
A BETTER CHANCE

A national program
successfully introduced
in Darien in 1981
giving talented
minority students the
opportunity to attend
Darien High School



This brochure was written,
photographed, designed and
produced by volunteer
"Friends of ABC."

The 1983 Annual Campaign for
ABC is now in progress. We
urgently need your support.
Please send your tax-deductible
contribution today. Checks
should be made payable to "ABC
in Darien, Inc." and mailed to
P.O. Box 3204, Darien,
CT 06820 or given to any
member of the ABC Board of
Directors.

Thank you for your generous
response to A Better Chance.

Sincerely,

C. Michael Armstrong
Donald W. Evers, Jr.
Co-Chairmen,
ABC Finance Committee

T

he goal of "A Better Chance" is to increase the number of well-educated minority students assuming leadership roles in American society. ABC is a national non-profit program organized in 1963, a joint effort of Dartmouth College and several private secondary schools. Since then, ABC has recruited more than 7,000 outstanding minority teenagers, placed them in over 150 excellent private and public secondary schools, and supported their efforts as students. By continuing to give minority group students a better chance, ABC enriches the schools and colleges they attend, and benefits the society to which they will contribute their talents. ABC's Program involves 6 young women who attend Darien High School while living in the ABC House on Brookside Road with Resident Director Bill McCarthy and his family, and tutor Leonard Krill. ABC students must meet the highest personal and academic standards for eligibility and retention in the program. Over 90 per cent of all ABC graduates attend colleges and universities, the majority of which are among the most selective in the U.S.

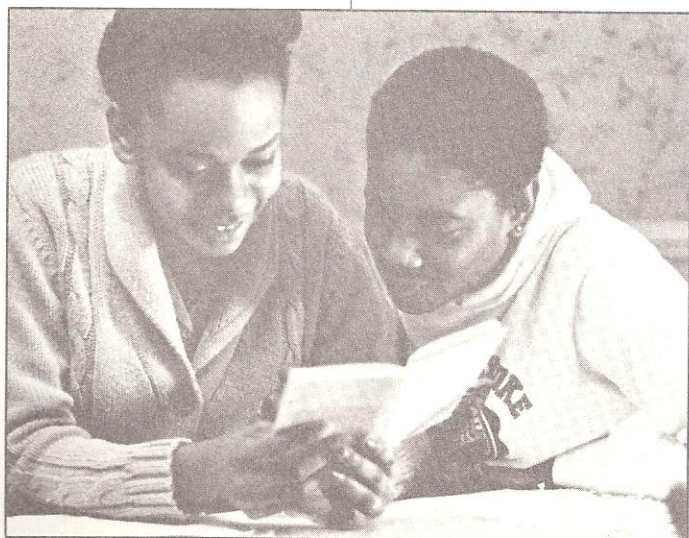
The success of Darien's ABC Program is a tribute to the town which has supported its first two years and to the fine young women who are our first ABC students. The best way to explain our program's results is to let the girls' achievements, and warm friendliness, speak for themselves.

ORGYLN CLARKE:

"To me, a good education is the key to reaching my goals in life and the ABC approach

has given me that advantage. Admittedly, it is a shame to say ABC students must leave their home environments in order to get a

good education, but if that is the price one has to pay, one pays it. The teachers are great, willing to help, and push you to your greatest potential."



La ROSE PARRIS:

"My values of education have changed a lot in the past two years. Before coming to Darien I never had to work hard for A's, now, since I do, I realize that education will always be hard work for me, pushing and struggling with myself in hopes of earning something beneficial to me in the present and the future."

A ABC IN DARIEN: A PARTNERSHIP OF PEOPLE

ABC in Darien is a partnership of people—outstanding minority teenagers seeking a superior education at Darien High School and many dedicated Darien citizens, organizations, educators and other volunteers who welcome the opportunity to become involved in helping “our ABC girls” to grow into achieving, contributing adults.

