

# CEPA GALLERY PRESENTS



## B U F F A L O

Portrait of a City

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- (LEFT TO RIGHT) F2 Masten neighbor. Photo by Shanon Grable, age 10
- F3 Beecher club members. Photo by Renee Cascia
- F4 Kassandra Willis & Brianna Kimble. Photo by India Habeeb, age 10
- F5 Jasmine Foster, age 7. Photo by Crystal Tinch
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## BUFFALO Portrait of a City

On July 8, 1998, armed with cameras and tape-recorders, members of the Beecher and Masten Chapters of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo, with the assistance of five mentors, began to gather the oral and visual histories of the people in their neighborhoods. *Buffalo: Portrait of a City* is the culmination of a six week Youth Mentoring Program with the Buffalo Boys & Girls Clubs and CEPA (Center for Exploratory and Perceptual Art) Gallery. The goal of this collaboration was to provide an opportunity for students to become educated about their neighborhoods and to meet new people by conducting interviews and photographing what they saw.

Often the world is too busy to notice the positive things that come out of our inner-city communities because we are bombarded with negative images presented by the media. CEPA and the Boys & Girls Clubs wanted to offer a fun and educational way for club

members to meet people in their neighborhoods, while learning and documenting the rich history of Buffalo.

The object of approaching people for interviews was for students to understand that everyone has a story to share; and you'll never get to know a person's history, beliefs, or opinions until you ask. The members of the Beecher Club, located on Tenth Street, collected data on the West Side, and the Masten Club members, located on Northland Avenue, gathered information on the East Side.

Participants of the club, ages 6 - 17, were challenged to develop several open-ended questions to ask in order to obtain interviews from people in their community. When looking for potential interviewees the "young journalists" had to introduce themselves, say what club they represented, and explain the project. When considering neighbors for photographs, the "young

photographers" had to ask for permission. This process taught the young journalists and photographers the importance of speaking clearly, being polite, and listening to others.

The neighbors were asked questions about their goals and hopes for the future, and questions about serious issues such as drugs and crime, which run rampant on our streets. At times the "journalists" asked personal questions, like "Are you married?" and, "Do you have any kids?" Their neighbors almost always responded with an answer and a smile.

The club members eagerly approached people on the street, often running to see who could get the first interview. One afternoon, their enthusiasm helped them get seventeen interviews. They interviewed people of all ages, racial backgrounds, and walks of life; including business men and women, college students, a man who was ad-

# PROJECT OVERVIEW



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dicted to drugs, an HIV/AIDS educator, a pharmacist, and a professional boxer who had met Muhammad Ali.

Neighbors spoke truthfully and candidly about their experiences living in Buffalo. One impressive response was from Sandy, a neighbor we met on the West Side. When asked, "If there was anything you could do to change your neighborhood what would it be?"

Her response, "I would probably focus more on children's education, and remind the parents that the kids of today are tomorrow's future. Parents need to encourage their children to keep going to school, no matter how hard it gets. They need to forget about the problems at home and to keep moving ahead."

After the interviewing component of the project was completed, the "journalists and photographers" came to CEPA's new darkroom where they learned how to enlarge the photographs they had taken. They used the computer facility at CEPA, to learn how to place images into a writing assignment about their most memorable interview.

Two murals were painted by the club members, with help from the staff of the Boys & Girls Clubs and CEPA, on the outside of the Masten Club, and on the inside of the Beecher Club. The murals were designed from the students' photographs, and will serve as a reminder in years to come of the hard-work that made this community experience possible.

The students began to realize as they progressed through the six week project that we often over-look the people in our neighborhoods who are making changes and doing positive things for the community. Too many times we look to athletes and entertainers to serve as our heroes and role-models, yet there are many people right here in our own backyards who go unrecognized.

Two thousand images and one hundred interviews later, I am proud of the sixty-three "journalists and photographers" of the Beecher and Masten Chapters of the Boys & Girls Clubs who have captured the essence of their neighborhoods in our inner city communitites. *Buffalo: Portrait of a City* represents a selection of the club

member's work. I am overjoyed with the final outcome of this journal, and am elated by the club members who eagerly collected interviews and took photographs.

*Buffalo: Portrait of a City* will remind everyone involved of the dedication that was made in preserving the history of two Buffalo neighborhoods. We would like to thank the neighbors who took a moment of their time to be interviewed and photographed.

— Crystal Tinch

*Crystal Tinch has been with CEPA since January 1998 where she acts as Mentor Coordinator and Teacher for CEPA's Youth Mentoring Education Programs. A graduate of Fredonia State College, Crystal is also employed by the Buffalo Public Schools and is an active participant in many youth oriented volunteer programs.*

*"Buffalo: Portrait of a City" was made possible through Mayor Anthony M. Masiello's 1998 Neighborhood Matching Fund.*

Contact CEPA to schedule a program tailored to meet your group's needs.

# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS PARTICIPANTS



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## Beecher Boys & Girls

Jackline Acevedo  
 Ronnie Billingsley  
 Kyle Cantrell  
 Edgardo Collazo  
 Christinia Conway  
 Jessica Conway  
 Joshua Conway  
 Mercedes Donaldson  
 Joanie Felix  
 Johanna Garcia  
 Sergio Garcia  
 Melina Garcia

Lexa Gill  
 Jennifer Harris  
 Mary Elizabeth Harris  
 Stephanie Harris  
 Shalonda Hill  
 Duane King  
 Jahyra Luciano  
 Benjamin Medina  
 Sarah Medina  
 Carlos Melendez  
 Edwin Melendez  
 Luis Melendez

Magali Mercado  
 Carlos Maldonado  
 Javier Maldonado  
 Yakira "Kitty" Moreno  
 Darlene Pabon  
 Hector Pabon  
 Edwin Rivera, Jr.  
 Giovanni Rivera  
 Javier Rivera  
 Robert Sanabria  
 Gina Santiago  
 Natasha Vazquez

## Masten Boys & Girls

Mark Adams  
 Sean Adamson  
 Latonya Anthony  
 Louturia Brace  
 Kenneth Brown  
 Angel Cotton  
 Taylor Croskery  
 Antonio Egleton  
 Jasmine Foster  
 Shanon Grable

India Habeeb  
 Damario Hunt  
 Cleveland Jones  
 Takiea Jones  
 Taminka Jones  
 Kristina Kelly  
 Stephanie Lee  
 Jamieson Lococo  
 Kira Lococo  
 Britney McClain

Nikki Minter  
 Shivell Pierce  
 Lola Rowe  
 Celena Taylor  
 Eugene Taylor  
 Lamar Trueheart  
 Delisa Warren  
 Tanika Williams  
 Yolanda Woods

# PROJECT PARTICIPANTS



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## George K. Arthur #14

When I woke up this morning I said to myself, "This is going to be a great day!" I was spending the afternoon with youngsters from the Buffalo Boys & Girls Clubs talking with and taking pictures of people in their communities.

I arrived at the Beecher Boys & Girls Club as the youngsters were receiving their daily instructions from Crystal Tinch (CEPA staff) and Jennifer Tomczak (Boys & Girls staff), and ready to go out and get interviews. The youngsters were off and running, filled with energy, enthusiasm and talk.

Their excitement rubbed off on everyone they met, and every adult they approached answered them with a smile and a "yes." People who had never been asked to have their picture taken, or for an interview, were asked by a group of children armed with cameras and grins as wide as the world. How could anyone refuse?

The real lesson I saw the youngsters learning is that each person is valu-

able and worthy of respect. They addressed adults as Mr. and Mrs., and asked, "May I take your picture?", and then said, "Thank you." They treated each person with respect and discovered that respect given to others gains respect for one's self.

I can't wait for the day when I will be able to watch the faces of the youngsters who look through this journal for the first time. I'm sure I will find pride and pleasure in their expressions as they first see their pictures and interviews in print.

The goodwill that was established between youngsters and not-so-youngsters was a joy to watch. Perhaps their direct approach would not have won Emily Post's approval; but everyone loved it, and that's what counts.

— George K. Arthur

*George K. Arthur, retired Common Council President and CEPA Board President, accompanied the Club members one August afternoon taking photographs and talking with community neighbors. He talked with*

*the students about his career in politics and how Buffalo has changed throughout the 60 years he has been living here.*

## Boys & Girls Clubs

Jennifer Tomczak  
*Fine Arts Director*

## CEPA Mentors

Renee Cascia  
Kianga Kearney  
Ramona Thomas-Reynolds  
Orniece Hill  
Rhona Vogt

## CEPA Participants

John Valentino  
*Education Curator*  
Crystal Tinch  
*Project Coordinator*  
Rachel Smith  
*Teacher/Volunteer/Mentor*  
Shana Weinstein  
*Volunteer*  
George K. Arthur  
*CEPA Board President*  
Roscoe C. Henderson III  
*CEPA Board Member*

*For editorial assistance, thanks to Cynthia Maxwell, Elementary School Teacher and Poet.*

# MASTEN & BEECHER CLUB MURALS



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## Boys & Girls Club

The Boys Clubs of Buffalo, was established in 1926 by the Rotary Club of Buffalo. The Rotary's intent was to create a youth agency which would provide after school programs and guidance to the juvenile delinquent problems of the year. In 1982 the Board recognized the need to include girls, and reincorporated it as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo. Presently, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo has six clubhouses located throughout the inner city.

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs is to provide appropriate and diversified programs and activities that serve to attract and hold area youth to the clubhouse. The Boys & Girls Clubs serve over 3,000 children,

ages 6 - 18, six days a week; and the goal is to promote personal and educational development, cultural enrichment, social recreation, health and physical education, citizenship and leadership development, and outdoor and environmental education. To further enhance the programs of the Boys & Girls Clubs, collaborations and/or partnerships have been formed with local agencies.

— Diane L. Rowe

*Diane L. Rowe is the Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo, Inc.*

## Jennifer Tomczak

Jennifer Tomczak, Fine Arts Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo, went into the neighborhoods with the club

members, transported them to CEPA, and designed the murals from the club members' photographs. Anxious to paint, the club members worked diligently with help from the staff of the Boys & Girls Clubs and CEPA, until the walls were covered. The murals, one inside the John F. Beecher Club, and one outside the Masten Club, will serve as a reminder in years to come of the hardwork that made this community experience possible.

The John F. Beecher Club is located at 180 Tenth Street in the Ellicott District.

The Masten Club is at 397 Northland Avenue in the Masten District.



