



Update

Winter 2009 Published by Community for Education Foundation

Achievement Awards 2008 – Another Great Success!

On November 12, 2008, Overcoming Obstacles hosted its 14th annual Achievement Awards gala in the historic Toy Building at Cipriani 23rd Street in New York City. Through the generosity of longtime donors as well as new supporters, the fundraising efforts ensured that additional students across the country will be taught Overcoming Obstacles' life skills curriculum.

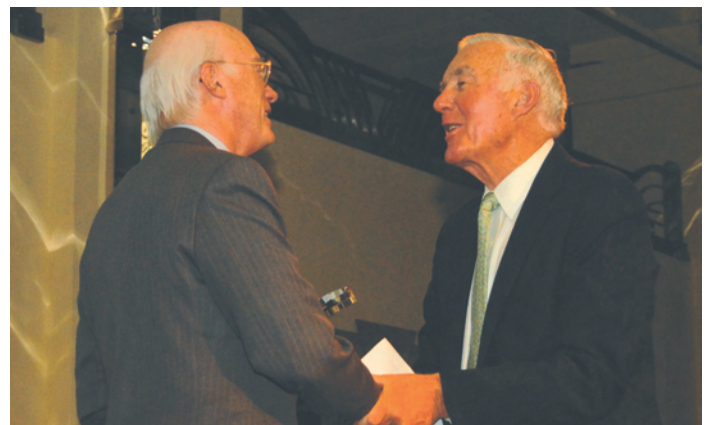
Fox 5 News anchor Rick Folbaum served as Master of Ceremonies for the fourth consecutive year. Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to Daniel L. Doctoroff

and John S. Dyson for their contributions to the fields of business, public service, and philanthropy. The Fall 2008 Update featured these two remarkable honorees and their achievements.

In this Update, we are proud to feature the student honorees, Mary Wright and Samy LaGuerre. Their awards celebrate the success and leadership they have demonstrated while participating in the Overcoming Obstacles program and which they continue to show in their daily lives.



John Chalsty (R), Chairman of Muirfield Capital Management and Overcoming Obstacles board member, presents Dan Doctoroff (L), President of Bloomberg LP, with a 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award.



John Chalsty (R), himself a Lifetime Achievement honoree, presents John Dyson (L), Chairman of Millbrook Capital Management, with a 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Thank you, donors! Here's what your support helps us achieve:

- Middle School 2 in Brooklyn has been removed from the No Child Left Behind list of "Persistently Dangerous Schools" due, in part, to its use of the Overcoming Obstacles program to improve the school environment.
- Kansas City Missouri Public Schools uses Overcoming Obstacles in a district-wide advisory period to help students develop communication, decision making, and goal setting skills.
- Intermediate School 232 in Brooklyn implemented the Overcoming Obstacles program as a service learning initiative, using customized curriculum materials and teacher training workshops to teach students responsible citizenship.
- New York City Public Schools continues to expand the Overcoming Obstacles program, broadening its reach to more students and bolstering student achievement.
- The Integrated Service Center of Staten Island renewed its partnership with Overcoming Obstacles to offer life skills instruction to at-risk students including those who reside in temporary housing.
- The Overcoming Obstacles program is in many new locations including Afton, Wyoming; Cleveland, Georgia; Greensboro, North Carolina; Plymouth, Massachusetts; Lewisburg, West Virginia; and St. Thomas in the US Virgin Islands.

Meet our Student Honorees

Our 2008 student honorees, Samy LaGuerre and Mary Wright, were nominated by their school administrators as exemplars of the Overcoming Obstacles program. From their applications and essays describing their experiences with the curriculum, it was clear that both students have accomplished a great deal by transferring the life skills lessons they learned in the classroom to their academic and social lives.



Left to Right: Rick Folbaum, Master of Ceremonies; Samy LaGuerre, 2008 Student Honoree; Rosalie Rothenstein, Public School 109 Guidance Counselor.



Left to Right: Andrea Lack, American Heart Association Vice President; Mary Wright, 2008 Student Honoree; Jill Chalsty, Founder of Overcoming Obstacles; and Helaine Baruch, American Heart Association Senior Vice President.

Samy LaGuerre A Leader Among Peers

Samy LaGuerre, an eighth grade student at Public School 109 in Brooklyn, was introduced to Overcoming Obstacles in 2007 as part of the Buddy Mentoring program, which trains seventh and eighth grade students to facilitate lessons about communication, decision making, and goal setting skills for younger students.

Samy was chosen to receive the 2008 Student Achievement Award for displaying maturity and insight while helping his peers grasp the concepts taught through the Overcoming Obstacles program. During his acceptance speech, Samy spoke about the importance of respect and friendship in his life and how he was able to practice teamwork and conflict resolution skills through the Overcoming Obstacles curriculum. He is the first middle school student to be awarded the Jack L. Siegal Memorial Scholarship, given to one student honoree each year.

The Overcoming Obstacles staff extends its deepest gratitude to the 2008 Achievement Awards dinner co-chairs for their support in making the event a success: John S. Chalsty, Muirfield Capital Management; Peter T. Grauer, Bloomberg, LP; Catherine R. Kinney, NYSE Euronext; John W. Rowe, M.D., Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University; Geoffrey Stern, Muirfield Capital Management; and Stuart Subotnick, Metromedia Company.

Mary Wright An Awardee with Heart

This year we are thrilled to announce a new partnership with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association that awards scholarships to student Achievement Award winners who are interested in careers in science and medicine.

Mary Wright, the first recipient of this scholarship, is a senior at Sheepshead Bay High School in Brooklyn and was selected for her tenacious pursuit of a career in medicine as a cardiothoracic surgeon. A proactive, independent, and intelligent young woman, Mary personifies the Overcoming Obstacles program not only in her actions but while using the skills she learned to meet the challenges of her difficult living situation.

As a student in temporary housing, Mary faces many hardships and must constantly work to cope with the instability that characterizes her life. Using her sharp mind, unwavering motivation to succeed, and support from the Overcoming Obstacles program, Mary is able to focus on her goals and map out ways to achieve them. In her speech, she spoke about her strategies to overcome obstacles, as well as the value of the scholarship to her while she pursues a degree in medicine.

Our Mission: To ensure that all young people learn the communication, decision making, and goal setting skills they need to be successful in life.



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