

Hand In Hand

Using Entrepreneurial Skills to effect
Social Change

By Nadia Campbell



My name is Nadia Campbell, I am 25 years old and I live in Brooklyn, New York. In September I accepted the position of Generalist at a senior center in Manhattan. My role there is to assist the Directors with the daily management of the center, its programs and members.

Prior to that position, I opened a Day Spa in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Our services included Facials, Massage and Nail Services. I had a great staff and consistent clientele, but I had too many complications with our landlord and decided to close. Even though things did not work out as planned, we had a great year and we made a difference in the community and the lives of our clientele. We hear that people still stop by and ask if we will be opening another location, so that must mean we did something right!

In addition to holding the roles mentioned, I have still maintained my most meaningful role of CEO & Founder of The Victorian Hands Foundation. TVHF is a nonprofit organization that I started after I saw a special on elder abuse and neglect. I was only 11 years old, but I knew I wanted to do something to help. So I started volunteering at a local nursing home by simply spending time talking with the residents. I then started encouraging other students and friends to volunteer with me on Sundays.

People started asking us who we were, so I came up with the name The Helping Hands Club. In 1998 I renamed the organization The Victorian Hands Foundation, in honor of my late aunt Victoria. She was very giving and was a nurse and foster mother, in addition to having three biological children.

Our supporters saw the need and encouraged me to take the organization to the next level, which I did. I filed the in-

corporation papers, formed a board and then applied for 501(c)3 nonprofit status. Over the years, we have been able to help bridge the gap between seniors and youth in the community. And we continue to enhance awareness and respect for our elderly among younger generations.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship's (NFTE) Biztech program in 2002. NFTE has given me opportunities to network with like-minded entrepreneurs of all ages. I have also been able to have access to helpful resources and attend exclusive events.

TVHF has also received numerous grants, awards and recognition from organizations such as the New York Mets and Bank of America. We've been featured in several publications, including The New York Times, the Daily News and on Fox Business News.

My main secret of success is engaging in things that I am passionate about, and getting others to become passionate as well.

For more information on TVHF, please visit www.tvhf.org. To find out more about me and to request me as a speaker, visit www.havehopespeak.com. My work will be featured in the February issue of Essence Magazine as well as on the cable TV channel TNT. □

