



THE COLLABORATIVE CONNECTION

The Washington, DC Family Support Publication of the Healthy Families ♦ Thriving Communities Collaborative Council

April 2007

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Mayor Adrian Fenty was busy with his 100-day plan and could not participate in an interview with the Collaborative Connection. He did, however, provide written responses to questions.

Speaking from your experience as chair of the City Council's Human Services Committee, please give me your assessment of the DC government's efforts to reduce the number of at-risk families who are homeless, jobless and in need of other essential services?

The District of Columbia's previous efforts to reduce the number of at-risk families has not been as comprehensive as they could have been, and I intend to expand them under my leadership as mayor. That said, Human Services has done and continues to do important work and make a positive difference for at-risk families. The most recent advancements include the launching of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to help families at risk of eviction stay in their homes. Human Services has also recently established a partnership with Georgetown University Hospital to expand health care service at DC Village to include an on-site clinic five days a week with evening services. It is innovative

and important human services like these that I will increase and deliver to families in need as mayor.

It is extremely important and laudable that education is your number one priority, however, there are at-risk families who have needs that distract them from focusing on education. Where does increasing resources for at-risk youth and families fit in to your list of priorities?

There is a great need to increase resources for at-risk youth and families. I intend to see to it that services for at-risk youth and families are increased across the spectrum of District government agencies and private community-based organizations by providing support to those that already have effective programs serving youth and families. This includes programs . . . that provide prevention and early intervention services to families who may otherwise become a part of the District's child welfare, juvenile justice, homeless, mental health, and criminal justice systems.

What will be your strategy for ensuring that the CFSA's Court supervision ends soon?

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DC Mayor Adrian Fenty

Conference Opening Session to Explore Collaborative History

Among the speakers at the opening general session of the Collaboratives' Annual Conference will be Jerome G. Miller, Ph.D., co-founder of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, who served as the federal court receiver of

the DC child welfare system from 1995-1997. Speakers at this session will share their vision and thinking when they created what we now refer to as the Healthy Families Thriving Communities Collaboratives and the HFTC Collaborative Council. Others on the panel will include Robert Brown, vice president for program development, Center for Community Empowerment; Judy Meltzer, deputy director, Center for the Study of Social Policy; and Fred Taylor, former executive director, For Love of Children. The panel will be moderated by HFTC Collaborative Council Chairman Eugene Kinlow.

Other general sessions will address Collaborative's historical journey, early partners, expanding partner circle, and impact.

Twenty workshops will address topics relating to:

- Framework of the Collaborative Movement
- Housing Challenges and Opportunities
- Resources to Support Families and Communities

- Accessing Resources in DC
- Fatherhood

The Conference will be held April 26-27, 2007 at the Kellogg Conference Hotel at Gallaudet University. For more information, or to register, visit www.hftcc.org, or call 202-299-0900.



Jerome G. Miller, Ph.D., co-founder of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives

HFTC Collaborative Council
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DATED MATERIAL

Protecting Our Children in April and Always



Jacquelyn Henry, Executive Director, HFTC Collaborative Council

National Child Abuse Prevention Month is an opportunity to raise awareness of the need to keep children safe, provide the support families need to stay together, and raise children and youth to be happy, stable adults.

The Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives were designed to build networks of support that are accessible to families before crisis, resulting in fewer cases of child abuse and neglect and reducing the risk that children are removed from their families and communities. In-

deed, one of our shared principles is "Commitment to Children." We are committed to the safety of children, to their right to be free from abuse and neglect, and to their right to achieve their full potential as members of our community.

Primary and secondary prevention services to families are part of the Collaboratives' core services with the Child and Family Services Agency. These prevention services are provided through information and referral, family assessment, parenting education and support, and support for fathers.

The Collaboratives and many of their partner organizations will mark this month with special events, providing important information to the community on how to recognize and report child abuse and neglect.

For more information, contact any of the seven Collaboratives (listed on this page), or visit the Web sites of the Child and Family Services Agency (<http://cfsa.dc.gov>), the Child Welfare League of America (cwla.org), or the Child Welfare Information Gateway (childwelfare.gov).



Become a foster parent, respite parent, or 24/7 emergency parent to keep siblings together if possible.

Homes in DC and Maryland are desperately needed. Training and strong support constantly provided.

Give children opportunities and have a positive impact by calling Tonya Logan at the Board of Child Care, (202) 291-3330, ext. 107.

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The Collaborative Council provides technical assistance, training, and advocacy for a network of seven neighborhood-based Collaboratives in Washington, DC. These Collaboratives, each with its own governance board, offer a range of services directed toward strengthening at-risk families and building supportive communities so that all residents can reach their full potential.

