



June 2012

Three Months and Counting

DOWNTOWN
BERKELEY
ambassador



Our First Quarter...

Only A Beginning

After a three-month intensified cleaning period, known as the Big Splash, the Downtown Berkeley Ambassador Program has now been in operation for three months. It has definitely been a quarter of beautification, hospitality, political dust storms and changes.

The absorption of the existing Host Ambassadors into the new Hospitality and Cleaning Programs was very beneficial. Former Host Ambassadors brought a wealth of knowledge, ownership and familiarity to the new program that was definitely an asset. The new incoming ambassadors embraced their roles and brought fresh perspectives and an innovative approach towards making Downtown Berkeley the welcoming area that we all know it can be.

The extensive research that John Caner and the Downtown Berkeley Association Board of Directors conducted in its search, and ultimate hiring, of Block By Block has paid off. The beautification and increased welcoming environment of Downtown Berkeley has been very successful yet there is still more to come. The focus on hospitality for visitors, residents and business owners, is an ongoing operation that is being met with favorable results. In addition the DBA continues to provide social service outreach to homeless and other street populations. Every person is treated with respect and caring, no matter if they fall asleep under a roof, or looking at the stars.

The partnership between the DBA and the existing City of Berkeley public service departments has been tremendous and essential. Without the support of the leaders and staff of almost every department in the city, the changes and improvements simply would not have happened. Block By Block exists in other cities and many districts across the country, yet the teamwork that the City of Berkeley displays is unparalleled and definitely another feather in the cap of those who serve the public so well.

The reception and appreciation shown to the ambassadors by business owners, visitors and residents has been heart warming and motivating. Of course though, you can't please everyone, so everyone still has a lot to learn. Downtown Berkeley and its efforts go beyond flower baskets, painted fixtures and power washed sidewalks; it is the beginning of a change in attitude, a vision towards the future, yet without losing the personality that is so uniquely Berkeley.

Lance Goree, Operations Manager

Here's What Happened

You Can Hit but You Can't Run!

On June 6th Ambassador Carmen Francois was approached by a gentleman who said he just witnessed a car accident. A car hit a parked vehicle and the car had sped off. The witness did not want to leave his personal information on the parked vehicle for fear that the person in the car that sped off may return and then have his personal information.

Smartly, Ambassador Francois suggested leaving one of the Ambassador Hotline Cards for the parked vehicle owner (victim!) asking he/she to contact us. She then took the witnesses personal information which could be relayed to the victim. Ambassador Francois communicated the situation to Operations Supervisor Tajiri Winesberry.

Later that afternoon the victim did indeed call the Ambassador Hotline number and spoke with Ops. Supervisor Winesberry. The victim was amazed and thankful of the entire process. In fact, the victim didn't realize that his car had been hit because he did not enter from that side of the car.

This is an excellent example of providing the type of unexpected customer service that has become customary in Downtown Berkeley. Ambassadors never know when or how they will make a difference, so they will always be prepared to Do What They Can!

Segway Away!

The Downtown Berkeley Association has been actively training its staff on the safe use of one of its most visible and effective tools, the Segway.

The Segway will allow trained ambassadors increased street mobility while giving visitors and residents another visual aid that the ambassadors are there to help!

Look for us on a sidewalk near you!



Fender Bender



Ambassador Team Leader Chris Boss and The Segway!

Deryl DeWitt.. A Success Story

"As Good As It Gets" ... Not Yet!

If Ambassador Deryl Dewitt truly believed that, like the title of one of his favorite movies, this is "As Good As It Gets", he would not be the asset to Downtown Berkeley that he is today.

Deryl has come a long way, on June 1st he celebrated his 5 year anniversary of being clean and sober after 20 years of substance abuse. Deryl voluntarily put himself onto his road to recovery, but he understands that that isn't the path that everyone has the strength to follow. As an ambassador, Deryl brings his own experiences to the job and puts that knowledge in his work. He has been "there" and is a sympathetic shining example of where many who suffer from substance abuse can go. But this is not as As Good As It Gets for Deryl, there is much more and much better to come.

And....

Deryl also has a fascination and respect for the late great "King of Soul", James Brown. So much so, that he shows Mr. Brown the sincerest form of flattery... Impersonation! Yes, our Ambassador Deryl DeWitt is a Professional James Brown Impersonator!

Deryl has shown an amazing desire to embrace his role as an ambassador by actively engaging business owners and visitors and residents. His creative and humorous traits are hidden beneath a calm shell, but come out easily with his personal interactions. We are lucky to have Deryl as part of the ambassador team and more importantly, so is Downtown Berkeley.



Deryl DeWitt



Ambassador DeWitt In Action

Constant Learning

Another Facet: Social Services

On June 5th, Eve Ahmed and Dan Ezekiel of the City of Berkeley's Health and Human Services provided training and a question and answer session for the Ambassadors of the Downtown Berkeley Association.

Ms. Ahmed and Mr. Ezekeil provided an overview of the mental health system in Berkeley, information on programs for voluntary and involuntary clients as well as tips on handling confrontations with people on the street who could possibly be unstable .

Berkeley has long been a sympathetic community towards providing assistance to those with mental imbalances. Block By Block, the DBA and its ambassadors are no different. Getting help to those that need help and want help will benefit the community as a whole.

The training and partnership with Health and Human Services is an important aspect of BBB's work in Berkeley. Thank you to Ms. Ahmed and Mr. Ezekeil.

It was time well spent.



June 5th Training with Eve Ahmed and Dan Ezekiel of the City of Berkeley Health and Human Services

It Is Good To Be Needed!

Where Did He Go?

On Friday, June 29th Operations Manager Lance Goree, Operations Supervisor Tajiri Winesberry and Ambassador Okoye Jones were in Constitution Square/BART Plaza when an agitated young lady came to us and said, "Where Did He Go?".

