

# The Inspire Spotlight

Newsletter of Inspire: A Shalom Afterschool Initiative

May 2016

## Inspire by the Numbers

# 100%

Percent of students  
who say they've  
learned something new  
at afterschool this year.

(What have they learned?  
Their answers range from  
"don't let anything stop you"  
to "about Ebola" to "in  
Antarctica you have to poop  
in a bucket!")

# 126

Home Visits This Year –  
on average each student and  
his/her family was visited  
once every month and a half

# 1,070

Volunteer hours  
donated this year –  
a huge THANK YOU to all our  
weekly volunteers, as well as  
to four volunteer groups!



## Bana Wins "Creating a Safer DeKalb" Essay Contest

What would you do to make your community safer?  
Why? How would you get it done?

Last fall, the Solicitor-General's Office invited all DeKalb County 8<sup>th</sup> graders to participate in an essay contest answering those questions. The contest was entitled "Creating a Safer DeKalb." Bana, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader from Eritrea, was one of several Inspire students encouraged by their Language Arts teacher to submit an essay.

Bana worked on her essay at afterschool with the help of one of Inspire's volunteers, Tracy. During homework time, Bana, Tracy, and another student brainstormed together ways to make Clarkston a safer place. Bana developed several ideas to make Clarkston better: install security cameras around apartment complexes and outside each home's front door so the person inside can see who is knocking at the door; prohibit the sale of guns at all stores; and allow only security and police to carry guns.

Like most middle schoolers, Inspire students are learning how to write well. Tracy used this opportunity to push Bana and teach her about good writing: "I thought it was a great learning experience



*(continued on back)*



**INSPIRE**  
a shalom afterschool initiative

## Bana Wins Essay Contest continued...

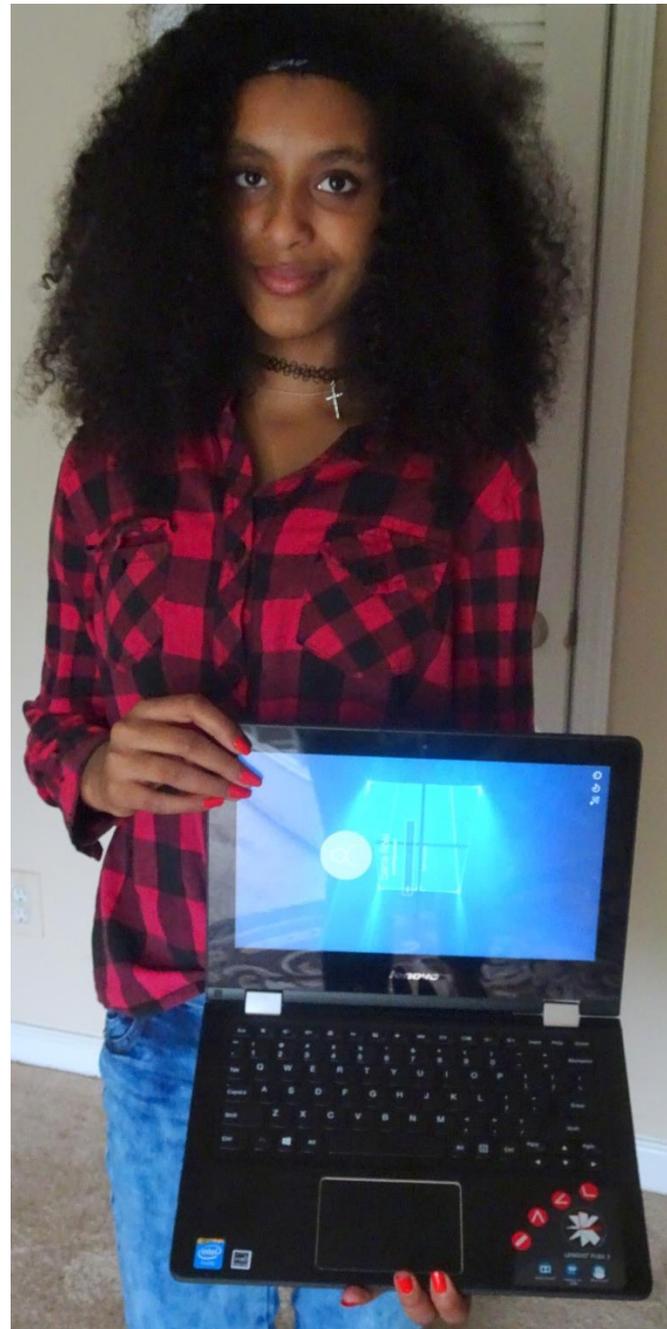
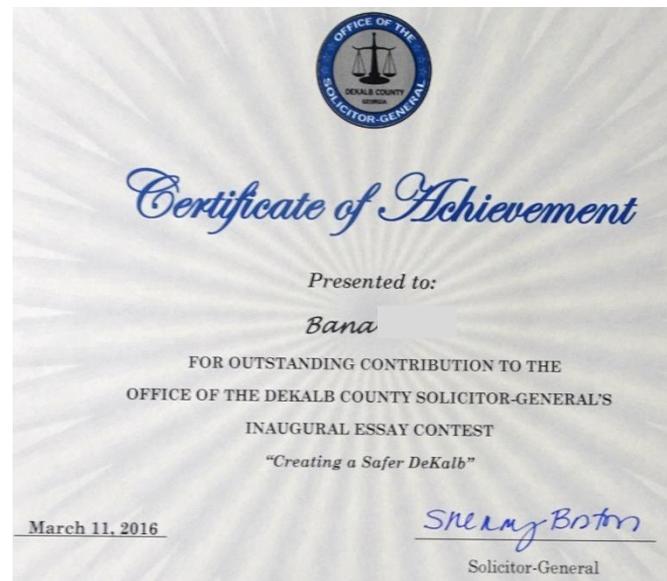
for her because she had three different ideas about how to make Clarkston safer, and I pushed her to talk ABOUT each idea for a paragraph. I kept saying, 'OK, but why? But how? Is that going to work?' and encouraging her to get specific details into her sentences. I think by the end she learned a little bit about how writing works: how you can't just write the same idea over and over for 5 paragraphs; you have to explain and describe your ideas. I was proud of her for doing the hard work of getting her thoughts onto paper and letting me push her to make it better."

