



Abigail Benitez
Columbus Family Academy

Dr. Abie Benitez, principal of Columbus Family Academy, is constantly “on the hunt” for educational enrichment opportunities for her students and teachers. One would be hard pressed to think of any of the many Yale outreach opportunities that she has not taken advantage of over years.

Dr. Benitez’s school has run a successful Ben Carson Book Club for the past two years and boasts three winners of the Carson Scholarship award. Her students are also active in the Yale New Haven Science Fair. She has brought the Yale Peabody Museum’s biodiversity carts into her building to extend enrichment opportunities for teachers and students. After school her halls and classrooms are full of students and volunteers many of whom are Yale University students and staff.

Dr. Benitez has also been an active Fellow in the Yale New Haven Teacher’s Institute for five consecutive years, where she has participated in seminars led by Yale faculty members resulting in new curriculum units for New Haven Public School classrooms. In her many roles as school representative, seminar coordinator and coordinator of the institute center for curriculum and professional development in her school, Dr. Benitez encourages other colleagues to participate and study on the Yale campus as well.



In recognition of her work in connecting students and teachers with education resources to benefit public education, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present Dr. Abie Benitez with an Elm-Award.

April 28, 2009



Ruth Henderson
Community Activist

If no one else will advocate on your behalf, you have a friend in Ruth Henderson. Ruth is a longtime community activist and advocate on behalf of youth, seniors, and her neighborhood. As vice chair of the Dixwell Management Team, Ruth helps support residents' efforts to strengthen the neighborhood by working with a multitude of institutional and nonprofit partners. In this role she has helped support neighbors' efforts to expand and improve Scantelbury Park – efforts that are coming into fruition this year when the park will open to public.

Ruth works at the Wexler Grant School and volunteers her time to support youth in the community. During summers, she has organized block parties for youth on Dickerman street that has given neighbors and youth an opportunity to fellowship with each other. She has also developed curriculum and taught classes to youth on life skills and preparing for job interviews.

Ruth efforts are recognized far and wide. In addition to the Elm-Ivy award she will receive today, we will also be receiving a citation from Alderman Greg Morehead who can not be here today, but who wants to recognize all of her contributions to the neighborhood and community in the Dixwell neighborhood.

In recognition of her life long service to the community, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present Ruth Henderson with an Elm Award.



Lise Orville

Lise Orville personifies the spirit of partnership between New Haven and Yale University to better the environment both groups share. For 13 plus years she has served as the coordinator of mentors with students and teachers to conduct science projects as part of Yale's Citywide Science fair. The word "coordinate" has a benign sound, but Lise's involvement with both sides of that equation is total immersion with the people and the process.

We tend to think about mentors as teachers of subject matter, but Lise brings mentoring to the level of changing the way students think about mentors and scientists, and how mentors look at students and teachers. For students it has led to complete changes in career and life path. For mentors it has led to the reawakening of discovery which is often the primary drive for scientists in their youth.

For Lise the Science Fair Program is a vehicle to share her love for science, for scientists, for teaching, and for students. For the New Haven Community, Lise has brought the combined strength of Yale's students and faculty interested in mentoring to a conduit – the Citywide Science Fair Program – to reach a student and a teacher body anxious to learn about each other and the world of science.

In recognition of her many years of service in helping students and mentors foster a love of science, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present Lise Orville with an Elm award.

April 28, 2009



Ruth Feldman

Yale Repertory Theater

Ruth Feldman is the ultimate connector. As the Director of Education and Accessibility Services of the Yale Repertory Theater, Ruth is a vital link between the New Haven community and the theatre. Under her guidance, the Yale Rep became the first theater in Connecticut to serve patrons with visual disabilities by providing high-quality audio-described performances, and she is active in developing a national standard for the live audio description of events.