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# MASTEN & BEECHER CLUB MURALS



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Here is a selection of essays written by some of the Boys & Girls Club Members:

## Jamieson Lococo

My name is Jamieson Lococo. I'm from the Masten Boys and Girls Club. I'm 12 years old. I just moved on Florida Street, it's ok. I like CEPA Gallery. They helped me to get to know people.

## Robert Sanabria

My name is Robert Sanabria. I live on Prospect Avenue. My street is not that dangerous, but the good part is that I have my friends that live near my house.

## Taylor Croskery

My name is Taylor Croskery, and I am 11 years old. I am from the Masten Boys & Girls Club. I really liked working with the cameras and developing my own pictures. I like playing basketball at the club. I play for the Masten Suns. We are 4 and 1, and we came in second place in the playoffs.

## Gabriel DelValle

My name is Gabriel DelValle, I was a Summer Youth employee at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo. I took pictures and interviewed people in the community. I thought Buffalo was very small until I became involved with the photography project.

## Britney McClain

My name is Britney McClain, and I am 11 years old. My club has been seeing a group called CEPA, a photographic club. I learned how to interview people in the city of Buffalo and take pictures of them. I also learned how to develop pictures in the dark-room. Everyone that I interviewed said something positive about Buffalo and their neighborhood.

## Angel Cotton

I learned how to talk to people and I liked taking pictures and interviewing them. Everyone I interviewed said something positive about their neighborhood and their community. I liked working with the people from CEPA.



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# FROM THE MASTEN DISTRICT



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## Masten District

The Masten District, which spans from Canisius College to American Axle, and Central Park Plaza to Martin Luther King Park, is normally referred to as the “East Side.” However, the Masten District is not the East Side of the city of Buffalo; rather the central part of the city. This is why the redevelopment and growth of the Masten District is so important to the progress of the city of Buffalo.

Years ago, the Masten District had numerous commercial strips, the most popular being Jefferson Avenue, and many manufacturing plants. African Americans moved into the district via the south (Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina) for labor positions. As the manufacturing plants closed, work dried up. Those who once labored in the plants were not cross trained for other work and were forced into either early retirement or unemployment. This did not only happen in the Masten District, but throughout Buffalo and Western New York. Now, Buffalo is

on its way back up, and Masten is playing an integral part in this renaissance.

The Masten District is on the move. People can see a marked improvement in the delivery of the city services and the overall perception of the district. Masten is better and people are feeling more optimistic about our future.

One area where Masten leads the pack is in the youth population. Twenty-two percent of the district is in primary, elementary or secondary high school. Due to this, the Masten District has several youth services and facilities to accommodate our growing youth population. Programs like CEPA’s are so important to our district because our youth need outlets other than sports to display their talents and to express themselves. CEPA has provided this opportunity through *Buffalo: Portrait of a City*.

We believe that a positive attitude is contagious. Come and visit the Masten District to see our progress.

— Byron W. Brown  
Masten District Councilmember

Masten Boys & Girls Club members interview their Masten District neighbors.

## Don Garner #26

On July 29th, Celena Taylor age 10, met Don Garner on his porch on Humboldt Avenue in the Masten District. During her conversation she learned that Mr. Garner was a professional boxer and had met Muhammad Ali!

Q: How long have you lived here in Buffalo?

A: Since 1941.

Q: What was it like in 1941?

A: Well there used to be a lot of work here, and you could walk the streets and it was safe then.

Q: What school did you used to go to?

A: I went to Hutch Tech High School.

Q: Do you like Buffalo?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there more violence now?

A: Well yes, there’s more violence now then there was then. You didn’t have kids going to school carrying guns. And the drug problem wasn’t as bad

# FROM THE MASTEN DISTRICT



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as it is now. We did have drugs, but not on a scale that we have it now.

Q: If there was something about Buffalo you could change what would it be?

A: Have the black folks go out and vote — elect a black mayor, but that would be up to you guys to do because it doesn't look like it's gonna happen otherwise. You all are gonna have to change that, you guys are the future.

Q: Did you work?

A: Yes, I was a professional boxer.

Q: Did you like professional boxing?

A: Oh yes, I made my living doing that.

Q: Do you know Muhammad Ali?

A: Yes, I met him a couple of times.

Q: What was the greatest match you had?

A: I fought Jimmie Bivins back in 1940. He was the Champ but I lost to him in Cleveland.

Q: How many rounds did you go?

A: Nine rounds.

**Trenton Peyton #27**

"I've been living here for 36 years... right here (referring to his house). I went to West Hertel, School 74 and

Riverside. I like Buffalo a lot, but I'd like to change the streets because they're not the same. I grew up at the Boys Club. I was into all the sports over there — table tennis, boxing, pool. I work at Nazareth nursing home, I'm a certified nursing assistant."

*Peyton's photograph was included in the mural that was painted on the Masten Boys and Girls Club.*

**Mrs. Foster #28**

Mrs. Foster was the first neighbor the students approached for an interview. Mark Adams, age 17 interviews Mrs. Foster.

Q: Miss, what's your name?

A: Foster.

Q: Are you from Buffalo?

A: Yes. I lived here all my life. I lived in this house for 32 years. I worked 28 years at Trico downtown, and I retired in December of 1991. I'm a widow, I have three grown children, two boys and a girl. They all live in Buffalo.

Q: What school did you go to?

A: I graduated from Angola High

School, that's out in the suburbs, going towards Silver Creek. I've been here a long time — I know everybody. I know all of the kids, just about a lot of them are grown men and women now. Some of them are still around, and some of them I see periodically.

