

A young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a dark blue blazer over a white collared shirt, is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is standing in front of a wall that has been transformed into a large-scale art project. The word "YOUTH" is written in large, bold, black letters across the top of the wall. The background is filled with various graffiti, including the words "SPEARMAN" and "SORRELLE", and other smaller text and drawings. The overall atmosphere is one of creative expression and community involvement.

*2007 YouthBuild Philadelphia Graduate
Shardell Martin*

A bright young leader in the City of Philadelphia!

Shardell Martin: One of more than 1,300 young people whose lives have been transformed at YouthBuild.

Shardell Martin dropped out of high school at age 16 after becoming pregnant with her son, though she admits that she was not very interested in school at the time. She was concerned with fitting in and concentrated on spending time with friends, cutting class often and earning low grades. After the birth of her child, Shardell realized that she wanted more for herself and her family. She enrolled at YouthBuild Philadelphia in 2006, an action that changed her life.

Shardell found herself at YouthBuild. In addition to maintaining excellent grades, she won top honors for her socially-minded business plan at the 2006 Make Change Conference in Philadelphia, and was chosen to represent her peers at the 2007 Future Leaders' Mayoral Forum (where she posed questions to the candidates). Shardell received her high school diploma in June 2007 and enrolled at the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP). She plans to finish at CCP in 2009 and enroll in a four-year college for business or criminal justice.

Shardell is a representative of the Executive Director's Board for Trinidad Head Start (her son's school), the Pennsylvania Head Start Association Board and the YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School Board of Trustees. She was inducted into the YouthBuild USA Hall of Achievement in 2007.

Please support Friends of YouthBuild Philadelphia. Donate today by mailing a check made payable to Friends of Philadelphia Youth for Change Charter School (d.b.a. Friends of YouthBuild Philadelphia), 1231 North Broad St., 3rd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19122, or submit your donation online at www.youth-buildphilly.org. For more information, call (215) 627-8671 or e-mail info@youthbuildphilly.org.

The official registration and financial information of Philadelphia Youth for Change (d.b.a. YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School) may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

**Photo: Shardell Martin during a visit to YouthBuild in early 2008.*

