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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

I know all of you care deeply about our mission and what we stand for. It's why you joined and why you choose to stay. Our model of offering friendship and material aid to those living in rural poverty is unique. As a board, our goal is to make sure we sustain our ability to fulfill our mission and to be accountable to you, our members, to the very best of our ability.

We're doing this by making the Box Project financially able to serve our current members and expand to other areas of rural poverty. Our building blocks for doing this are our survey, our business plan and our ongoing focus on implementing our strategic plan.

You'll read about the results of our survey in an upcoming issue. One statistic that jumps out is that for every \$1 of contributions we receive, we leverage over \$13 of material and financial aid to our families! This is unheard of. Our completed business plan reflects our efforts to analyze our income stream and expenses, streamline our operations, use your member and donation dues as effectively as possible and set realistic fundraising targets. Our strategic planning efforts have resulted in clear goals and objectives for the organization and for our committees who meet "across the miles" using monthly phone meetings to implement their goals and objectives. We can say with great satisfaction

that we're now in a much stronger position to apply for corporate and foundation funding to make up the difference between our \$50 initial dues and the true cost of \$140 to enroll and support each sponsor and recipient family pairing for their first year.

We've also looked at our mission and reworded it to be even more focused on our unique services to the people we serve. You'll see a final version in the next issue of the newsletter. For example, we not only support/operate our family-to-family matching program but we now have also developed a pilot "classroom-to-classroom" program that connects a class of students in a school located in a rural poverty area with a "sister" class somewhere in the US. Children are learning about each other through the exchange of letters, videos and email. In this model, friendship and understanding of each other's culture, schools and family life are being nurtured and no material aid is involved.

While we continue to be true to our mission of offering friendship, educational and material aid to those struggling to raise families in rural poverty, we are also looking for greater opportunities to foster relationships and help our families become more self-sufficient. We welcome your ideas and thank you so very much for your continued support, encouragement and faithfulness.

Most sincerely,
Pat Schneider
Board President

Survey Completed!

For forty years people from across the United States have volunteered by the thousands to give their friendship, advice and aid to families living in the worst rural poverty situations in the country. They have sent medicine, clothing, money and hope across state lines and cultures.. The stories and letters received at the Box Project's office have been heartwarming...but anecdotal.

The Box Project began a plan in 2000 to increase the impact of our actions in moving people out of rural poverty. We added more educational and scholarship options, we looked to financial opportunities, gained national publicity, and

we expanded into new areas and cultures within the country.

As part of this plan for the new millennium, the survey was conducted to evaluate our basic family-to-family program of direct sponsorship. Because of its unique structure in which families correspond directly with each other—not through a central agency—it had been difficult to go beyond anecdotal information and show the overall effects with certainty.

With gratitude for a grant from the Karma Foundation that allowed us to conduct the survey, and a tremendous amount of help and time from Dr. Juan Battle and Jen-eve Brooks-Klinger, we are now able to show the strengths of the program. Millions of dollars in aid

is provided directly where needed, and cross-cultural relationships develop. Thousands of families have come to learn about and even love someone very different from themselves.

The survey, along with the formal business planning being done by the Board, the revised mission statement, strategic planning and taskforce formation all come together to position The Box Project as a major player in dealing with rural poverty on a national scope.

Thank you to the 4,498 members who took the time and effort to fill out the survey. Your help has now made it possible to prove what we always knew.....

The Box Project really works!

Dues & Donations

The Board and Staff of the Box Project wish to thank all the members who came to our aid with donations and dues renewals in the past months. Program income suffered dramatically after 9/11, and many projected activities had to be cut. While we are still far behind budget, things look a lot better. Thank you!

KLEZ is a computer virus which sends out email from an infected computer making it LOOK like it came from someone else. In the past months, The Box Project has had to spend hundreds of dollars to protect our systems from KLEZ and other viruses yet allow members to freely write to us.

Board of Directors And Advisory Board Volunteers

The Board of Directors is always looking for persons with business, fundraising, social service or other special skills to enhance our program. The board is voluntary and unpaid. If you are interested in serving The Box Project, please send your resume and a cover letter to us.