**Dwight Cook #29**

"I was born in New York City and I have lived in Buffalo for 18 years. I went to Bennett High School. I like this neighborhood in the Masten District. I don't know what I would change about Buffalo, probably the weather. I used to go to the Boys & Girls Club when I was a shorty."

**John Oshei #30**

John Oshei, Director of Purchasing at Fibron Wood Products, was eager to talk with the club members about Fibron Wood Products, a business located on Florida Street in the Masten District.

"We make wood handles for the cutlery trade, along with sink and plumb-

# FROM THE MASTEN DISTRICT



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ing handles. We make pool cues, and almost anything for the industry that would need a wooden handle. We've been in business here since the end of the second World War. This is our third location, and we have a very nice operating relationship with our union which is the United Auto Workers Local 55. They are a very cooperative group and for over 30 years, we've had relations with that group to keep our factory going."

## Sean Thompson #32

Taylor Croskery, age 11 & Jamieson Lococo, age 12 interview Sean Thompson.

Q: How long have you been living in Buffalo?

A: Primarily, the majority of my life. I left for about 5 years and then I came back.

Q: How long have you been a barber?

A: I've been a barber professionally for nine years. I learned how to cut hair in college and in my junior year I was working in a barber shop. And then I moved back here and I've been working in Mr. Jay's since 1995.

Q: Do you enjoy this job?

A: Yes, at times. I can set my own hours, I feel very blessed that I have customers, so primarily when I am at work I have work and I enjoy dealing with the public. What I don't like about the job is I don't like to stand, and sometimes my days tend to be very long. And sometimes when I cut someone's hair, especially since the summer has been very warm, it's been very uncomfortable.

Q: How long has Mr. Jay's been here?

A: I believe Mr. Jay's has been in existence since the late 80's around 1989.

Q: Do you have another job?

A: Yes. Yes sir. When I was about... how old are you sir?

Taylor: Eleven.

A: When I was 11 I had a paper route. I worked that for awhile, then I worked for the city during the summer time and I had a Mayor's Summer Youth job, and then when I was in college I cut hair in the dorms, then I went to summer school for a year in Houston, Texas. I worked in Texas as a waiter, and I've been cutting hair ever since.

Q: Did you ever go to the Masten Boys

& Girls Club?

A: Yeah, of course!

Q: What did you do there?

A: We used to go on little field trips, and recreation, basketball, soccer, football. Pretty much probably what you guys are doing now.

*Mr. Jay's Hair Design is located on East Delavan Avenue.*

## Jane Harris #33

Q: How long have you been working as a hair dresser?

A: As a hair dresser professionally for four years, and here at this establishment for about four months.

Q: Did you have a job before this that you enjoyed?

A: I basically have been doing hair professionally in shops. Formerly I worked on Fillmore.

Q: Is there something on this street you would change?

A: I would get the dope pushers off the streets. It puts a damper on our spirits.

Q: Where you originally born in Buffalo?

A: Yes! Born and raised.

# FROM THE MASTEN DISTRICT



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Q: What high-school and college did you go to?

A: I went to Hutch-Tech High School, I attended UB but I didn't graduate, and I went to Continental School of Beauty.

*Jane Harris is the owner of Blessed Hair-Itage located at 291 East Delavan Avenue.*

Jean #34

Q: What's your name?

A: My name is Jean.

Q: How long have you lived in Buffalo?

A: Since 1969.

Q: Do you like it up here?

A: Yes.

Q: What are some of the things you have done here?

A: Buying my home, living with my family. My family is here — I have four grandkids. My son used to belong to the Boys club.

Q: If there's something in Buffalo you could change what would it be?

A: The streets and how they're made, bottom line — fix Buffalo streets and improve Buffalo housing.

Q: Where did you work?

A: Trico products.

Q: How long did you work there?

A: 28 years.

Vanessa Wiggins #35

"I grew up in Buffalo and haven't lived anywhere else. I have 3 daughters. I went to School 74, and Bennett High School. I've been into nursing for 6 years. I used to go to the Boys & Girls Club when I was younger. We used to make ceramics, and we even had discos on Saturdays. My two brothers used to box at the Club."

*Vanessa Wiggins was interviewed (on the porch of her mother's home) located on Lark Street.*

Natalie Solop #36

Q: How long have you been working here? (*Niagara Lutheran Home and Rehab Center*)

A: I've been working here 27 years, and I've seen a lot of changes. A lot of additions and changes in staff, and changes in our residents.

Q: Do you like your job?

A: I love my job! It's very versatile, I don't just sit at my desk, I go up and down the stairs and up and down the halls. I do a lot of paperwork. I absolutely love my job.

Q: What high-school did you go to?

A: I went to Sweet Home High School in Amherst, NY. I went to Bryant & Stratton Business School. Before I worked here, I worked for a psychiatrist, which got me into the health care field.

Q: If there was anything in the world you could change what would it be?

A: To end pain and suffering. Sometimes our residents are in a lot of pain. I would love to change that.

Q: Do you like helping the elderly out?

A: I do because if we don't help them, sometimes they can't do it themselves. So we have to find that kindness inside of us as a human service. I could work somewhere else and make the same money, but I choose to stay here and help.