We welcomed our first students in September 1981, after a major fund raising campaign successfully reached its goal of \$197,000. Thanks to hundreds of individual gifts and the generous support of our local companies and other organizations, we were able to fund the renovation of 11 Brookside Road, which is owned by the 1st Congregational Church in Darien and generously leased to ABC in Darien for \$1 per year.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL, KENNETH R. HIGGS:

“I count it a rare privilege to have served as counselor to the ABC girls during their first two years at Darien High School. In my 48 years as a teacher-counselor I have seldom known a group with more enthusiasm for all areas at the school and in the community. They are leaders in their classroom endeavors and there is hardly an area at the school which is not

richer because of their participation. I sincerely hope that they have gained as much from these two years as the school has. I am looking forward to the future of the program with even greater expectations.”

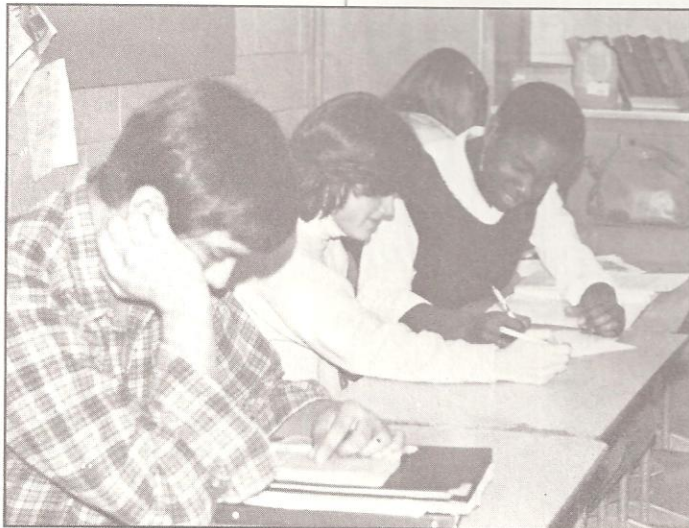
ROSA GARCIA:

“After being in the Darien School program, I’ve become more aware of the meaning of education. By coming here, I was forced to adapt to

so many things I never knew existed, my whole environment has become entirely different from what I was used to. Living in a house of people with different backgrounds, different attitudes, was not something easy. Nevertheless, my main priority has been my schooling so I can better prepare myself for the future.”

JONEVETTE FROST (TONI):

“I have always valued education a great deal. I believe it has a lot to do with my parents’ influence and it also has a lot to do with my realization that education is like a passport to understanding life and its various functions. Coming to ABC in Darien has helped increase the importance of education within me. I have always thought of education as a life or death matter—if one did not obtain a little of it.”



DHS in session: concentration and effort.

A ABC BRINGS NEW DIMENSIONS TO DARIEN

Better Chance provides Darien teenagers with first-hand contact and friendship with students from environments and backgrounds different than their own. Our ABC students have established warm relationships with their Darien counterparts, contributing significantly to our High School programs in academics, athletics, theatre, music and other activities. Darien host families provide each student with emotional support and a "second home." The ABC Program has, in two years, become a source of sustained pride and new friendships. It reflects positively on Darien's reputation and commitment to be a community of highest values and diversity.



The evening meal unites students with
DHS Teacher/Resident Director Bill McCarthy and his family.

O HOW ABC IN DARIEN WORKS

ur ABC students, resident director and a resident tutor share housekeeping duties. The resident director supervises daily life in the House, confers with teachers, keeps in touch with parents, and helps the tutors offer academic aid during the mandatory 7-10 p.m. study hours. Members of the Darien community serve as host families. On most weekends their ABC student joins them in a normal family environment. Our ABC students almost immediately became active participants in community, church, social and recreational functions as well as a range of Darien High School activities.

FINANCING ABC IN DARIEN: A COMMUNITY-WIDE CAMPAIGN PROVING DARIEN CARES!

A community-wide ABC fund-raising campaign was held between January and June 1981, and raised \$197,000. This generous response insured sufficient funds for almost three school years of annual operating expenses. Of this total, over \$100,000 was needed for the renovation and expansion of the ABC House. Thanks to the dedication of local architects, building suppliers and townspeople who donated furnishings and many hours to carpentry, painting, landscaping and general improvements, the ABC House renovation was accomplished within our bids and budget.