Phi Theta Kappa donates children's books

A note of thanks to the Norwalk Community College whose 2002 graduating class made a special project of collecting new childrens' books for Box Project centers.

Approximately 350 graduates and faculty gathered books which have been sent on to Appalachian community centers allied with The Box Project.

States form alliances for cheaper prescriptions

In an effort to get Medicaid drug costs under control, states are joining to negotiate lower costs with drug manufacturers. For states already reeling from unexpected deficits, the ballooning costs of prescriptions is threatening medical coverage for many poor. The most recent alliance is the "Southern Coalition" which was begun by West Virginia and includes LA, MO, NM, SC and Mississippi. Another such alliance is Maine, VT and NH. States are also publishing "preferred drug lists" and limiting which medications can be covered.

www.ncsl.org/programs/health/drugaid.htm Has information on state drug assistance to older people.

www.needymeds.com has tips on getting free or discounted medications from the drug companies.

LETTERS

Hi!

My name is Carol and I have a sister family is MS that I have sponsored since February of this year. I have a few ideas to share that have helped me help my sister family even more. The first idea is to get friends and family involved. even if they only send 1 box to your sister family, I am sure it will be greatly appreciated. I have also found some awesome deals on line that I have shipped directly to my family - sometimes with free shipping!

On birthdays, I ask my friends and family to mail a card with \$1 in it to the birthday child. Everyone has been more than willing to do this since I explain it is for a child who does not have very much and \$1 could mean a lot to them. Just wanted to share...hope to learn a lot from all of you too!

I have been a sponsor to Sallie S. for ten years and she has never once neglected to write back to me to say that she received whatever I sent and to thank me. Not only that, but she writes immediately after receiving my package, because a few days after I send mail to her I receive a response. I wonder if it would be possible to recognize Sallie for this remarkable record in an upcoming newsletter. Perhaps she would be a good role model for others to follow. Sallie is a great-grandmother who is still raising the children of her children. She lost her husband a few years ago and is now doing it on her own. When I ask her what she needs, she always lets me know practical, useful things that I can send her -she never makes outrageous requests or asks for inappropriate things. I think the world of Sallie and admire her courage and her character. If it would be possible to recognize Sallie in some way, I would be very grateful.

Sincerely,
Susan

My sister family in MS had asked for some fresh fruit. I mailed her some oranges in a box, but by the time it arrived, it was so badly damaged, she could not even eat one. The box was dripping with juice. I found an ad in my local paper that they would send a gift box of oranges and grapefruits and they were guaranteed to be fresh on delivery. So I tried it. My "sister" Dorothy was so happy. She never tasted anything so sweet. The delivery was prompt and no problems whatsoever. So I'm offering the name of the company for anyone who would like to try this with their family. They are Halegroves. It is on the net as www.halegroves.com and you can view their selection and prices and have it sent to your family. They are in Florida the address is Halegroves PO Box 700217 Wabasso, Florida. The phone is 800562-4502 and the operators are very helpful. I have sent a check to them, but you can probably order on line. Since they are in Florida, they are closer to MS than me. The handling charge is also less than my post office charges to mail from here. Just an idea for anyone who has thought of doing this.— Barbara

Have you seen the newest way you can chat with other sponsors from all over the country? You can learn what they are doing and share ideas. Lots of great things are happening. Go to Yahogroups.com and join Boxproject_Chatterbox

Member Congress Cancelled

There were only 37 responses by members requesting information and updates for the planned All Member Congress in October. Due to this lack of response, the Board has cancelled plans for the Congress. The October meeting of the Board is now planned for the Delta area of Mississippi.

Mississippi Children's Health Insurance Programs

If you mentor a Mississippi family with children, then you should look at the new healthcare programs now available for children. You can get information at <http://www.mschip.com> or by calling

1-877-KIDS-NOW.

Whether we're looking for a job, a college, a new home or a mortgage, we all know:

It always helps to have a personal introduction

That's part of the social capital that Dr. Juan Battle talks about in his article on page 6 of this newsletter. With that in mind, please let us know if you can help with contact names in foundations or corporations that would be open to hearing about The Box Project and funding our expansion efforts, educational or emergency funds.