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Human Services Committee Collaboratives' Research Agenda Outlined During Council Hearings

By Elaine W. Smith

HFTC Collaborative Council Executive Director Jacquelyn Henry provided an update to the DC Council's Human Services Committee in February on the evaluation efforts of the Collaboratives.

The Council is implementing the recommendations of the Urban Institute for developing the Collaboratives' research agenda that included steps to improve the functioning of the Efforts to Outcomes data management system, and has: been providing weekly technical assistance to the Collaboratives on their data collection processes, revised the intake program to make data collection more efficient, made certain data fields mandatory to ensure the accurate collection of baseline demographic information; and instituted the use of a new family functioning assessment that corresponds to the outcomes

identified in the organization's program logic model.

Through the updated ETO system and the new assessment tool, the Collaboratives will be able to systematically track four central outcomes: (1) Strengthened Social Connections; (2) Increased Parental Efficacy; (3) Improved Child Health and Safety; and (4) Sustained Stability in the Family's Environment.

The Council has partnered with CFSA to initiate a probabilistic data matching study with Child Trends, Inc. Child Trends is a national research organization dedicated to improving the lives of children. CFSA officially signed a \$75,000 contract with Child Trends, Inc. in January 2007 to conduct the study. The study will determine both the recidivism rates for families referred to the Collaboratives by CFSA (as either di-

verted or supportive cases), and those referred to the Collaboratives through non-CFSA sources, including self referrals. The study will analyze how many cases served by the Collaboratives between April 1, 2005 and September 30, 2005 were subsequently re-reported to CFSA.

The study will provide both CFSA and the Collaboratives with baseline data about the number and types of cases that return to the child welfare system even after intervention. The researchers at Child Trends caution that this analysis should not, by any means, be viewed as a definitive answer to the question of whether or not the Collaboratives prevent re-reports of abuse or neglect. For example, it is sometimes the case that the Collaboratives themselves must report a family to CFSA for investigation. Only a rigorous experimental study that includes a treatment and

control group will be able to answer the question of how well the Collaboratives prevent initial and re-reports.

The Council contracted with Child Trends, Inc. to develop a series of three questionnaires with a representative sample of clients referred to the Collaboratives by CFSA. The resulting evaluation will measure changes in family conditions and circumstances pre- and post-Collaborative intervention.

The Council contracted with an independent consultant to conduct a case file review of a random, representative sample of Collaborative cases. The resulting report will provide baseline data on service needs and will show whether the Collaboratives met stated needs, provided referrals, and were able to stabilize families through their services. Quantitative data will be supplemented by qualitative

Continued on page 6

SWWR Support Helps Client Get Life in Order

By Rachel Lewis

The life of Jeanne LaShawn Cox has been a roller-coaster ride. From a series of incarcerations, battles with alcohol and drug addiction, and homelessness—it seemed the only thing Jeanne had not seen in her life was hope.

Through the services of the South Washington/West of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative (SWWR), Jeanne is coming to see that the road ahead of her might not be quite as daunting. For one, the life she is creating for her 15-month-old daughter Grace includes an apartment, which the Collaborative as-

sisted her in securing through the Shelter Plus Housing Program. It also includes an education.

On September 21, 2006, Jeanne received a certificate for completing a 10-week parenting skills program at Sasha Bruce Youthwork. She credits Barbara Dorman, her Family Support Worker for this. When interviewed, Jeanne reflected back on this experience as a milestone saying, "it was the first thing I ever completed in my life."

Now, at age 37, Jeanne is on her way to completing even more. She is currently obtaining her GED, again at the advice and encouragement of Barbara Dorman.

As Jeanne said in her testimony before the DC City Council's Human Services Committee in February, Barbara Dorman and others from SWWR have served as tireless advocates for her as she sought to put her life back in order. Jeanne expressed gratitude to the Collaborative, "They've been real helpful to me and my daughter."

When her apartment became infested with rodents, the Collaborative followed up with the negligent landlord that wasn't addressing Jeanne's pleas for help and made the landlord come to her apartment and fix the holes in the wall.

In addition to helping Jeanne acquire a healthier physical environment, the Collaborative also helped her begin to cultivate a more healthy internal state of mind. Family support workers at the Collaborative directed Jeanne to the Core Service Agency for Mental Health Counseling and



Jeanne LaShawn Cox and Grace Cox

provided her with tokens to cover the cost of her transportation to her appointments.

Jeanne is now taking medication for her mental illness and her once "combat-

ive and evasive" persona has given way to that of a motivated citizen and dedicated mother.