She had left a visually impaired gentleman outside Chase Bank while she went in to complete a quick transaction. Upon completion of her transaction she walked outside to find that the gentleman, Ennis, had wandered away.

Operations Manager Goree continued to 'interview' the woman while Operations Supervisor Winesberry went East on Center, Ambassador Carlos Rivera went north on Shattuck Ave. and Ambassador Okoye Jones went South on Shattuck.

During the course of interviewing it was revealed where the young lady parked her car. Operations Manager Goree then headed for the parked vehicle. Sure enough, Ennis had headed for the parked car and that is where he was found. The young lady and Ennis were very grateful and expressed their sincere appreciation for the caring and sense of urgency the Ambassadors showed in finding Ennis! We're definitely glad we are here!



Ennis and his relieved and beautiful wife.

Thank You! I Feel Blessed Today!

Found but Not Lost!

At approximately 10:00 AM on June 29th, Ambassador Robert Walker Jr. found a billfold near The Brower Center at 2150 Allston Way. Ambassador Walker turned the wallet into Operations Manager Lance Goree.

An inventory of the wallet netted several credit cards, Clipper card and other identifications. Enclosed was also a UC Berkeley Extension Identification Card for Breno Sampaio. Operations Manager Goree called the number on the back of the card and connected with Gloria P. Roguel, International Student Assistant at the UC Berkeley Extension.

Luckily, Ms. Roguel knew Mr. Sampaio, also another stroke of luck was that one of Mr. Sampaio's instructors, Brigitte, happened to be in the office at the time of the call. They contacted Mr. Sampaio by phone to let him know that his wallet had been found. Mr. Sampaio wasn't aware that his wallet was missing.

Brigitte and Ms. Roguel arranged for Operations Manager Goree and Mr. Sampaio to meet at the UC Berkeley Extension at Noon. Mr. Sampaio's wallet was returned and he was very grateful. To put it in his words, "Thank You! I Feel Blessed Today!".

Good Job Ambassador Robert Walker Jr., you made a BIG difference today!



Breno Sampaio, Wallet Owner!

Welcome To Berkeley!

Another Tool Towards Welcoming!

On June 25th the Downtown Berkeley Association debuted its newest and soon to be brightest tool in its efforts to make Berkeley one of the most hospitable cities in the bay area!

The new, and naked, Welcome Kiosk is located at 2150 Shattuck. The management of the Chase Building kindly donated their private space located in BART Plaza/Constitution Square. The kiosk is equipped with Canopy Lights, Undercarriage Lighting, Display Shelves/Doors, CD/Radio and TV/Monitor.

The TV/Monitor will be used to run Berkeley oriented streaming video as well as be used inconjunction with a laptop to provide instant information and directions to visitors and residents in need. The ambassadors that man the kiosk will also refer many of the visitors and residents to the Visitors Center located on Addison Street.

Stop by the kiosk and say hello, you will be very welcomed!



Ambassador Team Leader Christopher Boss and the New Downtown Berkeley Association Welcome Kiosk



Ambassador Christopher Boss and the Welcome Kiosk at work.

Hospitality Statistics

April 2012 through June 2012

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Business Contact	'12	--	--	--	222	171	518	--	--	--	--	--	--	911
Hospitality Assistance	'12	--	--	--	372	1785	3126	--	--	--	--	--	--	5283
Maps / Publications Distributed	'12	--	--	--	110	0	1012	--	--	--	--	--	--	1122
Referral to Shelter/ Resources	'12	--	--	--	9	78	59	--	--	--	--	--	--	146
Street Population Contact	'12	--	--	--	0	742	1113	--	--	--	--	--	--	1855
Assistance Requested (business)	'12	--	--	--	26	113	270	--	--	--	--	--	--	409
Request for Police / Fire / EMS / Assistance	'12	--	--	--	9	18	13	--	--	--	--	--	--	40
Safety Escorts	'12	--	--	--	3	56	48	--	--	--	--	--	--	107
Safety Hazards Reported	'12	--	--	--	6	11	15	--	--	--	--	--	--	32
Trespassers / Loiterers	'12	--	--	--	132	163	185	--	--	--	--	--	--	480

Cleaning Statistics

April 2012 through June 2012

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
311 Requests	'12	--	--	--	20	5	15	--	--	--	--	--	--	40
Bills/Stickers Removed	'12	--	--	--	390	1974	2821	--	--	--	--	--	--	5185
Graffiti (illegal posting) - Removed	'12	--	--	--	33	185	307	--	--	--	--	--	--	525
Graffiti - Forwarded for Action	'12	--	--	--	13	66	14	--	--	--	--	--	--	93
Hazardous Waste Clean-up (human)	'12	--	--	--	5	18	82	--	--	--	--	--	--	105
Hazardous Waste Clean-up (pet)	'12	--	--	--	18	59	265	--	--	--	--	--	--	342
Landscape Large Planters	'12	--	--	--	8	11	35	--	--	--	--	--	--	54
Landscape Median Fingers	'12	--	--	--	6	0	0	--	--	--	--	--	--	6
Power Washing (block faces)	'12	--	--	--	12	4	6	--	--	--	--	--	--	22
Public Fixture / Furniture Painted	'12	--	--	--	17	0	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	22
Trash (lbs)	'12	--	--	--	975	1625	2213	--	--	--	--	--	--	4813
Trashcans Leveled Off	'12	--	--	--	22	39	103	--	--	--	--	--	--	164
Tree Wells Weeded	'12	--	--	--	42	21	45	--	--	--	--	--	--	108
Weed Abatement (block faces)	'12	--	--	--	8	5	42	--	--	--	--	--	--	55