Ruth helps New Haven public school students connect with and appreciate theater. Each year she manages Yale Rep's WILL POWER program, a series of performances for local high school students. As part of the program this season over 1,500 students and educators will attend *Death of Salesman* at the Yale Rep. The success of the program lies in Ruth's strong relationships with New Haven educators. She creates and distributes educational materials to help educators connect performances to their curriculum.

During the summer Ruth runs the Dwight/Edgewood Program where Yale School of Drama students help nurture future playwrights from the Troup Magnet Academy Middle School. Drama students give life to word and perform the plays written by the middle school students. Ruth's active and thoughtful involvement with the program at every level is surely creating a pipeline of future New Haven playwrights.



In recognition of her efforts to help connect New Haven and Yale through theater, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present Ruth Feldman with an Ivy Award.

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Professor Erin Lavik
Yale School of Engineering

Erin Lavik, assistant professor of biomedical engineering at Yale, is among the leading teachers and researchers of her generation in the field. She develops new therapeutic approaches for the treatment of spinal cord injury and retinal degeneration and has been recognized by the Technology Review 100 as one of a hundred young individuals whose innovative work in technology has a profound impact on today's world. Last year, she was honored by the Connecticut Technology Council as one of their 2008 Women of Innovation award winners.

Erin is also one of the leaders in Yale engineering who works to inspire future generations of scientists through the Science Saturdays program. This series brings Yale scientists together with New Haven middle and high school students to share the researchers excitement about their research. Founded by Professor Ainissa Ramirez and co-directed by Professor Lavik, Science Saturdays helps shatter stereotype about scientists and makes science fun.

In recognition of her dedication to sharing her passion and her knowledge with the scientists of tomorrow, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will now present Erin Lavik with an Ivy Award.



Forrester Lee
Yale University School of Medicine

Cardiologist, Yale School of Medicine professor and Assistant Dean of Multicultural Affairs, Dr. Woody Lee is known to many of us in this room. He is a strong supporter of K-12 science education in New Haven and has been instrumental in bringing together the Hill Regional Career High School with the Yale School of Nursing in a collaborative educational partnership. The partnership gives Career high school students and teachers access to the resources and facilities at Yale University and the Yale Medical School. For example, while most high schools, students learn anatomy from mannequins and diagrams in books, Career High School students learn anatomy using real human cadavers.

Dr. Lee has also been instrumental in the Yale Medical School's support of the SCHOLAR program, a residential summer program at Yale University for Hill Regional Career High School students where students participate in small group problem-based learning science modules with hands-on laboratory research led by Yale faculty. These and other supported efforts are preparing New Haven Public School youth to participate in New Haven's growing science and biotech economy.

Dr. Lee also leads research that benefits public health through his study of health care access for African Americans and other minority populations in relation to cardiovascular disease. He is also an historian who has helped create the body research leading up to Yale's celebration of the 150th anniversary of Cortlandt Van



Rensselear Creed, M.D., the first African American to graduate from Yale University.

In recognition of his many contributions in the realms of science and public health, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will now present Dr. Woody Lee with and Ivy award.



Christine Weideman
Yale University Library

Christine Weideman is not *only* in the business of preserving history, she is also *making* history by helping introduce New Haven young people to the archives profession. Employed by the Yale University since 1993 and as the Director of Manuscripts & Archives since 2005, Chris created the Family and Community Archives Project to identify ways to attract young people of color to the archives profession.

Working with nearby Cooperative Arts Humanities High School, the project introduced 113 eleventh graders from five U.S. History II classes to the archives profession by training them to become archivists for their families or community organizations. As part of the program students received an introduction to the archives, chose a family and organization and found archival materials related to it, conducted oral histories, toured the library's repository, understood the various uses of archival material and learned about basic preservation. After eight weeks the classes, the archivists mounted a public exhibit at the Sterling Memorial Library of materials uncovered, created and selected by the student archivists.