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Collaboratives Embrace Housing First A Priority Support to Low-Income Families

By Louvenia Williams

The development of the HFTC Collaboratives afforded us the opportunity to build a network of supports for families that included resources such as child care, job training, parenting support and educational classes, youth enrichment and educational supports, health linkages, etc. Because of our location in the neighborhoods, we were also able to build relationships with housing management companies and housing developers. These relationships and resources linkages are critical to our ability to assist families in stabilizing their family situation.

In 1998, two of the seven HFTC Collaboratives agreed to participate in a pilot program sponsored by the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness. The goal of this initiative, named the "Community Care Grant Program," was to move homeless families from homelessness to permanent housing, bypassing entry into emergency shelters and transitional housing. The Collaboratives agreed to participate in this initiative because as neighborhood-based family support agencies, we were constantly faced with the challenge of assisting fami-

lies who were either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. With our overall mission of preventing children from entering foster care by supporting and preserving families, we could not ignore the impact that housing had on our ability to stabilize families. This made participating in this project a natural fit with our work.

The first year of the initiative, which targeted 40 families, achieved a success rate of 98%, success being acquiring and maintaining permanent housing for at least twelve months. In the second year of this initiative, the remaining five Collaboratives joined the process and the number of families served with this initiative has continued to grow each year with an average number of families now being served in the range of 200 to 300 families a year. The number of families that we serve is only limited by the availability of resources. In the course of our involvement with this initiative, we learned that the Community Partnership's approach was modeled after a national program referred to as "Housing First."

The Philosophy of "Housing First" is that the first and foremost need and priority of homeless families is securing permanent housing. Supportive services are provided as needed and desired by the individual or family. The traditional approach prior to "Housing First" was to provide permanent housing after the family or individual has gone through a service-rich program. Our experience has taught us that most of our families in need of housing do not need to be placed in shelters or transitional programs for long periods of time. While these types of programs may be appropriate for high-risk families who do not have the capacity to manage a household, they are not necessary for families we encounter who have

just had a bad run of luck and need a little support to get back on their feet. Many of these services and supports can be provided along with advocating and assisting them in securing permanent housing.

Rapid Housing

Based on the success of the Community Care Grant Program, CFSA requested a proposal from the HFTC Collaboratives in March 2005, to assist with the development of their Rapid Housing Program. The program would utilize up to a million dollars in funding that they received from the federal government to (1) assist families who are preparing to be reunified with their children to secure housing; (2) assist youth aging out of foster care to secure permanent housing; and (3) to support families in their moms and infant substance abuse program to secure housing upon completion of the program. In the first year of this initiative, the Collaboratives assisted CFSA to secure permanent housing for 28 families who were being reunified as well as families who were at risk of having their children removed due to inadequate living conditions.

The first year of the CFSA Rapid Housing Program was overwhelmingly successful. In approximately six months, the Collaboratives successfully placed 53 youth who had aged out or were aging out of foster care along with the 28 families, for a total of 81 placements into permanent housing. In the second year, the Collaboratives housed a total of 16 families being reunified, 35 families being preserved and 85 youth who had aged out of foster care. In addition to assisting these youth and families in securing permanent housing, the Collaboratives provided supportive services as needed for up to a year.



Louvenia Williams, executive director, Edgewood-Brookland Family Support Collaborative

Emergency Assistance Programs

In addition to helping families secure permanent housing, the Collaboratives assist families in accessing other housing and emergency assistance services available to residents in the District of Columbia. These resources and the assistance provided often prevent families from losing their homes as well as prevent children from being subjected to unsafe living conditions. In FY2006, the Collaboratives assisted more than 500 families in securing these resources. These programs include the federal Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program and the recently funded DC Emergency Assistance program. More information regarding these programs can be found on the Web site of the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (www.community-partnership.com)



Fenty Responds to Collaborative Questions (from page 1)

We are currently negotiating an amended implementation plan to achieve the goals that the Child and Family Services Agency and the District must meet to exit court oversight of child welfare. We are giving CFSA the tools and support they need to lower caseloads for individual social workers and strengthen internal capacity to achieve quality practice. Over the next 18 months, we will focus on further strengthening the entire child welfare system, including our many public and private partners that work with CFSA on a daily basis.

Many families are in need of affordable housing and there seems to be an enormous lack of housing. What is your plan to make sure that affordable means: housing for those who make less than \$20,000.00 per year?

Ensuring that everyone can afford to live in the District of Columbia is a top priority for my administration. I recently announced the selection of 23 affordable housing and community development projects for underwriting. These projects could yield a total of 1,300 new units of affordable housing. These units are just

the beginning of my plans for ensuring that the District of Columbia is an affordable city. I will soon announce the appointment of an affordable housing coordinator under the deputy mayor for planning and economic development to oversee the creation and development of affordable housing for our residents.

