

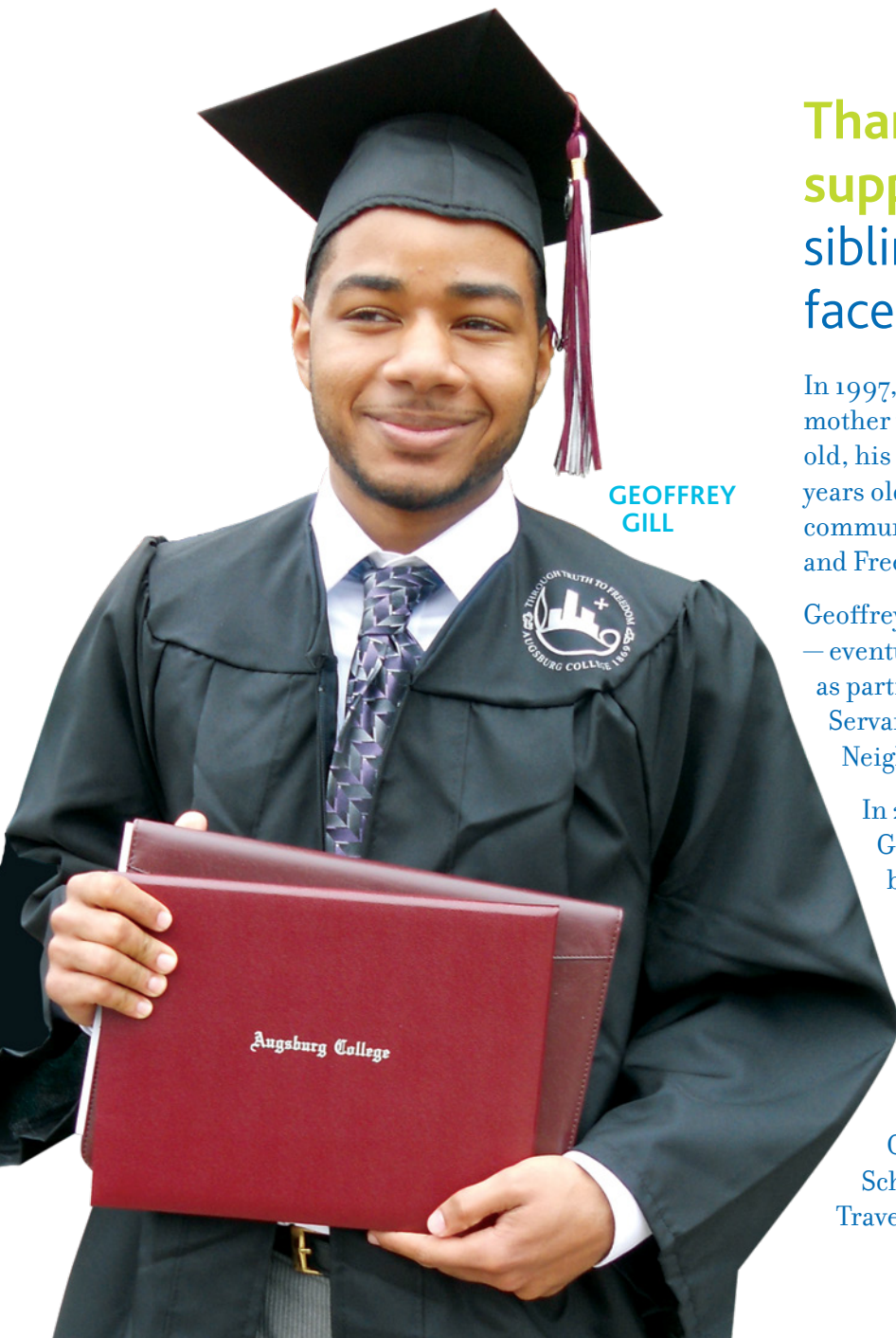


FAITH WORKS

SEPTEMBER–
OCTOBER 2012

SAINT PAUL AREA
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

▲ **PLAN NOW** with your youth group to spend one night in a cardboard box (or tent) to raise awareness and much needed funds to help knock out family homelessness in Minnesota! **MORE INFO INSIDE**



GEOFFREY GILL

Thanks in part to your support, Geoffrey and his siblings are thriving in the face of adversity

In 1997, Geoffrey Gill and his three sisters lost their mother to breast cancer. Geoffrey was just nine years old, his sisters ranging in age from two to seven years old. Their dad, Bernard Gill, reached out to the community for help, and found it with Project SPIRIT and Freedom School.

