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Subject: OpenDoors of Asheville News



Letter from Jennifer Ramming

OpenDoors Co-founder & Executive Director

Fall 2012

There is still time to participate in our Dig the Du Scholarship Fundraiser... keep reading to find out how and learn how this Fundraiser is making a big difference in the lives of our kids.



Happy Fall and Back-to-School Congratulations to all parents! This season is full of academic expectations, political campaign banter, and voice mails of year-round school concerns and considerations. There is so much being said from many perspectives about educational policy change, school failures, and how we should close the achievement gap. I ask that you REMAIN OPTIMISTIC!

I also strongly suggest you get your hands on Paul Tough's essential book, ***How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character***. Read it, share it with your neighbor, take it to book group and then hand it to your child's teacher to read over fall break. It might just change the way you look at the challenges before us as parents, a community and a nation. The premise of this book, and the studies it

summarizes and synthesizes, is that people can change and they do, with adult support through consistent healthy relationships.

Big A-HA moment- It doesn't matter as much as anyone thought whether kids have a high IQ or a low IQ, because IQ is just another test we can "pass or fail". Testing outcomes are largely skewed by how *motivated* the test taker was when he or she filled out the answer sheet. Pretty safe bet that we can all relate to that from our own test-taking experiences. In one study, IQ scores were changed by as much as 18 points when students were motivated by M&Ms given for each right answer. Some kids don't need M&Ms to work their hardest, but many do need a motivator, and when you are a child who is growing up in a high stress situation, within a dangerous neighborhood - you have a lot of factors distracting you from doing your best on any test, let alone a test widely believed to predict over-arching human potential.

What the book *How Children Succeed* describes, is the hope and benefit that can be regained for an at-risk child who is taught the value of open-ended curiosity, thinking outside the box, and tenaciousness. In our community we are fortunate to have many innovative educators who are doing just that – inspiring children and young adults to be the best they can be by all sorts of unconventional measures and looking at response to intervention instead of IQ and real outcomes instead of assumptions. Asheville is a hot-bed of reinvention and this doesn't stop at the classroom door. At Francine Delany, Isaac Dickson Elementary and French Broad River Academy, the classroom often doesn't even have a door!

OpenDoors youth Davon Smith enjoys chatting with [French Broad River Academy](#) Social Studies teacher Willie Kates. Davon is one recipient of our Scholarship Fund raised through OpenDoors' Dig the Du Duathlon.

OpenDoors is fortunate to work with 11 amazing public and private schools this fall which all do things a little differently and each is a great fit



for different kids. That is our goal, to find the best fit for each child to reach their personal potential and not be overlooked or under-served. Please join us in encouraging, enriching, educating, problem



...erforming, educating, problem solving, communicating, and advocating for children in need. We need tutors and mentors more than ever as we help break the cycle of

poverty by investing in a child so that they, in turn, invest in themselves.

This year's **Dig the Du Scholarship Fundraiser Duathlon** is this **Sunday** and I look forward to seeing you there!

Jen

We are very excited about our beautiful new logo which was crafted by [Sheri Lalumondier of Indigo Design](#)



Open Doors

OF ASHEVILLE

Dig the Du Fundraiser

REGISTER TODAY

Scholarship helps a local youth find **"the perfect fit"**

2nd Annual Duathlon is **this Sunday**

Davon proudly wears his French Broad

River Academy uniform as one of the school's newest 6th graders.





Through the combined efforts and financial contributions of [French Broad River Academy](#) and OpenDoors, Davon has beautifully settled into his first year at FBRA.

His "review" of his experience so far and from those who know him well, show what a great match this has been.



Davon says: FBRA is an awesome school. Things (school work and learning to paddle) are harder than I thought they would be, but the teachers are really helpful and they work at a good pace where we can get the work done and feel comfortable.

I felt nervous about fitting in at first. My language arts teacher, Mr. Martin, told me about how he



wnc's dirty duathlon

10·14·12

sky valley farm

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)

WNC's 'dirty duathlon' will once again help raise scholarship and enrichment funds for local OpenDoors youth. Join us for the fun, the workout and the great cause!

Dig the Du is a 2.5 mile run/12 mile bike/2.5 mile run at Sky Valley Farm in Hendersonville. The Perry Family is once again allowing us to use this magnificent private land for our event. **THANK YOU!**

Participate individually or as part of a team...



was nervous about fitting in too when he first started working there but he started to make friends quickly and felt great. So when we went to Camp Mondanin our first week of school I was making friends just like that too and the first day of school I was fitting in really well and people liked me.

Davon making friends easily does not surprise anyone, but his confidence and success when it comes to classroom work is something new. He has not always been a thriving student. The pressures and stressors that weigh heavily on his family can and might be too much if he were not in a “just right” school situation. With small class sizes, single gender and as much outdoor education and leadership that a 7 day week can pack in, Davon has found his perfect fit. And with the help of an amazing

committed mom, many coaches, great teachers, dozens of generous donors and two phenomenal teamleaders he is soaring.

Thank you Asheville for investing in this child!



**BIG SMILE @ THE FINISH LINE
LAST YEAR!**

**Volunteer - Donate - Sponsor
Participate**

Sooooo many choices... You're welcome!

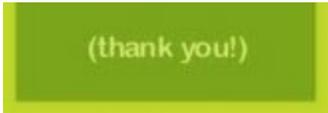
**Join us, this Sunday, October
14th, 10am, for the 2nd annual
“Dig the Du” race at Sky Valley
Farm.**

**This year we have specially
designed race tees for men and
for women, congestion-free start
area, individual & team
registration, music, bike rentals
(by Sycamore Cycles), unique &
private trails, handcrafted awards,
and incredible post-race food and**

Sierra Nevada beer!



*Special thanks to Sierra Nevada -
one of our town's newest neighbors*



*for so graciously stepping up to
quench the thirst of our participants.
(21 years and up of course!)*

THANK YOU TO OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS!

These businesses are generously sponsoring Dig the Du this year. Please do what you can to let them know how much we appreciate what they do for our kids and our communities!

Prestige





ENDURANCE FUELS & SUPPLEMENTS





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