

# IN REACH, INC.



*Helping Adolescent and Older Youth  
Reach Their Potential*

ANNUAL REPORT  
2003-2004



## Message From The President

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Eleanor Roosevelt

Awe, but sometimes the beauty of our dreams are not so apparent. And here on the eve of **IN REACH**'s fifth anniversary many dreams have been realized and many new ones envisioned.

For me, this year was one of reflection. I had the opportunity to dedicate a significant amount of time to the implementation of the Girls **ARE** Great! Program, **IN REACH**'s only operating direct service program during this time for middle school girls, and to improve and expand **IN REACH**'s outreach and communication efforts via its website and e-Newsletter, **REVEALED!**

Although my position requires me to be involved in every aspect of the development of **IN REACH**, and I enjoy every moment, I am most fulfilled when I am providing direct service. It is a blessing to be able to do this work and have the opportunity to work with such magnificent young people and become a source of support for their parents. **IN REACH** has so much potential and Prince George's County has so many needs that I am committed to building its capacity and sustainability.

Next year, I look forward to recruiting a new group of students for the Youth Leadership Council at Northwestern High School, implementing the Valuing the Voices of Girls Luncheon Series, further developing the Coalition for Girls, expanding **IN REACH** with interns and more volunteers, and increasing our presence in the community.

As this fiscal year ends for **IN REACH**, I will give added value to the advice that I often give to the young people I work with—Dream Big, Dream Often, and Never Stop Dreaming—and invite you to do the same.

# About In Reach, Inc.

**IN REACH** is a community-based 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit organization positioned to respond to the unmet developmental and academic needs of adolescent and older youth living in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Our mission is to engage young people, their families, educators, and communities in the pursuit of successful youth development, a springboard to academic excellence. **IN REACH** fulfills its mission by creating partnerships with public schools and communities to:

- Engage middle and high school students in direct service opportunities and programs,
- Create forums for interested parties serving children, youth and families, to share in the exchange of ideas and information, and
- Work collaboratively with educational systems, government, and community-based organizations to promote positive youth development and strengthen public education.

**IN REACH** believes that young people should always be *in reach* of a quality education, opportunities in their communities for development and, ultimately, their dreams.

## OUR PROGRAMS

The Girls **ARE** Great! Program, addresses the social, cognitive, and intellectual needs of middle school girls, sixth through eighth grades, by preparing and empowering them to become the keepers of their own fate.

The **Girls' Advisory Board** develops, involves, and trains girls on how to use their voices to create positive change in their communities for all girls. Using politics as the framework, girls utilize research, media, public speaking, and negotiating as tools for activism, public service, and leadership skill building.

The **YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL** is operated in partnership with Northwestern High School and designed for students who are interested in working to improve youth/adult communications in their school and community, providing service, and exploring leadership, which includes obtaining valuable life skills to support the transition to life after high school more smoothly.

The **Girls ARE Great! Valuing the Voices of Girls Luncheon Series** has been created to capture the voices of middle school girls by giving them the opportunity to engage in conversations and activities about the issues that currently affect them in their schools, communities, and families.

The *Coalition for Girls* connects individuals from diverse backgrounds dedicated to creating, supporting, and sustaining quality programs for girls.



# Girls Are Great!

In October, 2003, the Girls **ARE** Great! Program was launched. Ten girls from across the county—Riverdale, Hyattsville, Greenbelt, Oxon Hill, Mitchellville and Lanham—attending six public middle schools were welcomed into the Program.

The Girls **ARE** Great! Program, a 12-session Saturday program, has been developed to address the social, cognitive, and intellectual needs of early adolescent middle school girls by preparing and empowering them to become the keepers of their own fate.

The Girls **ARE** Great! program utilizes the Go Grrrls Curriculum and a combination of best-practices from various other program models to reach its goals. The Go Grrrls curriculum is a comprehensive program model that incorporates the latest information and research and conceptualizes gender-specific developmental tasks to empower adolescent girls. From the exploration of the affects of the media on self-image to how to become financially literate and learning successful test-taking skills, girls are taught how to use a variety of tools to help them reach their fullest potential.

## PROGRAM GOALS

- Engage girls in activities that allow them to examine different careers, identify educational opportunities, and improve their academic skills.
- Use creative activities and projects to explore images of self (health and fitness, relationships/friendships, communication skills).
- Empower girls to demonstrate leadership by using their voices to educate their peers about the inequalities that girls face based solely on their gender.

The 2003-2004 Class participated in

**Creative projects**—they made self-portraits and journals;

**Workshops**—a presentation by the Sexual Assault Center, an interactive and fun science workshop conducted by the Women in Engineering Program at the University of Maryland, and attended the Empower Program Annual Girls Conference at American University;

**Activities**—tree planting for Earth Day at Lake Artemesia in College Park with University of Maryland students and other volunteers; and

**Field trips:** the Youth Awareness Prevention Day Rally held at Prince George's Community College.





# Outreach and Communications

As a part of **IN REACH**'s on-going communication strategies, it prepared and released the *2004 Directory of Services and Programs for Girls and Young Women in Prince George's County*. The Directory highlights the services of nineteen organizations throughout the county and their important work.

The Directory contains shocking facts about the body image of girls and young women, an at-a glance listing of all of the organizations included, and a resource appendix of local and national organizations working with and/or on behalf of girls.

## **REVEALED! An E-Newsletter**

**REVEALED!** is a quarterly e-Newsletter created to provide readers with a closer look at the diverse developmental and educational programs available in the county to improve the lives of children and youth. It is distributed free via e-mail with over 800 readers to educators, concerned individuals, local leaders of nonprofit organizations, government, businesses and foundations.

During 2003-2004, **IN REACH** published three issues—Youth Leadership, Afterschool Programs, and Boys.

**REVEALED!** regular features include:

- **Community Connection** - A spotlight on community-based organizations
- **Recognize This!** - A showcase of the academic achievements and volunteer work of young people
- **In Our Schools** - A spotlight on educators and their schools
- **Student Pulse** - A youths' perspective on the current theme
- **Officially Speaking** - An interview with an appointed or elected county official
- **Issues to Watch** - Read about this now
- **On Our Shelves** - Resources to share

*According to The Body Image project, between elementary and high school, the percentage of girls in the U.S. who are "happy with the way I am" drops from 60% to 29%.*

# Donors, Volunteers, and Leadership

During FY 2003, **IN REACH** received over \$50,000 in in-kind support and cash donations. **IN REACH** received a grant from the Prince George's County District II Fund.

## **DONORS**

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