

## We Continue to Grow

by Imani Damali—Program Manager

This year was an awesome year with many new developments at SiNGA. The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) was a success—partnering with Teens Count to form the DC Youth Fashion Academy (DCYFA), we were assigned 100 participants. SiNGA participants learned to sew by Barbara Hunter and Shayla Humphrey taught how to develop a business plan in our Entrepreneurship class. Hazel Moss taught financial literacy, product pricing and sales. Human Development was taught by Tiffany Dyson; Fashion Illustration was taught by Imani Damali; and Textile Development class was taught by Jackie Hart. The participants at Teens Count learned stage design and production, how to act, model and choreograph. Our finale was a full scale theatrical fashion experience at the Atlas Performing Arts Center. (ctd. p. 6)



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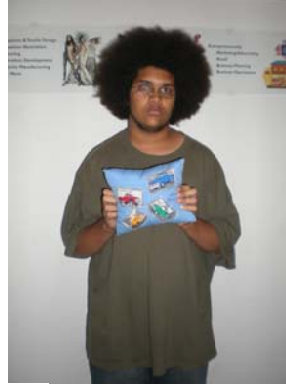


# Success Swatches

## Summer Youth Employment Participants



DAMARCUS is a 17 year old recent graduate of IDEA Public Charter School (PCS). His hobbies include writing songs, drawing and skateboarding. His career goal is to become a prominent musician and can't imagine doing anything else.



ERIC is 20 years old and attends DeVry University. He enjoys drawing and his career goal is to become a game designer.



SHERRY attends Booker T. Washington PCS for Technical Arts. She's 16 years old and enjoys shopping, texting, socializing, cooking and exercising. Her career goal is to become a fashion designer with her own chain of stores.



IMAN is 17 years old and attends the Field School. She enjoys socializing and her career goal is to become a fashion designer.



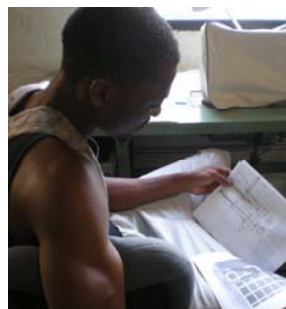
NYASHA is a 17 year old senior at Young America Works Vocational Charter High School. Her hobbies include modeling, sketching and roller skating. Nyasha's career goal is to be an on-set stylist for motion pictures. She has been accepted and will be attending the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, CA September 2010.



TIFFANY is a 21 year old Junior attending Delaware State University. She loves shopping and socializing with her friends. Tiffany's career goal is to be an accountant.



RACHELLE is a 16 year old senior at Benjamin Banneker Senior High School. She enjoys drawing and shopping. She re-joined us during the fall for our Community Service Program. Rachelle's career goal is to be a fashion designer and actress.



SHAWN is a 19 year old graduate of Spingarn Senior High School, he loves playing football. Shawn's career goals include video game design and being a lead vocalist for a post-hardcore rock band.



# My Favorite Part

By Nyasha Klusmann



I have been a SiNGA Summer Youth Employment participant for 3 yrs, and this year I would have to say was the best. Apart from learning the basics of sewing, we visited art museums, the thrift store, and many other places. However my favorite activities this summer were the entrepreneurship and the human development classes. Both classes were taught by young black women who were excellent educators and masters at their subject.

The Entrepreneurship Class, though I had taken one last year, was approached differently by Ms. Shayla. She taught us using scenarios we could relate to and activities that would make the steps of merchandising and business plans easy to recall to memory. Ms. Shayla helped us develop our business plans that were reviewed by a panel. I didn't have everything I needed that day, when she asked me was I ready I confessed my concern of not having all the required parts, she told me to do what I do best and talk my way into their hearts. My hope was restored by her advice and it served me well for I over came not having everything I needed and received a high score on the evaluation.

Human Development was something new to me and I must admit I wasn't very open to it at first, but Ms. Tiffany laid my doubts to rest and ignited an interest inside of me. She made everything a game and through our competitiveness we learned how to be good presenters and how to plan effectively for our betterment. Ms. Tiffany loved to have fun, but she tolerated no disrespect. She would stop talking when my peers and I would have loud conversation then say, "I can give you paper work, or you can stop talking. I have a lot of paper". Ms. Tiffany taught me how to effectively give a 1 minute sales pitch in a elevator—that is something I won't soon forget.