Outside our front door, our five juniors pose for photographer Phil Alexandre.

BECOME A "FRIEND OF ABC": WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT NOW!

The ABC in Darien Annual Campaign is now being undertaken to fund 1983-84 school year operating expenses. Contributions from individuals, corporations, retail businesses, community service organizations, foundations, and churches are being solicited. Special fund-raising events sponsored by Darien High School and other groups will also be conducted. The ABC Finance Committee has established a \$45,000 Campaign Goal to finance operating costs for 1983-84. To insure Program continuity, pledges for longer-term gifts will be accepted to help us minimize fund-raising and other administrative costs in the future.

We hope to gain many "Friends of ABC" so that we can count on a level of annual support to sustain our program with as few costly mailings as possible.

Operating expense projections are based on our actual costs during the past two years and the cost experiences of 26 other ABC public school programs.

Here's our budget for key expenditures:

BUDGET—1983-84 SCHOOL YEAR—SIX STUDENTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Allowances | \$2,000 | Printing | \$2,000 |
| Groceries | 7,500 | Miscellaneous | 1,300 |
| House Furnishings | 1,800 | Oil | 1,500 |
| House Maintenance | 2,500 | Water | 300 |
| Telephone | 750 | Trash | 250 |
| Salary: | | Electricity | 2,300 |
| Housekeeper/Cook | 5,500 | FICA Expense | 370 |
| Taxes and Assessments | 300 | Service Charges | 35 |
| Office Expense | 1,000 | Legal Fees | 750 |
| Director's | | Doctor Fees | 200 |
| Discretionary Fund | 2,000 | Auditor Fee | 250 |
| Insurance | 2,600 | Capital Improvements | 4000 |
| Travel | 2,200 | Contingency | 2,000 |
| | | T O T A L | \$43,500 |

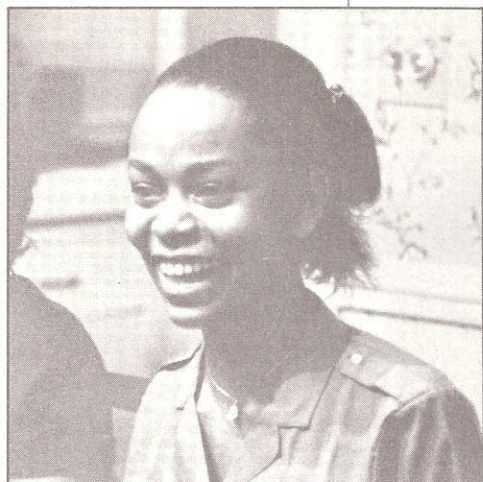
All contributions are tax-deductible.

A complete Financial Statement detailing all 1981-83 capital and operating costs of ABC in Darien is available on request.

**PLEASE CONTRIBUTE
GENEROUSLY TO OUR ABC PROGRAM.**

OUR ABC FAMILY

ORGYLN CLARKE
Born, Kingston Jamaica;
moved to Bronx, N.Y. at
age nine. Received 20
Awards at Wade Junior
High, including Exxon



Research Program scholarship. Darien High School Junior, on Honor Roll all six semesters. Member, Swing Choir, Advanced Choir. Performer, *Grease*, *Showbiz*, Spring '83 Talent Show. Orgyln is interested in a science career; possibly medicine or physical therapy.

ROSA GARCIA
Born, Los Angeles. Junior High Student Body Treasurer and highest Grade Point Average. Darien High School Junior, on Honor Roll all six semesters. President, Spanish Club; Member, Outdoors Club, Soccer Team, Special Olympics, Track, Advanced Choir, Youth in Government, American Red Cross. Rosa hopes to attend Stanford or University of California at Berkeley.



