

SISTRUNK BOULEVARD

Where history meets the future

NON-PROFITS ON SISTRUNK BOULEVARD HELP STUDENTS ACHIEVE

As a part of a series, WSG and the City of Fort Lauderdale CRA are featuring various aspects of the multi-faceted life of Sistrunk Boulevard as it undergoes major change for future improvements.

When Terrance Young was in middle school he struggled. He just couldn't figure out Algebra I. And even though he understood the writing concepts as explained by his teachers, transferring the understanding into a written format was more difficult than it seemed. Eventually, his grades reflected his struggle.

That was Terrance in the eighth grade.

Now an 'A' high school student at Lauderdale Lakes Charter School, the incoming eleventh-grader is a strong advocate for supplemental academic support - even if the student is doing well.

"Just because you get good grades doesn't mean that you don't need tutoring," Terrance explains. "You can always get help with something. Unfortunately, we don't always ask for help. I see kids struggling but it is not like they will accept help from me," Terrance continues. "They are too proud to think that I can help them. They would rather try to do it on their own and if they fail, then they fail."

Terrance is the product of WWJD Outreach Ministry, 1120 NW 6 ST, a non-profit organization that strives to meet social needs of the community by providing such services as after school programs, food distributions, toy drives and living expense payments. The 15-year old organization has assisted up to 400 students at a time and has expanded into five counties throughout Florida. Within the last year, it relocated to Sistrunk Blvd. where it currently runs a summer camp that provides free tutoring to students. The free tutoring will continue throughout the upcoming academic year at Title I schools such as Sunland Park Elementary School and assist other students starting off like Terrance who struggled in reading and math.

With a similar goal to WWJD, Community-Based Connections, Inc., 1033 NW 6 ST, is also reaching out to help the young establish a strong footing in education. The staff encourages high academic achievement from students in kindergarten through third-grade and instill in them success practices they

can use throughout their years in grade school and beyond. Started in 2008 with the United Way of Broward County as its funding partner for its efforts at Sunland Park Elementary School, the organization has had a positive impact on the performance of kids participating in the Sunland Park Early Achievers Program.

Brian Johnson, Community-Based Connections President/CEO, says that one of the keys to a child's success is providing the child with an option of achievement at an early age.

"You have to catch them at least by second grade," Johnson explains. "Unfortunately, the public school curriculum assumes that kids are already at a certain level of comprehension when kids enter the public education system. Sadly, they are not."

"I can't stress enough that help must start at an early age," Johnson explains. "Before the program started, the school segregated out the kids that needed the extra, extra help and it was overwhelmingly boys. They received it and now the results are good."

Fort Lauderdale Branch NAACP President Marsha A. Ellison says the other part of ensuring a child's academic success is parental involvement. She noted that education is a critical concern for maintaining individual civic rights along with healthcare and juvenile justice and parents must become and remain advocates for their children throughout their years in grade school.

"If little Johnny can't read, that is a major issue," Ellison said. "There is a disproportionate number of kids who are not being offered the best placement classes, who are being wrongfully labeled ESE and who are not reading on grade level. We are entitled to a good education and our children are not getting it."

The local NAACP does legal redress the first and third Thursday of the month beginning at 6:30 PM at the Mizell Center, 1409 NW 6 ST, and remains at the center until everyone is served. Parents and others can meet with attorneys and civil

rights activists to work through issues. They can also contact the office at 954-764-7604 or come to a membership meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Mizell Center beginning 7:00 PM.

As for Terrance, he received the academic help he needed and now is focused on graduating from high school and attending Florida State University to become an architect. "I can't draw well," Terrance admits. "But with help I can learn."

OTHER NON-PROFITS LOCATED ON SISTRUNK BLVD:

International Longshoremen's Association
445 and 440 NW 6 ST

Third Step Mental Health Center
547 NW 9 Ave, Suite 9

Cross Road Food Bank
621 NW 6 Ave

Community-Based Connections, Inc.
1033 NW 6 ST, Suite 201

Fort Lauderdale Branch NAACP
1100 NW 6 ST - New location

WWJD Outreach Ministry
1120 NW 6 ST

Teen Alliance Coalition of Central Broward
1400 NW 6 ST, Suite 2

JAB (Justice for All in Broward),
1400 NW 6 ST, Suite 1

Irma Hunter Wesley Fort Lauderdale Child Development Center
1409 NW 6 ST

Sickle Cell Disease Association of Broward County, Inc.
1409 NW 6 ST

American Legion Inc.
1455 NW 6 ST

Liberal Firefighters Association of Broward County
1612 NW 6 ST