Rumor has it that Walmart has recently made a special deal with a computer company to market a personal computer late this year which will sell for only \$300 to 500 for the whole system. If you know more about this, please let us know as this could be of great help to many of our families and we would like to explore some options.

CRAFTY IDEAS FOR YOUR FAMILY !

Looking for ideas you can share with your sister-family? We've found a whole web-site full of them! Crafts-n-Hobbies has hundreds of craft projects already sorted into age groups and abilities. Not only that, but they are clear on the materials needed, instructions, and approximate amount of time it may take. This is a great site for much more than just children's crafts. It also has decorating ideas, holiday ideas, recipes, senior activities, and even a chat area to ask questions. The pages are designed to be easily printable so that you can print out all the information needed for a project.

[Www.craftsnhobbies.com](http://www.craftsnhobbies.com)

A Painless way to save money for college?

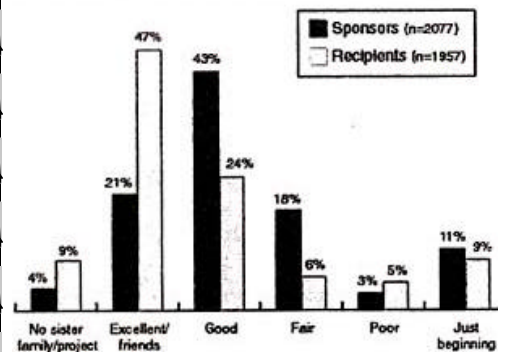
Upromise may be an answer!

We are always skeptical of financial schemes—especially new ones. But recently the TODAY Show had a section on Upromise.com. In this arrangement a small percentage of the purchase price of many goods or services is set aside and can be given to a 529 (tax sheltered) college account for a specific child. You can read more information about it at www.upromise.com

There are LOTS of national merchants involved in the program, plus charge card companies, utilities and services. They send in 2 or 3% of the sale to Upromise who AUTOMATICALLY will earmark the money for the child's account you have designated. Once there is over about \$50 in the Upromise account, the money is transferred into the child's own 529 account.

This appears to be a great way to start saving money for college IF you have a small child. It will not accumulate much in a short time, but over 10+ years, it will add up....and it costs you nothing.

Description of Relationship with Sister Family (Q8)



How's it going?
Apparently rather well according to over 4000 survey respondents

Emergency Fund Help

The Box Project's Emergency Fund helps recipient members in critical and odd situations. Among the applications in the past month were:

A family whose basement apartment had SD's Black Mold Disease. They could get a brand new home built for them IF they had another organization's help in getting a piling foundation in less than 3 weeks

An almost blind college student turned 19 and was not able to get her special glasses through Medicaid anymore. She needed them to return to school.

In both these cases and many more, The Box Project came to the rescue.

West Virginia

Calhoun County, situated in West Virginia still remains the leader in unemployment in the state. The needs of low income individuals and families continue to be present at all levels.

For some individuals a letter or card is all that is needed to let them know they are not forgotten; for others the basic necessities of day-to-day living are very limited or

non-existent. This could be children's school clothing, school supplies to complete school work, work attire for adults, non-prescription medical items such as band-aids, antibiotic ointments, pain relievers, cough drops, or toothpaste, soap and shampoo.

Listening compassionate ears, softly spoken words of encouragement and kindly suggested solutions to individual cares and problems are also needed to help people help them-

selves. We must be careful to strike a balance between meeting a need and enabling a need. Our goal must be to case and assist people on their way to self-sufficiency, not prolong dependency.

With a little help and encouragement, many will prosper and grow, others will not. We must focus on the growth, rather than the stagnation, with all of our assistance.

Community Resources, Grantsville

We asked people from four rural regions to write us their thoughts about the local situation. Here are their responses:

A TALE OF

Mississippi

The Mississippi Delta is a geographic, economic, and socio-political region in the northwestern part of Mississippi that is very rural and intensely agricultural. It is dominated by large farms that have existed since being settled by whites and African-Americans, and have aided in shaping the economic, social, and political history of the region. These farms were historically known as plantations; however, many of these farms are now known as agribusinesses, which are now owned by corporations. In the early 1900's, over half of the area's farms were operated by tenants, a system involving a white landowner that contracted with a tenant, who in returned lived in one of the landowner's subsidized or "shotgun shack" housing. Mechanization of plantations led to displacement of farmers which eventually led to the people congregating to small towns, unknowing how they would support themselves or their families, due to limited job skills and training.