What is your assessment of the work of the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives?

Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives are a valuable part of the local safety net for children and

families. They are a unique local resource in preserving and supporting families in their neighborhoods and communities. The partnership between Child and Family Services Agency and the Collaboratives is strong and always evolving to best serve the families that rely on them. For example, CFSA recently revised the menu of services it purchases from the Collaboratives. Another important evolutionary step underway is evaluation by independent reviewers to determine the effectiveness of Collaborative services.

Seven Receive Parent Leader Awards

By Elaine W. Smith

The DC Children's Trust Fund, in partnership with the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives, recently recognized seven individuals as 2007 Parent Leaders of the Year:

- Esther Miranda, Ward 1 (Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative)
- Allen Brockington, Ward 2 (North Capitol Family Support Collaborative)
- William Anderson, Ward 4 (Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative)

Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative)

- Kenneth Dawson, Ward 5 (Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative)
- Alisha Bolden, Ward 6 (South Washington/West of the River)
- Patricia Hill-McMillan, Ward 7 (East River Family Strengthening Collaborative)
- Marty Clark, Ward 8 (Health Services for Children with Special Needs)



Kenneth Dawson and Kim Palmer of Beacon House



Top: Robert Jones, East River Collaborative; Karen Feinstein, Georgia Avenue Collaborative; Samuel Tramel, South Washington Collaborative; Kinaya Sokoya, DC Children's Trust Fund; Barbara Kamara, DC Early Childhood Education Administration; Thurman Walker, North Capitol Collaborative; and Tony Dugger, North Capitol Collaborative. Middle (left): William Anderson and Karen Feinstein. (Middle (right): Samuel Tramel, Alisha Bolden, and Kinaya Sokoya. Bottom: Kinaya Sokoya announces Kwanza poetry award winners. Imani McLaurin (right) won first place (computer) and Quesi Harris won second place (\$100).

Kenneth Dawson a 54-year-old father, said his son "has the best years of my life and my undivided attention. When children see that you are responsive, they will do their best." William Anderson, who is raising five children on his own, said, "I raised my kids the way my mother raised me." Alisha Bolden said that through her participation in the South Washington/West of the River parent support group, she was encouraged to go back to school for paralegal studies and has earned an associate's degree. Patricia Hill-McMillan, an advocate for families and children who is raising her grandchild says, she is "determined to reach out and touch another parent or child every day."

Carolyn Abdullah, Parents Anonymous project director, said, "Parenting is equally the most challenging and rewarding thing that we can do. We are [pleased]

to honor parents that are showing leadership, and are proud of their strength and fortitude." Barbara Kamara, administrator, DC Early Childhood Education Administration, presented a proclamation recognizing the 2007 parent leaders.

Parent Leader Allen Brockington



Thurman Walker, chairman, NCCI; Barbara Kamara, ECEA; Allen Brockington and his family; Tony Dugger, NCCI; Kinaya Sokoya, DC Children's Trust Fund

Allen Brockington was referred to the North Capitol Neighborhood Collaborative by the Sursum Corda Housing Cooperative, which requires unemployed cooperative members to participate in personal development and/or job training programs. Brockington completed the NCCI "Quenching the Fatherhood Thirst" curriculum and graduated from the NCCI Fatherhood Program. In the NCCI program, he learned about the alarming rates of father absence and the impact it has on children. "Parents are teachers to their children and adult behavior speaks volumes to kids" was a recurring theme that Brockington acknowledges taking from the class. He currently practices the skills he learned from the program with his family, and now works two jobs to support his family. During his free time, he enjoys moments with his 2-year-old daughter. He anticipates even greater fulfillment with the upcoming birth of a son.



Fatherhood Education, Empowerment and Development (FEED)

Feeding the Minds and Activating the Power of DC's Fathers

What is FEED?

The Fatherhood Education, Empowerment and Development (FEED) program is a new program sponsored by the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives and the HFTC Collaborative Council that offers services to fathers who want to strengthen their connection to their children.

What Does FEED Offer?

Financial Opportunities: FEED offers fathers links to resources to help them become more financially stable and able to support their children.

Learning Opportunities: FEED offers 6- and 12-week training programs for fathers interested in forming closer and more meaningful connections with their children.

Leadership Opportunities: FEED offers two ways to become leaders and role models in the community:

- Limited paid internships to fathers who are trained in and who master the *Quenching the Father Thirst* curriculum, and demonstrate that they can become mentors for fathers just starting the training.
- Volunteer experiences through *Watch D.O.G.S.* (Dads of Great Students), a national program focused on the prevention of school violence by using the positive influence of fathers and father-figures in the city's school.