My third year at SiNGA, as the years before, was wonderful and I enjoyed every moment. I have learned so much this past summer and as I transition to college I will take what I've learned at SiNGA with me. When I return to SiNGA I hope to teach other District youth what I have learned from my times at SiNGA and at college.



Nyasha backstage with her model at the finale—Rags to Riches



Nyasha presenting her business plan to our panel of judges.



Human Development class with Ms. Tiffany.



# Rags to Riches

## —A Theatrical Fashion Experience—

### 2009 Summer Youth Employment Program Finale



Designers (L-R): Sherry, Rukiya, William, Arteesha, Rodney, Eric, Iman, Breanne, Tiffany, McKinley and Shawn

On Friday, August 21st, the D.C. Youth Fashion Academy (DCFYA) put on a fabulous finale—Rags to Riches—A Theatrical Fashion Experience. DCYFA was a collaborative effort between Teens Count and SiNGA to serve the 100 students assigned to us from the Department of Employment Services Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The play, choreography, set and production design were handled by Teens Count. SiNGA’s SYEP and Workforce Development participants designed and created the wardrobe for the models’ runway scene. A few of SiNGA’s participants also modeled, see Arteesha in the column on the left. The hard work, passion and dedication of our participants was evident as they put on a production which both enthralled and entertained the packed house at the Atlas Performing Arts Center, 614 H Street, NE, Washington, DC. A good time was had by all! Stay tuned for next year, it only gets better...



Arteesha in a design by Nyasha.



Iman, Tiffany, Eric, Ms. Imani & Shawn at our vending table.



Rachelle (center) with models wearing her designs.



Cast members from Teens Count rock the stage with their dazzling choreography.

# Launching My First Mini Collection— The Things I Learned

By Rukiya O'garro



Rukiya hard at work.

Attending SiNGA's Work Force Development Program I learned to improve my illustration and sewing skills, fabric selections, budget a collection and how to properly present myself in both a business and personal setting. I also learned that launching a collection means designing and creating each garment, making sure the whole collection is consistent with the overall theme of the fashion show. Finding the perfect location is also important as the theme and the location needs to go hand in hand. The right disc jockey (DJ) is also important as he/she needs to work with the designer to ensure that the music selected is reflective of the theme as well. For example, if the fashion collection is entitled, "A Dark Romance," the DJ needs to find the right music to complement my designs. Like location, a DJ is important.



Models backstage

The right models who can provide the right look is essential as well. Last but by no means least, in order to have a successful event, it is important that the event is well-funded. In order to do this, one can host a variety of fundraisers or if possible, acquire sponsors for the event to offset costs.

However, to host a successful fashion show, one needs more than financial support. If one is hosting a show on a tight budget, the support of friends and family is fundamental. They can volunteer and help offset costs in areas such as backstage management, registration, ticket sales and promotion.

SINGA has helped me take my designs from a sketch on paper to reality in fabric. Taking on this difficult task would have been impossible to do without the experiences that SiNGA Inc. gave me. One of the experiences SiNGA allowed me is being in my first show with Jobair Productions; an organization that hosted a fashion show to raise AIDS awareness in the D.C. community. They called to ask if any of the students were interested in showcasing their designs and I jumped at the opportunity. Being involved with the show I was fortunate to have one of my designs showcased on WUSA Channel 9 news when the show's organizer visited their morning program to promote the event. That, in turn, led to assisting models of the "Lovely Lady" boutique in their many fashion shows and the opportunities continue to avail themselves...



Left: Rukiya , Ms. Hunter , Imani Damali & Shayla Humphrey.



Right: Ms. Hart , Rukiya O's Model, Rukiya and Ms. Hunter at the fashion show.

# We Continue To Grow

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This Fall we were able to implement our Community Service and Internship Programs. Many of our SYEP participants returned for these after school programs. We served students from Benjamin Banneker Senior High School, KIMA Public Charter High School, School Without Walls, and Washington Math Science and Technology Public Charter High School. Students have created resumes; accumulated experience in clerical, research, organizational and administrative duties; and have completed an art installation we currently have on display. As we progress, we plan to include additional classes for both program participants to expose and give them experience in design, marketing and promotions—tools for successful entrepreneurs. The goal is to make this a year-round after school program.

