

## September 2009

Another DCLA season has been completed and our staff is still rejoicing in the stories. Besides DCLA this summer, we were also a part of Warrior Leadership Summit, a native youth event with Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, and it was a blessing as well. All three of these events challenged thousands of students to take leadership of their lives, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and to be the influencers and change agents with the friends in their worlds. Let me reminisce about DCLA a bit. In the past 24 years, a significant portion of my life has been spent in focused attention on the design, development and facilitation of this event. During that space of time, many thousands of commitments to Christ have been made and often a story or relationship passes my way that makes my heart jump and my tears flow. The following is one of those stories. Be blessed as you read.

*In July of 1985, a young street boy, 12 years old, came running through the Washington DC Convention Center chasing another boy and planning to do some bodily harm. Neither were part of the DCLA event at the time. A young lady on staff with the WCC stopped the potential fight and I happened to be walking by and offered to help. She was acquainted with the perpetrator, as he had been in trouble before. She boldly challenged his actions and suggested that he change his ways or he was going to end up failing in life. During my further conversation with him, he invited Christ into his life, and we gave him a free pass to the rest of DCLA. During that week, we also hooked him up with a local church. He continued to grow as a young Christian, and the same WCC staff person later helped him go to a Christian College. He is now married with children and has been a youth pastor for several years. This young man is a perfect example of how God can radically change young people. He is, however, a rare example within his extended family where many cousins and siblings are in jail or have lost their lives on the streets of DC. The same woman who stopped this fight, now 24 years later, still works at the WCC. On my final walk out of the Convention Center this year, she stopped me to retell the story and give an update. The young man had called her during the event and asked if she had seen me and if so to say hello and tell me thanks again for the free pass to DCLA in 1985. He said it has changed him forever.*

This story, just like many others, goes on and on and on. Most of the time we do not get to hear the ongoing stories of changed lives. They rest in the hands of God and the parents, pastors, youth leaders, teachers and mentors who brought the kids to the events. These people have played a part in impacting the lives of students for eternity. Oh yes, you've played a part too. You've impacted the lives of many students for all eternity through your care, prayer and gifts to partner with us in ministry.

All of us at Outside the Box Ministries are gearing up for the coming fall events and projects. God has given us some time to rest. Now, our work gets very intense as we prepare for nearly one event per week from now to Thanksgiving. Please pray for us as we meet soon for our annual staff meeting. This year it is October 4-6. Pray for good decision making, clear communication and great idea creation. Email some encouragement notes to me, Ryan, BJ, Holly, Mo or Kat during our meetings. Also send your prayer requests, as we will all be on-line, and ready to respond, share them with our team, and pray for you.

Your financial gifts are deeply appreciated and urgently needed. Thank you for your part.

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