Why should you become involved?

You can make a difference! According to the National Center for Fathering, an estimated 24.7 million children live in homes without their fathers (36.6%) Seventy percent of all urban families have absent fathers, compared to 25% of households nationwide. Children who live without their fathers are, on average, two to three times more likely to be poor, to use drugs, and to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioral problems. Children with involved, loving fathers are more likely to do well in school, have high self-esteem, avoid drugs, avoid skipping school, and avoid criminal activity.

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Funding for this program is provided under a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (DHHS-ACF). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this ad are those of the Collaboratives and do not necessarily reflect the views of DHHS-ACF.

Council Hearings (from page 3)

data collected through two focus groups. A sample of approximately 350 case files have already been reviewed by the research staff. Two hundred files containing adequate documentation have been included in the study. Data has been coded and is being cleaned for analysis. Focus group invitation lists have been created.

The Council used FY06 risk assessments to conduct an analysis of whether families who receive Collaborative services have reduced risk levels upon case closure.

In February 2007 the Council initiated a partnership with the Center for the Study of Social Policy to update the 1998 case study on the Collaboratives entitled, "The Development of Neighborhood-Based Child Welfare Services in the Dis-

trict of Columbia." The updated case study will present an outline of the Collaborative philosophy and framework, as well as place the Collaborative movement in a national context.

Henry also highlighted key Collaborative accomplishments during FY 2006, as follows:

- Ensured successful transitions for 241 CFSA youth through youth aftercare services.
- Accelerated reunification for 80 CFSA families.
- Accelerated case closure for 390 CFSA supportive assistance cases.
- Prevented removals of 106 children through Family Team Meetings.
- Increased kin placement for 293 children

- Ensured a safety net for 345 cases diverted and not opened with CFSA.

Henry also commended the CFSA for its progress toward achieving the goals of the LaShawn court order and encouraged the city to continue to support the agency in sustaining its gains and obtaining full compliance. She also expressed appreciation for the leadership of Uma Uhluwalia, stating that she "diligently worked to advance the partnership with the community."

Kinlow Suggests More Partnerships with Other Agencies

In other Collaborative testimony, HFTC Council Chairman Eugene Kinlow stated that the Collaboratives "have never been

funded to any substantial degree to do the human capital development part of our vision." He urged the committee to press all the agencies under its jurisdiction to consider shifting more of their work to the neighborhood through the Collaboratives and its partners. "It was our original vision that the Collaboratives would become a non-categorical network of supports available to families prior to, not after crisis," Kinlow said. "Far too many families come to our doors only when they are homeless or days away from becoming homeless, when they have already entered the child welfare system or when mental health or substance abuse issues place children at imminent risk of being placed in foster care."

DC Idol Hands Conducts Youth Anti-Violence Competition

By Rachel Lewis

“The Beginning of the Dream” was the theme of flyers that police officers circulated among local community groups, handed out to juveniles they encountered while on patrol, and posted up on along the streets of Ward 1 neighborhoods recently plagued by crime.

Saturday, February 24, 2007, the first anti-violence event of its kind took place in Washington, DC. The event was conceived by Ward 1 3D Substation Officer B. T. Davis, who in her spare time founded “DC Idol Hands,” a local nonprofit dedicated to “stopping the violence through peace, knowledge, and healing.”

Officer Davis and an army of volunteers set forth to turn the tables that Saturday as they gave local youth the chance to play the role of the police in two planned crime scenarios.

How would the youth react when put in the shoes of officers forced to make split-second decisions in the face of unknown threats?

Davis’s volunteer army for the day included Officers Ilarraza and Quiles, two of her bi-lingual substation colleagues, DC Metropolitan Police Department retirees, several representatives of the local Alliance of Concerned Men, Department of Parks and Recreation Community Outreach liaisons, Lieutenant Charnette



Participants participate in police role-play activities during “Beginning of the Dream” anti-violence competition.

on getting the day’s activities going.

Youth participating in the event included residents of Triangle Shelter House, other neighborhood peers, most notably a young man whose friend recently had been gunned down on 13th Street.

After sharing some hot chocolate and

The youth were informed that the team exhibiting the highest marks at the end of the scenario would win a free ski trip to the Mountains of West Virginia.

As Officer Ilarraza stood behind the cash register preparing to play the part of the armed robbery victim, Officer Quiles explained that “Sprulles Store,” the scene of the armed robbery scenario, was in fact the actual storefront where an armed robbery had occurred just months before.

Samuel Washington-Bey, a representative of the Coalition for Peace, was one of two men soon to be arrested by one of the youth participants. At the age of 20, he was arrested in real-life. The next 30 years of his life were spent in jail. He spoke candidly about his experiences, “I wished I would have known ... back in 1975, these types of programs never happened.”