We also started our first Workforce Development (WFD) Program. Rukiya O'garro was our first graduate and full of potential. Ms. O'garro previewed her first mini collection—Rukiya O.—showcased by Jobair Productions, the 3G A<sup>2</sup> Fashion Show. The fashion show was held at the Historical Ethical Society and she was featured on WUSA Channel 9 (see page 5).

Our Evening Classes have seen some positive developments this year as well. We continue to grow and expand our class selection. Students now have the option of taking all of the following classes: Sewing I, Sewing II, Sewing III, Fashion Illustration I, Fashion Illustration II, Crazy Patch Quilt, Jean Skirt with Attitude, Clone Yourself (make a form to fit you), Survival Skills (a workshop that teaches you to perform simple alterations and repairs), Make Your Own Window Treatments and Dollmaking! The opportunities are limitless, you can give yourself a valued lifetime gift.

We had a very productive year and 2010 holds promise for so much more. For those interested in our Evening Classes and/or youth programs, please give us a call at our office for an application.

# 2009 Fashion In's & Out's

By McKinley Williams, Nyasha Klusmann, Vernell Holiday, Sherry Adams, Arteesha Richardson, Rachele Montague, DaMarcus Harris, Tiffany Cleckley and Tanay Kelley

## In's

Dread Locks  
 MySpace.com  
 Leggings  
 Skinny Jeans—let's leave some circulation though, anything can be *overdone*  
 iPod  
 Jumpers  
 Oversized Bags  
 Maxi Dresses  
 Plaid

## Out's

Being a slave to fashion  
 BlackPlanet.com  
 Pastry Tennis Shoes  
 Baggy Jeans—the silhouette has certainly slimmed up this season  
 CD Player  
 Ankle Shorts  
 Velcro fastened Reeboks  
 Be too matchy, colors are our friends

## Snapshots From Our Evening Sewing Classes



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# Our Pillow Project



Every year our SYEP participants make a gift of their first project—a pillow. This year we donated the pillows to the children of **La Petite Academy** (pictured center) of Washington, DC.



Tiffany



Arteesha



Christopher



Shawn



Iman



Shawn & Sherry with the director & children of La Petite Academy



Breanne



Rachelle



DaMarcus



Tanay



Rachlle, Arteesha & Shawn manning the table of our SiNGA Bake Sale.



Tanay, Christopher, McKinley & Nyasha at Market Day.



Sherry and Iman man the tables of student's products at Market Day

## Our Summer Youth Employment Program - Learning & Making Money

In today's economy with most existing businesses unable to carry the load of our society's unemployment rate, entrepreneurs and small businesses are the hope for our community's economic future. With that understanding, the participants of 2009's SYEP proceeded to innovate and figure out different ways to make money and meet goals.

Our students set forth to decide the best way to raise funds for our printing costs. They decided to have a bake sale. Now when you hear the words "bake sale" a simple fundraiser comes to mind, but there was plenty to be done. They were in charge of everything - finding a location, deciding who was to make what, making and pricing out the products, and staffing the event. By the end of the day the students had reason to stand tall with their heads held high! They had reached their goal of assisting with the printing costs and had taken advantage of the opportunity to put into practice what they had been taught in the program—excellent customer service and sales.

Market Day is an integral component of our SYEP. Participants are told the first week about the expectations of the program. They were required to design and create 6 pieces to sell for Market Day. They developed business plans to that affect, decided their target audience, performed cost analysis, developed a budget and priced out their product. The students were also responsible for the marketing and promotion of this event. Their goods were sold at Eastern Market. In the beginning, much time was taken to develop the products, but by show time—Market Day—goals had been decided, production completed, with items packaged and priced. Excitement hung in the air until the last item of the day was sold. By the end of the event, invaluable lessons had been learned for future endeavors and that was the real reward! Check us out on youtube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ki4dulKfM4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ki4dulKfM4)



# Message from the Director



Stepping out on faith I initiated the program I wrote while in graduate school to fulfill the need of participants in quest of their dreams, goals or the skillfulness in the fashion industry, now known as SiNGA.

With the help of many professionals, politicians and community individuals, university professors, organizations, corporations and parents we will be 12 years old in March. This year SiNGA appointed our very first graduate to work as our program manager. Selecting this young lady adds meaning to our foundation and mission. This assessment signifies we are doing what the program was intended to do and the light at the end of the tunnel became just a little brighter. This light allows us to see our journey's transformation. People come and go, some stay and some come back. It is "the fruit" of our friends and families that helps us to serve the community. We have managed to keep our doors open for sewing enthusiasts, program participants and graduates. We offer: Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Evening Sewing Classes; One-on-One Private Classes; One Day Workshops; Year Round Sewing Programs; and Entrepreneurship Classes.