Modern day families are somewhat still the same as families in the past, composed of extended families, which often consist of parents, their adult children, and the adult children's offspring. These families usually consist of three or more generations living all in one household: the

first generation is the oldest and considered the "founders"; the second generation consists of the first generation's offspring; and the third generation consists of the second generation's offspring. These families have also operated as a mechanism that "facilitates migration and urbanization." This is where one member of the family would leave the Delta for an urban area, such as Chicago or Detroit, looking for better employment. In return, this person would tell other family members about the better opportunities, and that family member would join the original member.

Changes both inside and outside of the Delta led to massive alterations in the area. The first was the railroad, which provided a means for the Delta planters to transport their cotton much easier, and was a means of transportation for African-Americans to leave the Delta and head north to the industrialized cities hoping for better jobs and better lives; payment by the federal government to reduce the number of acres planted in cotton came about, which helped to begin the change to mechanize farming, further reducing the dependence on cheap labor; and finally, the invention of the cotton-picker, which enabled many planters to fully begin the shift to mechanized farming and reduce their reliance on labor for man. Due to these dramatic changes, work-

ers who were displaced became economically challenged in trying to adapt from their limited plantation job skills to those demanded by industrialization and now technology.

The Mississippi Delta's economy was and still is not an area with much industry. Thus, residents had to go on federal assistance to survive, which created new economic problems. The federal government had subsidized planters to mechanize and reduce their acreage which allowed them to barely feed their laborers, while at the same time the federal government had to economically support the laborers to keep them from starvation, making a dependence upon welfare an employment pattern of some laborers in the Mississippi Delta.

The Mississippi Delta is by no means complete. It is hoped by some that it will continue to present some of the major themes and forces that have already shaped the lives of people living in the Delta today. These social forces and problems have already affected the lives of all the people who live in the Delta by shaping how they eat, live, and interact with each other, which in turn affects the economic health and behavior of all the people of the Mississippi Delta.

DePorris Ministries

South Dakota

The Native American cultures are as diverse and varied as is "American" culture. Don't allow anyone to stereotype it, there are far too many variables and differences within the grouping to be seen as an aggregate. However, that said, here's a few observations about conditions specifically in the Sioux reservations of South Dakota.

There are six reservations in the state. Until recently, these were pretty much administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs - a centralized governmental agency. However, during the Clinton administration, more and more programs were shifted over to the tribal councils of these six areas. There is great debate if this was a good idea or not, and every person has their own thoughts on it. Some tribal councils were able to take the responsibility and manage it well. Others have not done well at all. (Much like politics anywhere else). But this has also caused significant differences in the lives of people on the 6 reservations.

The Pine Ridge/Oglala Reservation is probably the poorest of them all. Unemployment runs at 80% or more! Often the people need help with heat and the very basics of life. The Cheyenne Reservation seems to be better off, but still has problems. Hunger is a definite and very real problem. Only some have



running water in the home, and you may want to ask about the kitchen. There are no large stores close by. The tribal stores are in the towns, but are like glorified 7-11's. There are no Walmarts or large department stores nearby. Often families have to drive hundreds of miles to a store or doctor. Distances are considerable and if families have a car/truck, it is probably a high mileage one even if it's a late model used car.

Family is critical in the Sioux culture. The main source of emotional support and feelings of belonging come from the immediate and extended family. Do not be surprised if your family seems to shrink and grow at times as nephews and cousins pass through. In general, they are **much** closer than seen in general society.

Four States

Maine

Rural Poverty in Maine often consists of what we refer to as the "working poor". Often people live in an older one family home, which lacks adequate insulation, with a dug well that sometimes goes dry. As a consequence, heating bills can be unmanageable, families have to buy water or go to neighbors, family or to Laundromats to wash clothes. One way or the other, there is no discretionary money, especially during the winter months. Maine is a beautiful place to live and raise a family, but it is a daily struggle for the poor. It can cost an average family well over \$1200 a year just to heat a home.