Minutes later, the team of teens approached the scene with blue lights flash-

ing. They took off in hot pursuit of Mr. Washington-Bey who ran down an alley way next to the store. After catching the two suspects, the teens had to pat them down while calling in a series of codes to dispatchers. One of the teens picked up one of the fake guns to move it out of the reach of the suspects and was promptly reprimanded by Lieutenant Robinson who deducted points from their total score for “touching the evidence.”

When it seemed his role of police officer couldn’t get any more complicated, youth participant Travis Armstrong got a surprise as Washington-Bey and the other suspect took off sprinting when his back was turned.

Later that afternoon when the teens were told that they had all in fact won a ski trip for their excellent efforts, Armstrong reflected on the suspect escape incident saying to one of the police officers, “I see how ya’ll feel.”



Robinson and Sergeant Eckles, head of school violence prevention and a 19 year veteran of the MDP.

When addressing colleagues around her during the adult volunteer huddle before the event, Eckles pointed out “Everyone who is here today is a resource.” She and others shared their excitement about this historic collaboration and unique event. Much praise was directed to Officer Davis who humbly dismissed the attention and seemed entirely focused

muffins with police officers and other volunteers, the youth were split into two teams and each were assigned a role to play in either the “Armed Robbery Scenario” or the “Domestic Violence Scenario.”

Each of the two youth teams were paired with a surveillance officer and independent judges who were charged with ranking the teens’ performance in several categories such as professionalism, tragedy prevention, handling suspects, preserving the crime scene, and teamwork.



Above: Participants receive instructions on the anti-violence competition. Right: Participants act out the armed robbery scenario in front of the Sprulles Store.

Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative

Marian Urquilla Selected for National Leadership Program

Marian Urquilla, executive director of the Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative (CHSFSC), has been selected to participate in the 2007-2008 Annie E. Casey Foundation's Children and Family Fellowship program. The Children and Family Fellowship is one of the Casey Foundation's strategies to build and continue to develop the leadership of individuals currently at the helm of pub-

lic and nonprofit organizations working to improve outcomes for children and their families.

The 2007-2008 fellowship class is composed of 16 accomplished leaders from around the country. Children and Family Fellows are selected from both the public and nonprofit arenas and work in the fields of family support, responsible community redevelopment, social justice,

child welfare, juvenile justice, health, mental health, education, law, economic development, public policy, and advocacy.

The Fellowship is an intensive 18-month executive leadership program designed to increase the ability of leaders to improve outcomes for America's vulnerable families. While balancing the demands of her current position, Marian will participate in a series of learning opportunities including executive seminars, site

visits to agencies and organizations throughout the country that have pioneered innovative service delivery models, and work within the CHSFSC to strengthen the organization's capacity to improve outcomes for children and families.

For more information on the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Children and Family Fellowship program, visit www.aecf.org.

Northwest Weed and Seed's New Partnerships

By Jessica Alvaraz

The Northwest Weed and Seed is a project of the Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative that promotes community safety and neighborhood development. Northwest Weed and Seed works daily with local law enforcement agencies, community policing, crime prevention, violence intervention and neighborhood restoration. The program is designed to foster working relationships between residents and DC Government agencies, law enforcement officials, US Attorney's Office, DCPS officials, community- and faith-based organizations and local business.

The Northwest Weed and Seed is expanding its partnership base and this spring will begin its targeted service delivery with both the New Commandment Baptist Church (NCBC) and the Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Collaborative (GARCEC). This partnership will

strengthen and expand the multi-agency network of support services, education, life enrichment programs, and advocacy initiatives to address the complex and

Seed has allocated resources in an effort to enhance NCBC's ex-offender re-entry initiative. Northwest Weed and Seed will provide capacity-building resources to

"Northwest Weed and Seed has produced notable success in the community. I foresee even more successes with the new partnerships."

—Albert Herring, U.S. Attorney's Office

overlapping needs of ex-offenders, young people and families living in the immediate area.

New Commandment Baptist Church (NCBC) is located in one of the city's designated crime hot spots. Weed and

help NCBC deliver the necessary services and programs, such as quarterly employment resource fairs, employment readiness trainings and mentoring programs. In addition, the Northwest Weed and Seed has leveraged relationships with

Americorp and VISTA volunteers to work solely with NCBC's re-entry population. The VISTA volunteer assigned to this site will be responsible for fostering relationships with community partners, businesses, and professional services and associations in order to develop a comprehensive network of communications, coordination of employment opportunities, and other supportive services.