ELIZABETH TEJADA
Born, Santiago, Dominican Republic; moved to New York City at age one. President of her Junior High Student Body, received 20 Awards, graduated Salutatorian '81. Darien High School Junior, on Honor Roll all six semesters. Activities: softball, eighteen hours per week part-time jobs. Liz is interested in a science or business career.

ELIZABETH TEJADA:

"My purpose for coming to ABC has been to better myself academically. DHS offers a good opportunity that would not have been mine had I not applied. When I came here I did not know what to expect besides academic help. It took a few months to get used to the idea that I was also changing in character. This has been the most noticeable difference in me and I have to admit that I fought this change at first. Now it is something I'm grateful for because it has made me a better individual."

LaROSE PARRIS
Born, Jamaica, West Indies; moved to Babylon, L.I. at age eight. At Peter Brennan Junior High, won several music awards and was member, National Junior Honor Society. Darien High

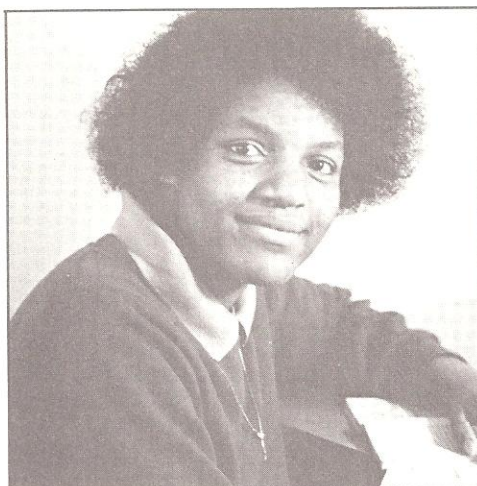


School Senior, member Debate Club, Advanced Choir, Marching and Concert Band; Youth in Government; works twenty hours per week at part-time job. LaRose has applied to Columbia, N.Y. University, University of Pennsylvania, Boston University, and SUNY at Stony Brook, and is interested in a law career.

JOY "KATHY" MARSHALL
Born, Brooklyn, N.Y. At Meyer Levin Junior High, received 10 awards including United Nations French Award. Darien High School Junior, on Honor Roll all six semesters. Member, Swing Choir, Advanced Choir, performed in *Showbiz*. Activities include Community Action Program, nine hours per week as mother's helper. Kathy hopes to attend Brown or Cornell and plans a medical or engineering career.

KATHY MARSHALL:

"The Darien school system is truly one to be admired and has many more advantages than a city school. Its excellent resource centers, modernized library and computer center are only a few examples. Basically, I have learned here that things don't always come as easy as I thought they did. If one really wants to accomplish anything in life, the primary ingredient has got to be hard work. Believe me, I'm talking from experience!"



JONEVETTE "TONI" FROST
Born, Cleveland Ohio. Completed seventh grade with highest grade point average, organized Sunday School programs, worked at neighborhood hospital and Jessie Owens Summer Youth Program. Darien High School Junior, on Honor Roll past four quarters. Activities include Post 911, Youth in Government, Junior Class Council, tennis team, part-time work at Milne Real Estate. Toni is interested in becoming a lawyer and aiding her community in Cleveland.