A recent study done by the Maine Center for Economic policy states that, "Maine residents are working full time but not earning enough to pay for the necessities of life - rent, healthcare, food, transportation, child care, household goods, etc. The result is not only the way life that shouldn't be, but also an economic burden on everyone."

Older homes often need frequent repairs and the money is not available. There is always the threat of homelessness if the condition of their home deteriorates to the point that they can no longer live there. Sometimes the harsh Maine weather and rural conditions make staying in sub-standard housing impossible. Public transportation is nonexistent. Employment, medical services, food, clothing and all other services are at least 20 miles away in either direction. Reliable transportation is necessary in rural Maine, and though people may live in a falling-down home they still must have a good vehicle to get them to places they must go to meet basic survival needs.

Many rural elderly who live on minimal fixed incomes have to make choices every day between buying food or medications. We often hear stories about people taking only half their medications so that they can eat. These are daily life and death choices most of us never have to make.

The 1990 census showed that almost 11% of Maine's population live below the poverty level. Of those welfare recipients lucky enough to find a job, 52% STILL earn pre-tax income below the poverty level even with employment! The median hourly wage is only \$7.15/hour.

Rural Community Action Ministry

Can the complications of poverty be solved in a box?

By Dr. Juan Battle—Box Project Member

National poverty data are calculated using the official Census definition of poverty, which has remained fairly standard since it was introduced in the 1960s. Under this definition, poverty is determined by comparing pretax cash income with the poverty threshold, which adjusts for family size and composition. In 2000, the average threshold for a family of four was \$17,603; for a family of three, \$13,738. Given this, 31.1 million people or 11.3 percent of the total U.S. population lived in poverty in 2000.

But, beyond the lack of money, what does it really mean to live in poverty? To begin thinking about this, it might make sense to think about capital in three forms: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. In short, economic capital is how much money you have; cultural capital is what you know; and social capital is who you know. Most of us know what economic capital means, but we're not as clear on the other forms.

It's probably easiest to think about cultural and social capital in terms of schools and families. Cultural capital is a concept developed by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) who suggest that knowledge of certain cultural forms, such as classical music, drama, literature, history or fine art, as well as certain forms of speech, are privileged in a society. Knowledge of these areas of culture is a mark of upper class membership and forms the cultural capital of elite and educated individuals and families. Ordinary educational institutions incorporate cultural capital in their activities, not primarily as something to be taught, but rather as something that pupils are expected to have already. School pedagogy refers to and draws upon this background knowledge, without explicitly teaching it. Hence, children coming from families with substantial cultural capital gain an advantage in educational institutions because the cultural capital they bring with them facilitates their learning in those institutions. Conversely, those students lacking in familial cultural capital find school education doubly difficult, as they have to negotiate a discourse that makes reference to this untaught cultural knowledge.

Social Capital is a term used by James Coleman (1988) and others to describe social resources in communities and families. It refers to the supportive activities provided by parents and community members in supervising, monitoring, advising and providing leadership for children. When the structural links between parents and community are strong, social capital functions effectively and children are believed to thrive. Conversely, where these structures are weak, young people cannot benefit from or draw upon social capital, and they are more likely to fail in school and in other ways.

A life in poverty means lack of access to economic, cultural, and social capital. It's a level of economic and social isolation unfamiliar to most U.S. citizens, and is all too familiar to recipient families of The Box Project.

So what then makes The Box Project unique? Well, a food bank could deliver food; but through developing relationships and respecting differences, The Box Project nurtures the transference of economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Transferring the first one is easy; the other two take time and patience. Respecting one's cultural and social capital might mean respecting the fact that economically poor individuals might not feel equipped to write a letter as often as the sponsor family might like. It means realizing and respecting that a recipient family might feel self-conscious that the sponsor family might critique their handwriting, spelling, sentence structure, or life circumstance. It means realizing how someone could feel both grateful for receiving a box, and, at times, resentful to the person who sent it. Whoever said money isn't everything probably had a few dollars in the bank; but they were also right. Having money isn't everything; knowing what to do with it, knowing how to ("legally") get it, and enjoying the benefits/options that a life not in poverty affords, is also important.