Geoffrey and his sisters — Vanessa, Amira, and Halina — eventually all became involved in the programs, as participants and alumni. Amira was a 2012 Servant Leader (teacher) at the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood Freedom School.

In 2008, Bernard Gill died unexpectedly and Geoffrey, then a freshman at Augsburg College, became the head of household. It was not an easy season. But with support from the community, including the Project SPIRIT and Freedom School staff who have been role models and “godfathers” through the years, Geoffrey didn’t just survive the significant challenges — he excelled.

Geoffrey became a Travelers Page Education Scholarship recipient, and Mike Newman of Travelers has mentored Geoffrey for four years.

PROJECT SPIRIT & FREEDOM SCHOOL CONTINUES



Join



FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

iylc fall retreat

The Interfaith Youth Leadership Coalition and Vibe, an urban youth group, will co-host a retreat in late September for high schoolers interested in exploring together a future of youth-led, service-based, interfaith-oriented activities in the Twin Cities. Please contact Patricia Lull at PLULL@SPACC.ORG to get on the mailing list for the event.

walk for an end to poverty on 10/14/12!

Join your neighbors in the Saint Paul CROP Walk to raise funds for the award-winning hunger relief efforts of Church World Service. 25% of donations support hunger relief programs locally, right here in St. Paul.

For more information about Church World Service or other CROP Walks, visit WWW.CHURCHWORLDSERVICE.ORG.

LOCATION: Camphor United Methodist Church, 585 Fuller Avenue

TIME: Registration at 1pm, step off ceremony at 1:20pm, step off at 1:30pm

CONTACT: David Leitzke, DJLEITZKE@IPHOUSE.COM

council events

FEDS	Sep 11, 25	5:30-7:30pm
FEDS	Oct 9, 23	5:30-7:30pm
CROP Walk	Oct 14	1pm
Cardboard Box City	Oct 18-19	
Bringing Faith to Life Breakfast	October 25	7:30-8:30am
FEDS	Nov 13, 27	5:30-7:30pm
FEDS	Jan 8, 22	5:30-7:30pm



VANESSA GILL

“Freedom School and Project SPIRIT played a huge role in my life.”

PROJECT SPIRIT & FREEDOM SCHOOL CONTINUED

Travelers Foundation is a longtime funder of Project SPIRIT and Freedom School.

And in May, Geoffrey Gill graduated from Augsburg College with a degree in family youth ministries.

Geoffrey’s sister Vanessa, also a program alumna, graduated with a business degree from the University of Minnesota in June. Vanessa majored in entrepreneurial management while minoring in leadership. After studying abroad in Brazil this fall, Vanessa hopes to bring her talents to a youth development nonprofit organization. She also has long-term entrepreneurial plans in both the business and nonprofit realms.

Vanessa says, “Freedom School and Project SPIRIT played a huge role in my life. A lot of the students I participated in the program with, as well as the teachers, are like family. I know the programs were a huge help after school to keep my siblings and I engaged in positive activities and out of trouble. They also taught us a ton about our history and culture.”

This fall, Geoffrey and Vanessa’s sister Amira will enter her sophomore year at St. Catherine University, and the youngest Gill, Halina, will be a senior at Central High School in St. Paul.

These scholars have most certainly beat the odds, and then some.

We are immensely proud of Geoffrey and Vanessa’s collegiate achievements. We are so glad to see Project SPIRIT and Freedom School “babies” now maturing into the successful adults we always believed they could and would be one day.

serve



WILL YOU HELP US KNOCK OUT FAMILY HOMELESSNESS?

FROM PATRICIA

Cardboard Box City 2012 Thursday, October 18–19th

Project Home and Families Moving Forward invite youth groups, congregations, community groups and organizations to **SLEEP OUT** (in a temporary dwelling, a box or a tent), **ROCK OUT** (the band Sheltered Reality will perform live) and help us **KNOCK OUT FAMILY HOMELESSNESS** at our Cardboard Box City event on Thursday, Oct. 18, 2012 (MEA weekend).