*Niagara Lutheran Home and Rehab Center, established in 1955, is located at 64 Hager Street.*

# FROM THE ELLICOTT DISTRICT



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## Ellicott District

The Ellicott District makes up Buffalo's Lower West Side. With a population of about 13,000, it stretches from the Peace Bridge gateway, along the Niagara Street business district, almost all the way to City Hall. The District is an historic "zone of emergence" where successive generations of immigrants have arrived, become established, and often, moved up and out. Focusing attention toward the redevelopment of the area, the City of Buffalo has begun a comprehensive effort to build new housing, rehabilitate existing homes, and improve the neighborhood environment.

Beecher Boys & Girls Club members interview their Ellicott District neighbors.

### Hoang #38

- Q: How long have you lived here in Buffalo?  
 A: 13 years.  
 Q: Where are you from?

- A: Originally, from Vietnam.  
 Q: How long have you been in the states?  
 A: 16 years.  
 Q: Do your parents live here?  
 A: Yes.  
 Q: Any brothers or sisters?  
 A: Yes, I have two sisters, one older one younger. The older one lives in Connecticut and the younger one lives with me.  
 Q: How do you like it in the United States?  
 A: I've been here all my life. I really don't know anything about my background.  
 Q: How do you like Buffalo?  
 A: I've grown up here, I've gotten used to it. I'm going to college in August.  
 Q: Do you live here on the West Side?  
 A: Yes. I live a couple blocks away.  
 Q: Where did you go to school?  
 A: City Honors.  
 Q: What school will you be attending in the fall?  
 A: Geneseo.  
 Q: What program are you with?  
 A: We're with TOPS. We're promoting Kids Festival. We have different

activities for the kids. Each year we take time to give to the kids, to give back to the community.

### Barry #39

- Q: How long have you lived in Buffalo?  
 A: For 11 years.  
 Q: Do you have a wife?  
 A: No, I'm not married.  
 Q: What do you like about Buffalo?  
 A: All of the good people.

### Mark #40

- Q: How do you like this community?  
 A: I love it.  
 Q: Why?  
 A: I think it has real character. It's obviously very ethnic — a lot of Hispanic folk, lots of people that look like me and lots that look like you.  
 Q: What don't you like about the community?  
 A: I guess all the empty buildings in the area. It's too bad to see so many buildings that aren't being used, on Niagara Street and even on some of

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the side streets.

Q: Would you like to change the drug population here?

A: Well, sure, I don't think anything good has ever happened to someone that has used drugs or alcohol.

Q: If you were to change anything as a U.S. citizen, what would you do?

A: Education. I'd ask people to read more books, learn, open their minds, meet more people. Talk to young people like you on the street. Learn!

Jose #41

"I was born in Italy, and came here when I was only 9 years, you do the math. I'm 89 so I've been here 80 years. I love Buffalo, I do. When we landed from Italy, we landed at 62 Main Street. I still remember it — it was a big building, and we only lived in 2 rooms. And now we got the front room, the dining room, the kitchen, the bedrooms and everything. And we got along just as good. People gave birth in the house, we had a mid-wife. I had a mid-wife for 5 children. I have 6 children, but I lost my daughter

when she was 68 years old. My oldest son is 70. I had one girl. I've lived in this house for 50 years. I raised all my kids there. I love my neighbors, nobody bothers us."

Jose Sanchez #42

"I've been living in Buffalo since 1954, that makes it about 44 years. I've been working for the Metro Rail for almost 19 years. Buffalo has a very good transportation system. In a couple years they'll have what is called a hub-link system, where people will be able to get out to the suburbs much easier than now. It will help people get to the suburbs to find jobs."

Jose Perez #43

Q: How do you like this community?

A: I love it.

Q: Why do you love it?

A: Because there's a big population of my race over here.

Q: What race are you?

A: Puerto Rican.

Q: What don't you like?

A: There's nothing I don't like about the West Side.

Q: If there was one thing you could change, what would that be?

A: More businesses.

Santa #44

Joanie Feliz, age 7 interviews Santa.

Q: Have you lived here for a long time in Buffalo?

A: No about 1 year.

Q: Do you have any kids?

A: No.

Q: A husband?

A: No.

Q: What do you like about Buffalo.

A: A lot of little things.

Q: Do you work?

A: I used to...I was a hair dresser.

Q: You're the woman who used to do my hair when I was a baby! I remember.

JR #45

Q: How long have you been in Buffalo?

# FROM THE ELLICOTT DISTRICT



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A: I've been here eight years.

Q: Do you like it?

A: Somewhat. I'm originally from Brooklyn, NY. You could say I do. I have a lot of gratitude living in Buffalo.

Q: Do you have any accomplishments here in Buffalo?

A: Well, the accomplishment right now that we're doing is trying to bring this message out to the street. We work with the Clean Initiative Program on HIV and AIDS and what we do is teach outreach. Today we're targeting the adolescents. What we do is take the message anywhere — institutions, hospitals. We have a large population on the Lower West Side that is infected with HIV and AIDS. That's my goal — to help somebody. If I can get at least one person out of twenty here to listen to me and understand that there's a virus out here, and it's killing them, and that there's no known cure, and that once you get it, you die, well, that's an accomplishment to me.

Q: Are you saying that if there were

one thing you could change about Buffalo, it would be that?

