

local hero

Live **YOUR BEST** Life

Art Works!

Monica Haslip builds a haven for creativity on Chicago's South Side—and helps thousands of kids paint a brighter future.

→ **WHEN MONICA HASLIP**, then an executive for Black Entertainment Television, moved to the South Side of Chicago in 1991, she was lured by the soul food restaurants and proximity to her church. But she was disheartened to see kids playing on train tracks, gang members on street corners, and an absence of parks.

So Haslip—who trained as a painter in her native Alabama—started inviting local kids to her basement for art workshops she called the Little Black Pearl (LBP). “People thought I was crazy,” she admits. But she soon received a \$466,000 grant that helped her recruit local artists as teachers. Her goal: to help kids imagine a future for themselves beyond their blighted blocks. “I wanted them to see people who look like them, making a living as artists,” she says.

By 2005 LBP was so popular that Haslip, aided by the city, opened a 40,000-square-foot art and design center, complete with ceramic and painting studios and a darkroom. LBP now serves hundreds of kids each year (many of whom are wards of the state). Students learn to market and sell their work in the space's gallery; proceeds go to support LBP's programs.

In September Haslip, now 46, realized her latest dream: an on-site high school, which welcomed 175 kids, most of whom are academically challenged or at risk of dropping out. She says she hopes LBP's unique resources will help them “want to go to school again.” As she notes, “Art touches kids in ways that other things can't.” —**LESLIE GOLDMAN**



Haslip at the Little Black Pearl Art and Design Center.

Hold It Right There

Chris Shinouskis makes sure everything in your car has its place.

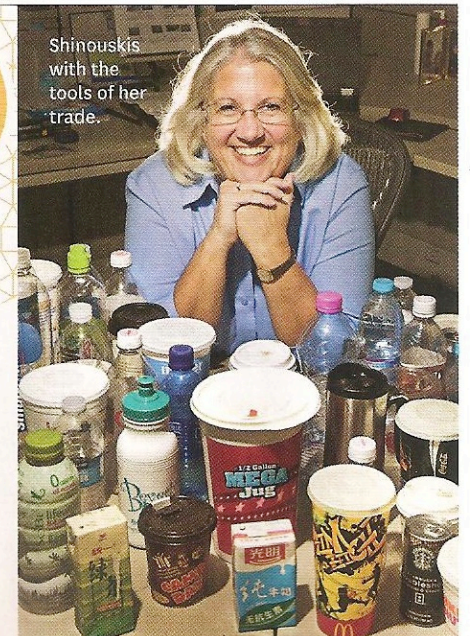
Known around General Motors' Michigan office as the Cup Holder Lady, Chris Shinouskis is in charge of designing a berth for any kind of beverage, along with all pockets, glove compartments, and trunks for all GM vehicles. The position was created after Shinouskis's daughter

complained that their car had only one seat-back pocket. Since 2005 Shinouskis has pondered the variables that affect what we bring into our cars (convertible owners need a spot to stash sunblock; people in hot climates carry bigger water bottles; residents of China drink

from square boxes of green tea) to deliver smarter storage. “When your arms are full and it's raining, you don't want to wonder, *Where does my cup go, or my cell phone, or this umbrella?*” she says. “If everything has a place, I've done my job.”

—**RACHEL BERTSCHE**

you do what?!



Shinouskis with the tools of her trade.