Christine would be the first to say the success of the project was all due to the work of the archivists on her team, but all of these positive results stem from her vision and leadership as well as her dedication to community service and commitment to the profession. In recognition of her efforts to introduce and attract young students of color to the archives profession and for bringing New Haven students and



families together to discuss, record and preserve their own histories, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will now present Christine Weideman with an Ivy Award.



Daniel Edeza
Yale College Class of 2010

From the day Yale College junior Daniel Edeza arrived at Yale University from Hawthorne, California as a Gates Millennium Scholar he began to make New Haven home. Like all Yale students he has many talents and interests, but one of his true passions is education.

Daniel has served New Haven students in numerous ways over the past three years. He has been a Public school Intern at the Fair Haven Middle School. Public School interns serve as a liaison between a New Haven Public School and the Yale community by strengthening current volunteer efforts in the schools and by finding new ways to match resources at Yale with the needs of the school. Next year, Daniel will be student director of the Public School Intern Program.

Daniel has also served as Yale President's Public Service fellow at Solar Youth. The President's Public Service Fellowship created by President Levin in 1994, funds Yale students to work on behalf of economic development, human development, and neighborhood revitalization with public sector and nonprofit organizations in the City of New Haven.

Daniel's commitment to service and public education has won him the respect and admiration of not only his peers but principals, teachers and guidance counselors in the New Haven Public Schools. In recognition of his dedication to enriching the lives of New Haven youth, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present Daniel Edeza with an Ivy award.



Leon Noel
Yale College Class of 2010

Yale College junior, Leon Noel has harnessed the power of the internet to connect those who need help with those who can provide it. Leon conceived of, created and continues to operate, ListFullofHope.com, a community-based website that makes it possible for people in need to find those who can help fill that need. As the website states, “This site is about bringing communities together. If you need something, ask for it and if you have something to give, give it. “Help build you community by helping your neighbors in need!”

Cries for help are posted almost daily on the website. Anyone willing and able to help can email via the craigslist-styled site and offer assistance. Following is a post made by one New Haven one woman. “I have a family of three – myself, my husband, and my eight year old daughter. My husband is out of work, and I am supporting the family on a video retail salary of \$8/hour. I have been trying to get on state aid, but I’m getting the run around. I’ve tried food banks in my area, but they have little to nothing to give. I’m simply asking for food donations, food gift cards, or suggestions to reliable food sources that you know of.” The posting by this New Haven woman was responded to by someone in the local community that was able to help.

Leon is a social visionary with a practical streak. His idea has already sprouted similar websites in other cities including Philadelphia and San Francisco. Leon’s humanitarian and social-action goals have been realized in real time with



immediate benefits to the people of New Haven and beyond. In recognition of his work using the capacity of the internet to bring people together, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will now present Leon Noel with an Ivy Award.



The Yale Health Professional Schools Annual Hunger and Homelessness Auction

The Yale Health Professional Annual Hunger and Homelessness Auction helps keep shelter doors open. For fifteen years the auction has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for greater New Haven non-profit organizations that serve the underserved and needy in New Haven.

The auction was established in 1993 by students at the Yale school of Medicine and Public Health who were interested in alleviating hunger and homelessness in the Greater New Haven area. Their idea was to create an auction organized and supported by the health professional community with the goal of giving the proceeds in the form of grants to local non-profit organizations that provide programs that combat hunger and homelessness.

In addition to the auction, annual events include a chamber music concert, a hunger and homelessness' speaker's panel featuring community members and workers from the community kitchen, and a hunger and homelessness annual awareness football game with faculty members and students. The auction raises over \$30,000 annually and grant recipients include Loves and Fishes, Community Soup Kitchen, Domestic Violence Services of Greater New Haven, JUNTA, Christian Community Action, Youth Continuum, New Haven Home Recovery and Columbus House.



In recognition of its more than decade-long efforts to support one of New Haven's most vulnerable populations, Mayor DeStefano and President Levin will present the Yale Health Professional Schools Annual Hunger and Homeless Auction with an Ivy Award.

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