A: Not only that, because we also bring out bleach kits and we give them to drug users to clean their syringes. What I would like to do is stop the spread of drugs and HIV. It's not just HIV itself. We have a drug problem too. What they do is both combine together. What happens is that drug users keep spreading the disease through needles. And perhaps to educate the youth a little bit more.

Q: What are bleach kits?

A: In a bleach kit you get a little container of bleach and these little pads that have alcohol so that they can have some type of cleanliness when they use other people's syringes. There is some information inside a bag about how to use these things, and that's a bleach kit.

Q: Do you pass out needles?

A: No, no. We have a needle exchange program in Columbus Hospital. And if people pick up clean syringes and bring in old ones, it's a way of stopping the spread. It's working out, because the addicts are going in there.

Juan #47

During several trips into the community, the students met business owners including Juan, who is the owner of J T's Inner City Sportsware.

Q: What is your name?

A: My name is Juan but everybody calls me "Pupa."

Q: What is the name of your store?

A: The name of the store is J T's Inner City Sportsware.

Q: How long have you lived in Buffalo?

A: Five years or so. We have come and gone but we have always touched base here in Buffalo. We came back here in the late sixties. It has changed big time. When I was younger I used to leave my bike out in the front lawn without it being swiped and its not like that anymore.

Q: How long has your store been here?

A: Well, we've been here for 18 months, no 16. We opened up in March of 1997. So it's a little over a year.

Q: If there is something about Buffalo you would like to change what

# FROM THE ELLICOTT DISTRICT



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would it be?

A: Wow that's a good question, I would eliminate the politicians. They've drained this city. All they've thought about is the developer and the big corporations they don't care about the smaller businesses. They say they do but it is all a bunch of blah, blah, blah.

*JT's Inner City Sportsware is located at 273 Maryland Street.*

Jesse #46

"I go out preaching the word of God to the young people. You know, there is hope in Jesus Christ. He has given me eternal life, and that's what he wants to give each and every one of you. God bless you."

Eric #48

"I've been in Buffalo since 1988. I work at Hispanics United, I'm a Case Manager for the developmentally disabled. I help people who have problems, who are mentally retarded or who have some physical disabilities.

I help them get what they need."

*Hispanics United of Buffalo Senior Community and Housing Services is located at 254 Virginia Street.*

Henry #49

"I love the community and the people that live around here, not because they're Hispanic, but I can see that everybody gets along with everybody. The only thing that we have to change is for the young people so they can have stuff to do during the summer, not hanging out at the corners. I'm married and I have kids that are teenagers. I think you gotta make more parks or do some activities for the young people, teenagers that are coming up now, and with this I'd like to thank you."

Carol Belcer #50

Q: What is your name?

A: Carol Belcer.

Q: Where do you live?

A: On Cottage Street here in Buffalo.

Q: How long have you lived here?

A: For 23 years.

Q: Where were you originally born?

A: On the East Side in Lovejoy. I came here 23 years ago. I love it. People are friendly and nice. We get a lot of bad publicity but it is not true. Everybody who lives in the community always stands by each other. Like I said, a lot of people from the outskirts of suburban areas downgrade us and it is not true. We have no problems here. I raised two kids who both graduated from high school and they are working now. I want to move to Pittsburgh because I can't seem to find that many jobs around here. Jobs are very hard to find. I am a college graduate and I still can't find a job. It's really hard. It's a lot about who knows who.

Q: What would you change about Buffalo?

A: I would change the politicians. The streets have been like this for years, since I have been here. You can go over to that street and it would be all paved beautiful. Why because people from the outskirts come here for the council. I can respect that but people live here, we live here every single day. I think we should have our street paved.

# FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD



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## Roscoe C. Henderson III

Throughout my travels across the United States, what has become very apparent to me is that access provides opportunities.

Access to love, education and art allow people to develop. I have a strong passion for art; and I believe it is a universal language which holds no boundaries. Art enables us to communicate through shared senses: touch, sight and hearing; and the beauty of art is found in individual interpretation.

The art of photography captures a moment of reality and then freezes it. These photographs tell a story of a thousand words reflecting the best of our community—our children.

These youngsters were given access to their communities through art and through their accomplishments we have access to *Buffalo: Portrait of a City*.

From the Neighborhood,  
Roscoe C. Henderson III

*Roscoe C. Henderson III, is a life-long resident of the Ellicott District. He is the*

*Legislative Assistant to the Councilmember Barbara Miller-Williams, and serves on CEPA's Board of Directors.*

## Kevin Horrigan

We have a tremendous asset in the city of Buffalo: neighborhood groups. These groups, block clubs, business associations, non-profit community development and human service providers, are in every neighborhood of our wonderful city. With limited resources, they empower themselves to improve their respective streets, commercial strips, and communities. Although they are the foundation of our neighborhoods, when working alone, they are like loose strands of thread. When working with one another and interwoven with government, they can become the fabric of our community.

In January of 1996, the City of Buffalo created the Mayor's Neighborhood Matching Fund Program. Modeled after a successful program in the City of Seattle, the goal of the program is to take advantage of Buffalo's strongest asset, its people, and provide them with the opportunity to improve their

community. Collaborative efforts that focus on neighborhood planning, improvement, organizing and neighborhood/school partnerships, contribute to this program's success.

In just two years, the program has provided assistance to almost 250 neighborhood based groups. And while the city has provided assistance totaling more than half a million dollars to these organizations, the greatest attribute of this program is derived from the community. Its success is due to the "match" aspect. Community groups must contribute the equivalent of what they are requesting from the city in either cash, in-kind services, and/or volunteer labor.