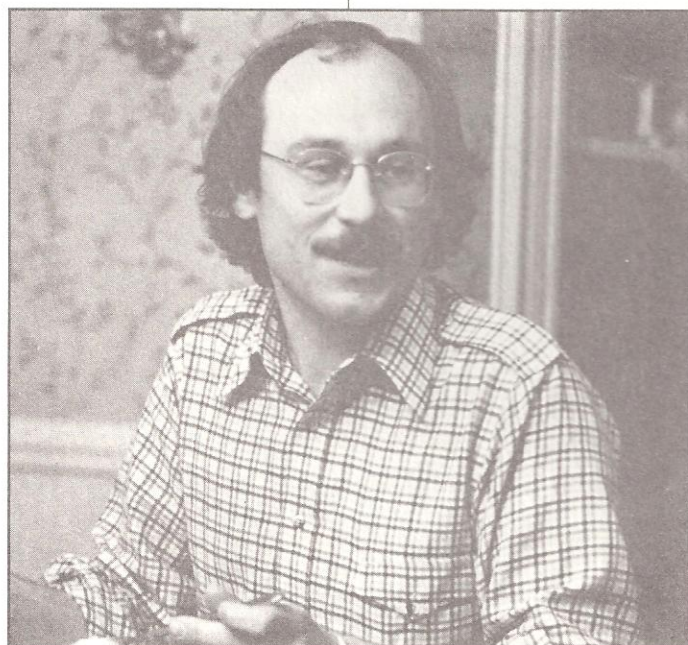
THE SELECTION OF ABC STUDENTS

The ABC National Admissions Staff screens more than 1600 applications in order to place over 430 students in ABC's 150 member schools. Guidance counselors, principals, teachers, clergy and social workers in specific areas across the country suggest potential candidates to the professional staff at ABC's national headquarters in Boston. Applicants must be in the top 10 percent of their class; have a grade point average of at least 85; score well on the required Secondary School Admissions Test; have commendable character traits; and be personally motivated. Following testing and interviewing, accepted students are evaluated and selected by local chapters. To remain in the Program, ABC students must continue to demonstrate high academic and personal qualities. Students represent a range of ethnic backgrounds and geographic regions including Black, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, American Indian and other minorities.

HONOR SOCIETY TUTORS DONNA HILL, MEG McCREERY, LIZ ROBERTS:

"The ABC tutoring program, sponsored by the National Honor Society,

began providing tutors when the girls were beginning their adjustment to Darien and the High School. We, as tutors, often felt we were there to provide support socially and emotionally as well as academically. Both were fun and satisfying.



DHS Teacher/Resident Tutor Leonard Krill brings sensitivity and educational guidance to our students.

Over the year, we saw the girls change dramatically. They became more involved with their activities and classes, and our roles changed as well. As they learned to deal with their course loads, we spent less time explaining basic concepts or suggesting general approaches to learning problems and helped, instead, with more specific, isolated questions. Earlier this year, as the courses became increasingly difficult, the demand for tutoring expanded but recently this demand has decreased significantly. The ABC students have discovered how good it often is to struggle with such problems alone until they make sense. Therefore they no longer want tutoring every night.

Whether our goal was to help the girls adjust, or to help them succeed academically, we have contributed to their learning to help themselves."



Dr. Velma Saire, DHS Principal/ABC Director enjoys some horseplay.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT ABC

Does the Town of Darien or Darien High School provide financial support for the program?

No. All funds needed for ABC are privately raised.

Do ABC students take the place of a Darien student in one of the highly-competitive "upper track" classes?

The High School administration states that there is ample space for any student who qualifies for advanced track classes. All students receive equal treatment and are placed in the class most suitable for that student.

Because Darien ABC students have proven to be outstanding, will they receive local college scholarships at the expense of Darien students?

It is possible that ABC students will be offered local organization scholarships. However, this has not been a problem in other ABC public school programs. Most colleges classify ABC students according to where their families live and not to where the host town is. ABC students receive major college scholarship support through National ABC, other minority organization programs, and from colleges directly.

Is it likely that an ABC student might be accepted to a major college in place of a Darien student?

No. Darien students, including local minority group members, do not compete directly with ABC students for college admissions. To the extent that colleges weigh geographic and minority group considerations, all students are admitted to college based on where their families reside, not where they attend high school.

T ABC's BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND "THE FRIENDS OF ABC"

The Board of Directors has worked successfully to select our students, develop the program's policies, raise necessary funds to finance the program and administer the annual operations of ABC in Darien. The Board of Directors' working committees include Student Affairs, Housing, Host Families, Finance, Community Relations and High School Relations.

ABC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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C. Michael Armstrong, VP
Suzanne Albani, Secretary
Dotti Sarr, Treasurer



"The Friends of ABC" were established during our 1981 Capital Fund Drive to explain the new Program to our town and to gain its financial support.

We urge you to join our many current "Friends" by becoming an annual contributor to ABC in Darien.