In addition, this spring, Northwest Weed and Seed will support GARCEC, to establish the Men's Resource Drop-In Center, which will focus on bridging service gaps and providing critical programs and support to men with the goal of developing responsible parenting and rebuilding families. Services and programs will include employment, literacy, counseling and overall family support. For more information, contact Florence Michel, Weed and Seed site coordinator at 202-319-7599, ext. 207.

Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative

Building the Capacity of a Non-Traditional Social Service Agency to Deliver Support Services

By Ange Anglade

Beacon House has played a major role in serving high-risk youth and their families in EBFSC's targeted community and guiding the development of EBFSC. Since 1989, Beacon House has provided educational and enrichment programs to youth in the Edgewood community. Beacon House offers at-risk youth ages 14-18 a safe environment where they receive study hall, tutoring, and literacy programs as well as teen programs and summer day camps. Since its inception, EBFSC has supported the continuous growth of Beacon House as a primary provider of services and programs to youth in Edgewood. Although Beacon House has served in multiple capacities over the years, it has never been officially viewed as a provider of family support programs. Earlier this

year, EBFSC began working with Beacon House to build its capacity to provide family preservation and supportive services that address the growing needs of the families and children with whom they interact daily. EBFSC has assisted Beacon House in formally establishing a family support component to their overall youth program by expanding the YTRIP (Youth Truancy Intervention Reduction Program), currently at Browne Junior High School, to serve students attending Noyes and Charles Young elementary schools.

This additional component will address social and environmental issues that place children at risk and provide greater access to family resources. EBFSC and Beacon House believe that identifying and providing services to truant youth while they are in elementary school can

increase their chances of success once they enter middle or junior high school. In cooperation with school personnel, the EBFSC and Beacon House team plans to provide intervention and family services that will increase school attendance, academic performance, and overall family well-being.

In collaboration with EBFSC, Beacon House recently hired a family support worker assigned to work closely with EBFSC and the schools to identify truant students. EBFSC staff will provide overall program oversight, supervision, coaching, evaluation and training to Beacon House. The staff of Beacon House will be trained by EBFSC to provide truancy intervention and support services to youth participants identified by the school, using Family Group Conferencing and Fam-

ily Development models. YTRIP is designed to address the at-risk barriers that often hinder students from achieving academic success as well as family needs. Youth participating in this program will be monitored through Beacon House's academic and enrichment programs.

Research indicates that children who are connected to after-school programs have greater success in achieving their academic goals. Connecting these children to Beacon House's programs and providing intensive monitoring to the youth and case management to families is a recipe for success. EBFSC and Beacon House are excited about the possibility of offering families in the Edgewood Community on-site wrap-around family supportive services.

Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative

PEP Sponsors Parent Educator Certification Training

In December 2006 the Georgia Avenue Collaborative received funding from the DC Escheated Estates Fund to expand its Parent Empowerment Program. Through this funding, the Collaborative sponsored six people to participate in the Parent Educator Certification Course conducted by Catholic Community Services. On Tuesday, February 20, 2007, they completed the training. The graduates are: *Maria T. Wilson, Robert Hobson, Jamie Ramirez, Robert Sanders, Jr., Mary Smith, and Vanessa Ramirez.*

By having these additional people certified as parent educators, the Collaborative can extend its reach in providing parent education classes and workshops to the community. GARCEC believes that parent education is one of the front line strategies for preventing child abuse and neglect. New trainees will receive assistance in setting up their first six-week sessions. Locations for these upcoming sessions are to be announced. To refer parents to upcoming PEP sessions, contact Shakira Gantt, community resource specialist, at 202-722-1815, ext. 351.

Opportunities Fair

In partnership with the First Church of Seventh Day Adventist, ROC North, and the Assembly of Petworth, the Georgia Avenue Collaborative is hosting its second annual Opportunities Fair on Thursday, April 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the 800 block of Shepherd Street, NW. The Opportunities Fair was initiated when the GARCEC Fatherhood Initiative staff saw a need to address the numerous social, emotional and economic challenges facing men in transition. Many women showed an interest and wanted to participate, so this year's event has been expanded to offer resources that benefit men in transition, as well as women and children. The goal is to expose individuals in the community to opportunities that empower the entire family.

The fair will feature a mix of employers, training programs, health screenings, resources and information. Organizations represented at this year's event include Giant Warehouse, Iron Workers Local #5, Goodwill Industries, the DC Department Of Employment Services, Career Blazers, All Labor Solutions, Unity Health Care, the National Kidney Foundation, the Office on Latino Affairs, and the Latin American Youth Center – just to name a few. Collaborative staff will be on hand to assist individuals in need with referrals to support services and to recruit participants for the Fatherhood, Education, Empowerment and Development (FEED) program.