"When it came time to go to the gym [for enrichment activities], Bana hadn't finished," Tracy recalls. "She had been quite focused on getting her ideas on paper, so we sat at a table in the corner of the gym while the others played basketball" and continued working together on her essay.

It turns out all that hard work and pushing paid off. Weeks after submitting her essay, Bana's teacher told her she had won the contest. But Bana didn't believe it. "Even American people participated," she said. "I *never* even thought I could win!"

On Friday March 11, Bana was honored as one of five essay winners at the awards ceremony hosted by DeKalb County Solicitor-General Sherry Boston. The winners received certificates from Ms. Boston and U.S. Representative Hank Johnson, as well as brand new laptops! Bana says, "When I saw the laptop I finally believed it was true."

When I asked Bana if she was proud of herself, she said no words but broke into a giant Bana grin. She beamed with pride. We, too, are proud of Bana and her hard work. And we're grateful to Tracy and all our volunteers for their dedication and willingness to challenge our students and help them meet their potential.



We asked students, "What is your favorite thing we did this year?"

The most common answer: "The Volunteer Group Visitors!"

Four volunteer groups came to visit Inspire this school year; some stayed one day, while others stayed an entire week!



 **NYU** *Top left:* A volunteer from New York University poses with Bana and Eden and their winning STEM Challenge Structure: Who can build the tallest tower out of only one roll of aluminum foil?

*Top right:* A volunteer from Concordia University works with Chance and Meron on a GEOPRISM activity; groups built 3D figures using gum drops and toothpicks, then dipped them in a solution of soapy water to see all their panes and prisms.  **CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**  
PORTLAND • OREGON

 **THE LOVETT SCHOOL** *Bottom left:* A volunteer from The Lovett School works in the exploration room with Eric, reading a book with him about the four seasons.

*Bottom right:* A volunteer from Jubilee Partners smiles happily with Ngo Dei, a student who lived with her family at Jubilee during their first two months in the country in 2012. 

\*\*\*To see ALL that we did this year, check out our 2015-2016 YEARBOOK at <http://shalominternationalministry.com/multimedia/>



*Clockwise from top right:* Ms. Lucy teaches Ayub how to play a chord on the guitar; Chance works on his Athlete Silhouette art project; excited birders look through binoculars to spot birds; Eden dissects a flower during an exploration lesson.



## How to Donate

### **ONLINE:**

[www.rally.org/shalominspire](http://www.rally.org/shalominspire)

**CHECK:** Make checks out to "New Church Development Commission" and write "Inspire" in the memo line.

### Mail checks to:

New Church Development Commission  
1024 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306

### **SUPPLIES:**

Check out our [amazonwishlist](#) for specific items we need by searching "Inspire: A Shalom Afterschool Initiative."

To Volunteer, Email:  
[inspireshalom@gmail.com](mailto:inspireshalom@gmail.com)

To See Photos, Visit:  
[www.facebook.com/inspireafterschool](http://www.facebook.com/inspireafterschool)



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## A Note from Ms. Natalie

### Help us expand to a new room!

Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church is graciously offering us use of an additional room; starting in the fall, we will have one Exploration Room and two complete Homework Rooms. But we need many supplies to make it happen! Please consider donating the following items (or making a donation for their purchase) so that we can have this new room up and running when our students return in the fall: tables, bookshelves, bulletin boards, white boards, storage bins, pencils, pens, glue sticks, scissors, notebook paper. Thank you!



Shalom,

Natalie Schucker  
Program Coordinator