



Journey for Change 2: Empowering Youth Through Global Service is a unique and innovative partnership between The Angelrock Project and The Salvation Army Greater New York that takes thirty at-risk youth from Brooklyn, New York to South Africa for two weeks of global service. After the success of ***Journey for Change: Empowering Youth Through Global Service*** in 2008, the program has since expanded to recruit children from the Bushwick, Brownsville, and Bedford-Stuyvesant Salvation Army Community Centers. Additionally, fifteen college age mentors have been selected through partnerships at NYU, Pratt Institute, and Medgar Evers College.

The ***Journey for Change 2*** youth will begin the program with a mission trip to South Africa from August 18 – September 3, 2010. While in South Africa they will volunteer in the shanty towns of Diepsloot and Soweto, helping orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) and grannies in their homes, schools, gardens, and make visits to community centers, orphanages, and clinics. The group will then travel to the Limpopo region for a rural service work component volunteering at homes, a school and a hospital run by the Buffelshoek Trust and visit the renowned Bhubezi HIV/AIDS clinic. The trip will also incorporate a rich cultural experience with the youth touring Soweto, the Apartheid Museum, and Constitution Hill, enjoying a safari in Kruger National Park, and dining at a number of traditional South African restaurants.

Upon completion of the trip, the youth will immediately begin their roles as “***Journey for Change Global Ambassadors***” for one year. As Global Ambassadors, they will focus on **advocacy**, **service**, and **education** initiatives both locally and internationally. The **service** component includes volunteering in their home communities on a regular basis, as well as a spring trip to New Orleans, LA to rebuild houses for victims of Hurricane Katrina in partnership with St. Bernard Project. The main focus of the **educational** initiative is to ensure that all of our youth, most of whom struggle in school when they first enter our program, are on the track to college. Hence, we are extremely grateful to partner with the LEAD Program, an exemplary college preparatory program for this very purpose. **Advocacy**, however, is at the center of the Global Ambassador program. The international and local advocacy focus for Journey for Change 2 is the HIV/AIDS crisis South Africa and Brooklyn. The similarities between the youth’s home community of Central Brooklyn and South Africa are truly astonishing, as Central Brooklyn is considered “Ground Zero” for the HIV/AIDS epidemic among African-Americans in the United States, and for women, adolescents and children with the disease in New York City. Brooklyn has the highest percentage of AIDS deaths in New York City and a staggering 87% of all people living with HIV/AIDS in Brooklyn in 2008 were persons of color, with 7% of the nation’s children under 13 with the disease also living in Brooklyn. Given the fact that South Africa has more persons living with the disease than any other country in the world with an estimated 6 million people infected and 1.8 million AIDS orphans, the synergy between the two populations call for an urgent, vital, and necessary advocacy campaign.

The Journey for Change Ambassadors will raise awareness in partnership with the Brooklyn Borough President’s Office, (RED), and MTV Networks, the program’s media sponsor. Additionally, there is a regular blogging component where the youth blog for partner websites including CNN’s AC360.com, Timeforkids.com, and MTV.com. In November 2010, they will travel to Washington D.C. to speak with elected officials on Capitol Hill and they will take part in a myriad of activities leading up to World AIDS Day.

Journey for Change: Empowering Youth Through Global Service was born out of the crisis inner-city youth across America are facing as they enter their teenage years. Many youth succumb to the pressures facing them, whether it is to drop out of school, get involved in gangs, or use drugs. Over half of the population of Bushwick lives below the poverty line and receives some form of public assistance and Bushwick High School only has a 31% graduation rate. Bedford Stuyvesant struggles with poverty, gang violence, and a failing school system reflective in the fact that Boys and Girls High School in the area has a 34.9% graduation rate. Brownsville not only faces its own struggle with poverty, but also has the highest violent death rate in the city. ***Journey for Change 2: Empowering Youth Through Global Service*** presents a unique and extraordinary opportunity to thirty youth from these three struggling communities.

The Journey for Change Global Ambassadorship Program aims to serve as a catalyst to stay fully committed to these young people for an entire year, with the goal of creating leaders engaged in civic, political, and social change, as well as mentoring each child individually to assist their parents and/or guardians in guiding them to make positive long-term choices for their lives.

The inaugural 2008 ***Journey for Change: Empowering Youth Through Global Service*** trip was filmed by CNN and aired as part of the documentary “Black in America 2: Tomorrow’s Leaders” hosted by journalist Soledad O’Brien. For more information on ***Journey for Change: Empowering Youth Through Global Service*** and ***The Journey for Change Global Ambassadorship Program***, please visit The Angelrock Project at www.angelrockproject.com.