Who knows what is best for a community than the people who live there? The matching fund program allows people to look at the strengths and weaknesses of their neighborhood and build on them or correct them.

The Mayor's Neighborhood Matching fund program takes advantage of our resources by bringing them together from the bottom up — strengthen-

# FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD



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ing the fabric of our city's neighborhoods.

— Kevin Horrigan  
Mayor Masiello's Neighborhood  
Matching Fund Coordinator

*The "Buffalo: Portrait of a City" journal was funded through the Mayor Masiello's Neighborhood Matching Fund and the generous donations of time and effort by the volunteers who made up our match.*

## CEPA Gallery Day

City of Buffalo  
Executive Chamber  
*Proclamation*  
**CEPA GALLERY**

WHEREAS, a strong successful education system produces a brain trust for this city's future; and

WHEREAS, our children need the support, care, and nurturing of the entire community to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, our school system, the city, and all our partners must strive to reach new heights by enhancing student achievement, stabilizing

school funding, improving the learning environment and producing measurable outcomes; and

WHEREAS, **Businesses in Partnership with Buffalo Public Schools and Buffalo Alliance for Education** has made educating our children a key priority and committed itself to enhancing the depth and breadth of learning experiences available to our students; and

WHEREAS, **Businesses in Partnership with Buffalo Public Schools and Buffalo Alliance for Education** has made these efforts as an advocate for children so they can enjoy a successful career, become productive citizens and realize their dreams; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ANTHONY M. MASIELLO, Mayor of the City of Buffalo, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, October 27, 1998 as

## CEPA GALLERY DAY

in the City of Buffalo and urge all my fellow citizens to recognize and extend my sincere thanks to all those businesses receiving the **Mayor's Partner-**

**ship Awards** today who have chosen to enter into a partnership for progress toward Buffalo's tomorrow by advancing quality education today.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Buffalo to be affixed this 27th day of October, 1998

ANTHONY M. MASIELLO  
MAYOR OF BUFFALO



# CEPA GALLERY



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## CEPA Education Program

While packing for the April 1997 move to its new facility CEPA Gallery staff members got a mini history lesson about the organization. We came across early artist statements of now well known artists, posters of events, and yellowing newsletters. Among the documents examined were photographic slides from 1979. The images were of a group of children taking a photography class at CEPA. This discovery and numerous posters and pamphlets advertising the gallery's different programs provided an opportunity to review the history of CEPA's educational programs. Since

1974 the gallery has pursued its educational mission in many forms, from traditional classes in black-and-white photography to some of the first workshops in digital imaging in the nation.

Today, CEPA conducts educational programs for youth in schools, community centers, and housing projects as well as classes and workshops for adults in our own imaging facility. CEPA's successful youth education initiatives have grown and led to collaborative education programs in schools and community centers across Erie County.

Since its inception CEPA has seen all

of its activities as educational. By implementing projects like *Buffalo: Portrait of a City* the CEPA education program encourages youth involvement in their communities and neighbor-to-neighbor contact. Projects with youth in community centers challenge students to learn outside of a formal classroom setting. Through instruction and exhibits this program gives youth a chance to represent themselves and show others how they see the world and their community. The youth produce documentary projects of their lives and neighborhoods that are exhibited at CEPA Gallery and community sites throughout Western New York. The participants



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# CEPA GALLERY



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become creators of their own visual histories and documentarians of their own life experiences.

In addition to working with youth in community centers, CEPA completes projects with the Buffalo City Schools. Many of these projects concentrate on an intensive study of the working world based on documentary photography and computer illustration. CEPA's educational programs, such as *School to Work*, were designed to teach students about the working world. CEPA introduces students to the workplace and provides them with a creative means of exploring occupations that: 1) provides interdisplinary

connections; 2) introduces students to positive, local, working role models; 3) increases students' test scores by making their studies relevant and enjoyable.

Prior to moving to the Market Arcade Complex in 1997 CEPA conducted photography classes in such places as darkened school locker rooms (the showers are dark and it makes for easy cleanup). We now have a large dark-room, capable of hosting up to twenty four individuals, for use by program students, artists, and community members. CEPA has also created a digital arts classroom with state-of-the-art computers that have the abil-

ity to scan, manipulate and print images to paper or film. Adult classes in photography, digital image manipulation, web design, non linear video, and internet use are offered year round. This facility is located at CEPA's downtown Theatre District site providing easy access for inner-city youth and adult communities. Programs are brought to the local community through numerous collaborations, regional artist projects, and educational programs for inner-city youth.

Contact CEPA to schedule a program tailored to meet your group's needs.



