently reconnected with ABC scholars from AHS, Phillips Academy and Brooks," she relates. A major reason: "We share a unique experience."

Social media has made it easier for Roldan to reach out. A month ago she was contacted through Facebook by Shakiya Snipes, AHS '00, and Gloria Rosario, AHS '99, Andover roommates, and joined them at a get together.

Despite the intervening years and changes they brought, "I saw my roommate and it was like we just picked up where we left off!" she recalls.

The women discussed their experiences in Andover, both good and bad. "We talked about the hardship and negative experiences like

dealing with negative students, race issues, the relationship between girls in the house and more," she said.

After graduation in Andover, Roldan attended Binghamton University (SUNY), majoring in political science with a minor in women's studies. She traveled to Jamaica and the Dominican Republic to study globalization and tourism. She also was a resident adviser for three years.

Roldan was selected to join Inroads, an organization whose mission is to increase racial diversity in Fortune 500 companies. As an Inroads scholar she had the opportunity to intern every summer at Altria, formerly Philip Morris.

She took off a semester to work at the League of United Latin American Citizens based in Washington, D.C., which advances economic and educational opportunities among Latinos.

After graduating from Binghamton, Roldan continued to work for Altria in the government affairs department. She also added an internship with the Hispanic Association for Corporate Responsibility to her already impressive roster of accomplishments.

Eventually moving back to New York City, she worked for two years as an international trade specialist for a company that specializes in customs compliance for the petroleum sector.

Then she had, as she laughingly refers to it, a quarter-life crisis, when she realized "I wanted

to do something more meaningful with my skills and experience."

Roldan would like to find a position that involves corporate responsibility and is considering graduate study to get there. In the meantime, she works for The Standard, an insurance company that assists people with financial issues associated with disability.

To the ABC scholars in Andover, she has this advice: "Connect socially with the community, even though this could be the hardest thing about the experience, and maintain friendships with other scholars. When I go on interviews, I talk about my Andover experience and employers value this. They understand it takes courage and perseverance to be successful in that kind of environment. It's part of who I am."

STUDENT BOARD

Darée Colon, a senior, has been chosen president of the Andover ABC Student Board for the school year.

The other board officers are

- Vice president: Henrica Bresil
- Treasurer: Monique Lopez Espinoza
- Secretary: Abigail Awodele
- Enrichment: Felicia Reyes
- Public relations: Jazzare Mays



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