

AUDREY'S SOCIETY WHIRL



By Audrey J. Bernard
Lifestyles/Society Editor

The Book Bank Foundation (BBF) honored neurologist Dr. Carlisle L. St. Martin and 21 year-old child welfare reform advocate Jamel Robinson at the

5th annual Neurologist Dr. Carlisle L. St. Martin and Jamel Robinson honored at hero awards

and achievements within the medical community. Robinson received the hero award for his courageous efforts to improve the outcomes for all children in the New York City foster care system.

Stellar guests in attendance included Hip-Hop Association's founder and president, Martha Diaz; MANNAGOD Enterprises' CEO, John Gray; and Wachovia's FVP of Investments, Joseph Vaccaro. Over \$5000 dollars was raised for the "Shelter from the Streets" campaign on December 18.

In 1972, he was awarded a scholarship to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and completed medical school at Downstate. Following his residency at Long Island Jewish Hospital in 1984, Dr. St. Martin opened his own medical practice in Forest Hills, Queens.

He credits his childhood mentors, the nuns at St. Barbara's Elementary School, for giving him the foundation to excel in his studies. "Once you can read you can achieve anything," says Dr. St. Martin.

ries of physical and psychological ailments including failure to thrive, mild cerebral palsy, quadriplegia, A.D.H.D and other additional learning disabilities.

Within the foster care system, he was subject to neglect and sexual abuse. In 2001, he dropped out of high school and by 2005 he was incarcerated. Despite these unfortunate circumstances, Jamel has become a voice for the youth in the foster care system.

He has served as a keynote speaker at colleges, foundations, community organizations, youth forums and community meetings, holding NYC's child welfare system accountable to the success and failures of all the children in its care.

"It is my undying, unwavering overall commitment to improve the outcome and quality of life for NYC's most disenfranchised youth and my peers in our city's foster care system," says Jamel. He is currently completing his studies at the City College of New York, in hopes to become an attorney.

Dr. St. Martin and Robinson both exemplify the mission of BBF and what it works towards every day. Both have overcome obstacles that could have made them victims to poverty, drugs, and crime. Instead, they have become symbols of hope and inspiration to those in the community.

"I am proud that The Book Bank Foundation has awarded leaders in our community from two different generations," said Toby. "Jamel is evidence that our youth plays a significant role in the enrichment of our community. For a young man raised in the foster care system to become such a great voice for the abused and underprivileged within the same system, not only is heroic but an ultimate act of selfless service to the community."



Brian Latture

Mr. Toby continued, "Dr. St. Martin is one of the most prominent neurologists in our community who has given so freely and quietly that it often appears as if it does not happen at all. I can't count how many times he has given free medical care to New Yorkers in need."

In 1997, The Book Bank Foundation was founded by celebrity sports agent and philanthropist Glenn Toby in an effort to boost literacy among the nation's youth with an emphasis on inner city children. With its corporate office in New York City, the foundation provides tutoring, alternative education, career development and special projects to thousands of children in New York City improving the quality of education and life of many families city wide.

The Book Bank Foundation has donated over 450,000 hours of community service over the last 10 years and has distributed an average of \$40,133 worth of donations to the less fortunate per year. For more information, please visit, www.thebbf.org.



Jamel Robinson, Glenn Toby and Dr. Carlisle St. Martin

5th annual BBF awards ceremony sponsored by ECC Life & Style, on Sunday, December 7th. The evening festivities were topped off with an electrifying key note address by Glenn Toby, founder and CEO, BBF.

Glenn Toby, founder and CEO of BBF presented Dr. St. Martin with the vanguard award for his exemplary leadership

Dr. St. Martin immigrated to Brooklyn at the age of 5 from Trinidad. The oldest of 8 children, he was raised in a poor single parent home by his mother, a public health nurse. As a young child, his eyes were badly crossed and at 9 years old, he went through a series of three rigorous eye surgeries leading him to his vocation of "helping people like the doctors that helped him."

As an attributed neurologist who has helped hundreds people nationwide, he is also an active member of BBF.

Robinson was born to a drug-addicted mother on September 2, 1987. Two months later, he was placed in foster care, where he remains to this day. With both drugs and alcohol is his system at birth, Jamel was diagnosed with a se-



Joe Vaccaro, Wachovia FVP, Investments



MANNAGOD Enterprises CEO John Gray



Martha Diaz



Bakar Kitwana



(L)Jeff Lahens and (R)Shawn Harrisc co-owners of ECC Life & Style, Glenn Toby