This summer the collaboration with Teens Count added another dimension to what we could offer 100 youth, 14 – 21 years of age. The "Success Swatches" section highlights a few of the youth that have come through our doors, those who were willing to view and experience the business of fashion and the marketplace (retail) through our Summer Youth Employment and Workforce Development Programs.

Recently, we had our annual FRIENDRAISER. Some people think this is a fundraising gathering. Of course, if some wish to make a contribution, we would never refuse. However, the concept of SiNGA's FRIENDRAISER is to recruit potential friends as volunteers, advisors and ultimately as board members to help us move our mission to the next level.

SiNGA's mission is to empower program participants to be competitive entrepreneurs in apparel and textile design, product development and trade, retail activities and how to open and run their own businesses. SiNGA's vision is to create a state-of-the-art facility, with a fashion incubator that supports and services entrepreneurs in the District of Columbia. It is our intent to implement in the New Year, 2010, our incubator to facilitate local designer's and retail establishments. This in turn will enhance economic development, alternative education, and global marketing.

Without your help and support we could not survive. We are only as good as the people in our community allows us to be. So, when you give thought to your annual giving, tithing, volunteering or mentoring we hope that you will remember SiNGA. We accept what you can give to keep our mission and vision growing. Thanks to "ALL" who have helped to make this transformation and we extend our gratitude, in advance, to all who will help in the future.

Peace & Blessings,

Jackie Rodgers-Hart

## Notions: The Needs of SiNGA

Advisors

Board Members

Volunteers

Students

Apple/Mac Computers

PC's

Storage cabinets

Book shelves

Website Design & Maintenance

Printers

Contact:

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## Community Service & Internship Program Participants



Olemeku and Wendy



Ke'von and Ian

## SiNGA Would Like To Thank :

Aaron Johnson  
Aaron Wills  
Amy Cole  
Andy Cooley  
Antoin Green  
Ashley West-Nesbitt  
Audrey Bryant  
Bess Bazemore  
Cheryl Lofton  
Christopher Bradley  
Councilmember Harry Thomas, Jr.  
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Edwina Montague  
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Helena Darden  
Herbert Spencer  
J. Thomas Bandy  
Jackie Hart  
James Hudson  
Jane Huntington  
Jennifer Eubank  
Jhmira Alexander  
Kelsey Jackson  
Khalid Gross  
Laura Brand-Ballard  
Marcus Ellis  
Marjorie Barnes  
Mazi Mustafa  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul & Vania Deverger  
Nkosi Ayize  
Nzinga Damali  
Priscilla Francis  
Raymond Rhinehart  
Shonika Proctor  
Tasha Klusmann  
Terry Walker  
Tianya McMillan  
Tony Rich  
Tonya Gonzalez  
Tyler "Skip" Melton  
Wendell Moore

*Please accept our apologies if we omitted your name*

# We ♥ Our Volunteers

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a *life*  
by what we give" - *Winston Churchill*

This year's SYEP would not have been the success it was without the time, hard work and dedication of our volunteers. We would like to **THANK** the people who took time out of their busy schedule; people who have careers in various professions and were willing to share both their personal and business experiences; people who care about our youth and were willing to help them become productive citizens; people who *care* about the future of our community!

For those who want to volunteer and make a difference in the lives of our youth please contact our office. With each day we have the power to make this world a better place. Don't miss your opportunity!



Ashley West-Nesbitt conducting a Self-Esteem Workshop.



Audrey Bryant teaching the Portfolio Development Workshop.



Priscilla Francis, Cheryl Lofton, Christopher Bradley & Aaron Johnson—our Business Plan Judges.

## Corporations and Organizations

CnF Catering	Sutherland, LLP
DC Children Youth Investment Trust Corp	Harry Pangas
DC Department of Parks & Recreation	Lisa Morgan
DC Department of Employment Services	Vlad Bulkin
Friends of Kennedy Playground	The Center for Career Technical Education
Giant Foods	Unitees
Ledos Pizza	Verizon Sports Center
Regal Theater	WSA St. Alban's ParishCostco
Safeway	