Poverty is complicated and complex; and a box full of necessities and good intentions isn't going to eliminate poverty in the United States. However, I encourage the sponsor families to continue reaching out. Believe it or not, you're making a difference. I also encourage the recipient families to share their appreciation, joys, and yes, even frustrations with their sister families. A sponsor family might have more capital, but that doesn't mean they have more answers. We're all trying to make a difference ... one person ... one family ... and one box at time.

Bourdieu, P., and Passeron, J. C. 1977. *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
Coleman, J. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology (Supplement)*, 94: S95-S120.

To get more information on poverty statistics check out the Census Bureau's Website on Poverty:
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html>.

For information and more creative ways to see how poverty 'works', check out:

1. Institute for Research on Poverty: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/>
2. Joint Center for Poverty Research: <http://www.jcpr.org/>
3. National Center for Children in Poverty:
<http://cpmnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/>

Don't forget FIRST AID

With summer here and people being active outdoors, it's almost inevitable that someone is going to get hurt, stung or scraped. The simple inclusion of a first aid kit in your

boxes (with extra band-aids as they always seem to run out first) is a good idea that could even be a lifesaver.

And here's another idea.....

How about providing a "scholarship" to your family paying the fees if they will take one of the Red Cross First Aid or CPR training

classes? They are available in almost every town and can help your family "learn how to learn" while also providing self-esteem and aid to others.

You can find every chapter of the Red Cross at www.AmericanRedCross.org to look for one near your family.

Matched Classrooms Works Well

Our elementary school is now matched with a sister school in Greenwood, Mississippi. I have learned so much from my partner teacher. However, I have learned even more from the letters that her students send to my students at least once a month. Children have a way of opening up and allowing us a glimpse of their true selves without holding back. These letters **have** been the most beneficial resource to increase my understanding of the current lifestyle.

Although they help illustrate the present situation, I agree that is no substitute for witnessing the environment first hand. I agree that we should start collecting data from the areas. It would be priceless if we could visit ourselves. However, if that is not possible in the near future, maybe we can continue to use students as a resource. My partner school has access to video equipment. They sent us tapes of themselves and their school. We have also sent them disposable cameras which they returned to us so we could have them developed. It was very enlightening.

It has been and continues to be a wonderful experience for my students and school community. My students have learned that when you give, you truly receive.

Lana Beck

Virginia Naeve

Founder of The Box Project

An ordinary lady from Vermont, who had an extraordinary amount of drive, went to a disarmament conference in Geneva in 1962. On the way she met Coretta Scott King. The lady, Virginia Naeve, hoped to talk to the head of the United Nations. Instead, her chat with Mrs. King proved much more lasting. The two ladies spoke of conditions in Mississippi and what might be done to help one of the worst rural poverty areas in America. As they parted, Mrs. King gave Virginia the name of one family she knew that needed help.

**"Don't try to save the world.
Just save one family."**

Virginia contacted the family when she got home and was soon sending boxes of things the family desperately needed. In a short time, Virginia's neighbors started helping too. Other needy families were added to the list until Virginia got a new idea. Instead of people bringing things to HER to send out, why not just match the sponsor families directly with the needy ones?



With this simple idea, the Box Project was born.

Help your family NOW plan money for school next fall

It's time to begin thinking about going to college. Most college applications has been mailed by now, but if you've procrastinated it is still not to late. Contact the college and fill out your application now! Talk to your high school Guidance Counselors, and visit the school you are interested in if possible.

There are many scholarships available for you in order to fund your education. Don't forget the fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. It can be found at:

www.fafsa.ed.gov

The Federal Pell Grant money does NOT have to be repaid!

Here are some web-sites that you can search:

Mississippi State Student Incentive Grant

Mississippi students who demonstrate financial need are eligible for this renewable award of up to \$1500 per year.

Contact: the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39211-6453.

Ron Brown Scholarship (merit and Academic).