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# CEPA GALLERY



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## Board of Directors

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John Valentino, *Education Curator*

Kathleen Kearnan, *Special Projects*

Michael Bosworth, *Gallery Manager*

Crystal Tinch, *Community Education*

Sue O'Donnell, *Publication Design*

Abigail Matthews, *Intern*

Keri Cavanaugh, *Intern*

## CEPA Hours

Office, Upper Gallery,  
& Underground

Mon - Fri 10am - 5pm

Passageway Gallery

7am - 9pm Daily

## CEPA Gallery

at the Market Arcade

617 Main Street, 2nd floor

Buffalo, NY 14203

Tel: (716) 856-2717

Fax: (716) 856-2720

Email: [cepa@aol.com](mailto:cepa@aol.com)

Website: [cepa.buffnet.net](http://cepa.buffnet.net)

## What is CEPA?

The Center for Exploratory and Perceptual Art (CEPA Gallery) functions as an education and research center for the exploration in the photographic and digital arts. The gallery supports established and emergent visual artists and advocates for traditionally under-represented artists in cultural institutions. Programs include: Exhibitions; Visiting Artist Lectures Series; Youth & Adult Education Programs; Darkroom and Computer Imaging Center; Public Art Programs & Metro Bus Show; Independent Film/Video Screening; *CEPA Journal* and *CEPA Newsletter*. CEPA's scope is international, providing a forum for artists and curators worldwide. CEPA also supports and exhibits the work of artists in the Western New York region. CEPA's programming reaches over 250,000 annually.

## CEPA Funding

CEPA is a not-for-profit arts center founded by Buffalo artists in 1974 as a resource for photographic creation, education, and presentation. This CEPA project is sponsored by the **City of Buffalo Mayor's Neighborhood Matching Fund**. CEPA programs are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), a state agency. Additional funding includes: The National Endowment for the Arts (a Federal Agency); Erie County; City of Buffalo; The Cultural Incentive Funding Program and DEC/CIP, administered by the Arts Council in Buffalo and Erie County; Buffnet; The Campos Group; Buffalo Board of Education; The Gunk Foundation; Cellular One; Marine Midland Bank; and CEPA Members. Contributors to the CEPA Underground Imaging Facility and equipment include: NYSCA Capital Aid Program; City of Buffalo Block Grant Funding; The Buffalo Community Foundation; Chase Manhattan Bank; Hamilton, Houston, & Lownie Architects, PC; Junior League of Buffalo, Inc; Adobe, Inc; Kaufmann Foundation; Margaret L. Wendt Foundation; The Western New York Foundation; Marine Midland Bank; M&T Bank; and numerous equipment donors.



- 31 Fibron Wood employees. Photo by India Habeeb, age 10
  - 32 Sean Thompson, barber at Mr J's, cuts Aubrey Lloyd's hair. Photograph by Loutoria Brace, age 12
  - 33 Jane Harris inside of Blessed Hair-Itage. Photo by Taylor Croskery, age 11
  - 34 Jean, Masten neighbor at her home. Photo by Loutoria Brace, age 12
  - 35 Vanessa Wiggins. Photo by Taylor Croskery, age 11
  - 36 Natalie Solop. Photo by Celena Taylor, age 10
  - 37 Lemon Thomas. Photo by Ramona Thomas-Reynolds
  - 38 Hoang, volunteer with Kids Fest. Photo by Crystal Tinch
  - 39 Ellicott neighbor, Barry. Photo by Carlos Maldonado, age 12
  - 40 Stephaine and Jennifer Harris, and Ramona Thomas-Reynolds interview Mark on Niagara Street. Photo by Yalonda Woods, age 16
  - 41 Fannie and Josie. Photo by George K. Arthur
  - 42 Jose Sanchez. Photo by Javier Rivera, age 15
  - 43 Jose Perez. Photo by Jennifer Harris, age 13
  - 44 Santa talks with Joanie Felix. Photo by Renee Cascia
  - 45 JR, HIV educator talks with club members on Buffalo's West side. Photo by Orniece Hill
  - 46 Jesse. Photo by Yalonda Woods, age 16
  - 47 Juan, owner of JT'S Inner City Sportsware. Photo by Taylor Croskery, age 11
  - 48 Eric, case manager at Hispanics United at Buffalo. Photo by Javier Rivera, age 15
  - 49 Ellicott neighbor Henry. Photo by Orniece Hill
  - 50 Carol Belcer. Photo by Britney McClain, age 11
  - 51 Gabrielle DelValle and Renee Cascia. Photo by Carlos Melendez, age 10
  - 52 Israel Carrion. Photo by India Habeeb, age 10
  - 53 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Carlos Melendez, age 10
  - 54 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Celena Taylor, age 10
  - 55 India Habeeb and Angel Cotton. Photo by Renee Cascia
  - 56 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Celena Taylor, age 10
  - 57 Mail carrier Ray Cunningham. Photo by Taylor Croskery, age 11
  - 58 Shivel Pierce, Jennifer Tomczak, Kenneth Brown. Photo by Tanika Williams, age 8
  - 59 Masten neighbor. Photo by Tamnika Jones, age 11
  - 60 Photo by Edwin Riveria, Jr. age 10
  - 61 Beecher club members participate in Kids Fest on Niagara Street. Photo by Rhona Vogt
  - 62 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Jessica Conway, age 7
  - 63 Jamison Lococo. Photo by Crystal Tinch
  - 64 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Sergio Garcia, age 10
  - 65 Morales Grocery on Buffalo's West Side. Photo by Joanie Felix, age 7
  - 66 Beecher neighbor. Photo by Renee Cascia
  - 67 Masten neighbor. Photo by Nikki Minter, age 13
  - 68 CEPA Gallery's darkroom facility
  - 69 The Market Arcade at 617 Main Street, the location of CEPA Gallery
  - 70 CEPA Gallery's digital imaging facility
- BACK COVER Photo of Hector Pabon's feet taken by Hector Pabon, age 8



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