Youth groups from congregations, schools, and clubs from across the state will create a temporary cardboard box city at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

Funds raised by Cardboard Box City residents will benefit the families served by Families Moving Forward and Project Home Family Shelter Program.

Cardboard Box City will be held rain or shine ... or snow! The homeless don't have a choice.

Questions? Please email us at
CARDBOARDBOXCITY@GMAIL.COM.



As we move further into the strategic planning process, we will be asking questions about the bedrock of our work. Why do we do what we do as the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches? Knowing that question is before us, I've become a fan of the mission statements of other non-profits. One of my favorites comes from a faith-based, social service* in Cleveland whose mission statement begins — *We believe in second chances ...*



What do you believe in — deeply, passionately, and at the very bedrock level of your life? Do you believe every child deserves a chance to succeed in school and in life? Do you believe every neighbor needs safe shelter and an opportunity for employment? Do you believe that there is food enough for everyone? That peace matters? That justice is a faith concern?

We will be listening to hundreds of persons in this planning process. Church leaders and community activists, program participants and Board members, elected officials and partner organizations will all be invited to respond to questions to help our Board refine our mission for this time and place. As a reader of *Faith Works*, there will be opportunities for you to comment, to share your own bedrock commitments.

You can follow our progress on WWW.SPACC.ORG. There you'll find updates and progress reports, along with questions for reflection. But before you go to the website to see what others are saying, take some time to reflect on your own deep commitments. What do you believe in enough that it shows in all you do?

PASTOR PATRICIA LULL
Executive Director

“What do you believe in — deeply, passionately, and at the very bedrock level of your life?”

* The faith-based, social service is [LUTHERAN METROPOLITAN MINISTRY](http://WWW.LUTHERANMETROPOLITANMINISTRY.ORG).



FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GIVE

Saint Paul Area Council of Churches
1671 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105
www.SPACC.org

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consider planned giving

Do you care about the ministry of the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches? Is it important to you that our works enrich others long after your death? To ensure they remain strong and effective and have lasting impacts on future generations, please consider including the Council in your will.

Visit WWW.SPACC.ORG/DONATE for more information.

become a member congregation

HOW

- » Gather one or more congregational volunteers as delegates to the Council
- » Foster congregational involvement in Council projects and programs
- » Invest a donation of \$100

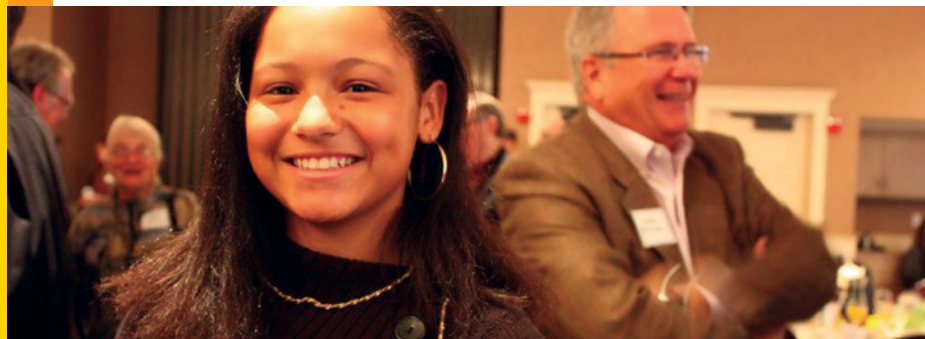
CONTACT

Renita Picotte at 651-789-3840

other ways to help ...

- » Volunteer
- » Organize a drive for Project Home supplies. Right now, toothbrushes, new underclothes and pajamas for children of all ages and their parents are needed

Visit WWW.SPACC.ORG for information and more ideas.



▲ **SHELBY RICHARDSON**, one of last year's stellar speakers.

BE A TABLE CAPTAIN FOR BRINGING FAITH TO LIFE!

DS (DANCERS STUDIO) EVENT CENTER

415 Pascal Street North, St. Paul
Thursday, October 25, 7:30-8:30am

Recruiting is in full swing for the Council's Bringing Faith to Life Fundraising Breakfast. Please note that we will be at a new venue for this event — the DS Event Center in St. Paul.

We have room for nine more tables. If you believe in connecting congregations for service and justice and would like to be your congregation's ambassador for this important event, please contact Connie Johnson today at (651) 789-3857 or at CJOHNSON@SPACC.ORG.