Open to academically talented African-American high school seniors. Must demonstrate leadership potential,

community involvement and financial needs. Contact: Ron Brown Scholar Program, 1160 Pepsi Place, Suite 110-B, Charlottesville, VA 22901. Tel. (804) 964-1588, Fax: (804) 964-1589 and web site www.RonBrown.org

E-Mail mn1allorv@cstone.net

United Negro College Fund Scholarship Coordinator, 8620 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive, Fairfax, VA 22031. Tel:

(800) 331-2244. Web-site www.uncf.org/programs. They have many different scholarships.

Jackie Robinson Foundation Scholarship Award (Academic achievement and financial need) Applicants must be accepted by four-year accredited college or university, be a US citizen, have high academic achievement, illustrate leadership potential, and demonstrate financial need. Deadline April. Contact: Jackie Robinson Foundation Scholarship Program, 3 West 35th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10001-2204. Tel (212) 290-8600, Fax: (212) 290-8081, web www.jackierobinson.org

Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund (Academic) Applicants must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, must be admitted to a HBCU, and must be a US citizen. Contact: Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, TMSF Selection Committees, 100 Park Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10017. Tel: (212) 878-2988, Web: www.tmsf.org

Other web-sites that can be searched for scholarships.

Fastweb is a good site when looking for scholarships <http://content.sciencewise.com/newscholarship/detail.cfm>

www.blackExcel.org Black Excel

www.irts.org IRTS Foundation

www.qmsp.org Gates Millennium Scholarships

www.hurston-wright.org/awards_app.html Zora Neale Hurston/ Richard Wright Award

www.blackexcel.org/summer-progs.htm 100-plus Summer Enrichment Programs

www.collegescholarships.com A list of scholarships from around the country

www.free-4u.com/minority.htm Scholarships for many ethnic groups and minorities

www.sciencewise.com/molis Minority Online Info Services

There are also scholarships for disadvantage students:

www.hrsa.gov/bhpr/dsa

A true education is always earned—
Only the opportunity can be given

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E-mail: Info@BoxProject.org

The Box Project, Inc. is a national, non-profit organization which encourages families and individuals living in rural poverty to become self-sufficient and overcome the cycle of poverty by offering friendship, educational and material aid.

The Last Word

We get many things sent to us. Some are nice, some are OK, some are truly funny, and some are outstanding! I'd like to share some of the better ones that happened recently with you.

One thing which has been uplifting has been the Yahoo ChatterBox Group. The ability of members to email and daily chat with each other has taken off better than we ever expected, and the messages and ideas have been wonderful! (see our website for details).

Our special thanks goes to Dr. Juan Battle and Jeneve Brooks-Klinger for a fantastic job with the survey. Without them we simply could not have done it.

Also, thanks to YOU. Over the past two months members have responded warmly to our need for dues renewals and donations. While we are still not making budget, we are breathing a lot easier because of your renewed support.

We've laughed at notes sent to us asking us to make sure that all our sponsors are rich, and we've been saddened by calls telling us of fires and injuries. We've rejoiced with many recent letters informing us that member students are actually graduating.

We get strange email from overseas wanting us to wire thousands of dollars to some "secret bank account" so we will get millions sometime later. (Why of course we will! ;-p) And we get simple scrawls just asking for any help possible to go to school again.

One of the harder problems to deal with diplomatically are the people who call wanting not just to sponsor, but rather to evangelize, convert and "save" a poor family, believing that unless they are _____ they are doomed. They may mean well, but that's not why we're here.

In a similar vein, we get lots and lots of letters expressing appreciation for The Box Project and ending with requests that God

bless the board and staff here for what we are doing. My usual response is, "He already has!" We have the great privilege of seeing the results of The Box Project's work on a full, national scale. There aren't many jobs where you actually see so many wonderful things happen directly because of your work, but this is one of them. We have a great team, fantastic members, clear mission and plan. We are indeed blessed.

We get many requests asking for information and how to expand The Box Project to other countries. Pat Schneider tries to answer them, but none of them seem to have accomplished it in their own country. Perhaps it is political. Perhaps it is a cultural thing. But it is obvious that what we have here in America is something very special.

Now, let's go back to making sure all our sponsors are very rich....

Powerball tickets???

Allen G. Pitts
Exec. Dir.