For more information, contact Shakira Gantt, community resource specialist, at (202) 722-1815, ext. 351.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Robert Sanders, Jr.

Robert Sanders, Jr. was an ambassador to the Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative at its first site on Allison Street, NW, in 1999, and he quickly became an active member. He has continued to look out for the Collaborative staff and clients as a neighbor, member and champion of children ever since.

Dr. Sanders, who holds a masters in education and a doctorate in ministry, has a 32-year history of working for DC Public Schools. He was the building supervisor at Taft Junior High School, Backus Middle School and Miners Elementary School. Following his retirement in 2003, he was an administrator at the New School for Enterprise and Development Public Charter School. Dr. Sanders is currently volunteering 40 hours a week as an administrator at Macfarland Middle School.

During his tenure in schools and in the Petworth community, Dr. Sanders has always served as a gatekeeper, the kind of person that young people come to for help. He has the heart, wisdom and listening ability to deal with any kind of problem or challenge that a young person is facing.

Dr. Sanders fulfills more than one role at GARCEC. He has helped with community engagement and currently serves on the Budget and Finance Committee. Recently, the Collaborative sponsored his becoming certified by Catholic Community Services as a parent educator, and he will be assisting us to reach a broader community of parents, including fathers, as we expand our outreach and prevention work through the Parent Empowerment Program.

Congratulations to Dr. Robert Sanders, Jr., a resident who truly belongs in the community spotlight.



EBFSC Accepting Minigrant Applications

The Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative's Community Minigrant is now available! Every year, EBFSC makes small mini-grants available to residents in the community that are looking to sponsor events and activities that strengthen the community. The theme for EBFSC's minigrant program this year is "Schools, Community, and You!" For 2007, EBFSC is specifically searching for applicants that are interested in partnering with schools in the EBFSC target area. We want to continue our commitment to the

strong connection that exists between families, communities, and schools. There are minimal eligibility rules that have to be met in order to qualify for an EBFSC minigrant, and the qualifications are as follows:

- Applicants must live in an EBFSC target area.
- Priority consideration will be given to those that collaborate with Ward 5 schools to complete projects.
- Projects must support families and

children and strengthen the community.

- Applicants may not profit financially from the project.
- Traditional service providers will not be considered, however, they may act as a supportive network for residents or groups seeking grants.
- Grants will vary based on project needs, but will not exceed \$1000.

EBFSC staff is available to provide technical assistance for those applying for a minigrant. For more information about EBFSC's Minigrant Program or to receive an application, please contact Jann'l Henry at 202-388-3302, ext. 1007 or jhenry@ebfsc.org.

North Capitol Neighborhood Development Tearful Farewells to a Solid Leader

By Tony Dugger

An anonymous writer once said, “A solid foundation today is necessary for a promising future tomorrow.” These words describe the leadership of Charon Ellis who was executive director of the North Capitol Collaborative from 2001 to 2007. After exceeding her goals over five years, Ellis offered her resignation to the NCCI Board of Directors in March 2007.

She started at the North Capitol Collaborative as the Weed and Seed program coordinator. When the executive director, Edgar Reese, resigned in 2001, she was selected by the Board of Directors to assume leadership of the organization.

Ellis went to work immediately. She hired a deputy director to manage day to

day operations, a community engagement director to build a new public image, and a clinical director to supervise case management. She later hired a chief financial officer who worked feverishly to establish better financial systems.

She guided the organization through several crises, yet, she never took the spotlight for herself but acknowledged her staff for their hard work and diligence.

She was also instrumental in building reserves for NCCI that contributed to the organization’s solvency. Her accomplishments are exemplary. She leaves North Capitol Collaborative as a financially stable organization with several years of “unqualified audits,” a compe-

tent senior management group, and a new public perception of the organization among partners.

“...Sometimes I have mixed feelings as I leave North Capitol. So much time and energy have been spent building this organization and working with the community; it’s like a baby you bond to,” says Ellis. “There comes a time when you know your part is done.”

For many, her resignation was a huge surprise. She is acknowledged by the Board and staff for fairness and honesty. She will be remembered by some for contributing to a solid foundation at the North Capitol Collaborative with the expectation of much promise in the future.



Charon Ellis, NCCI former executive director

South Washington/West of the River SWWR Sponsors Housing Forum

By Samuel Tramel

Housing is an ever increasing need of many of our families. To address this need, SWWR held monthly panel discussions on housing and home ownership in February and March. More than 70 residents, including those from four public housing communities (James Creek, Syphax Gardens, Hopkins, and Potomac Gardens) attended the February event. Panelists included the following:

- Perlia Smith, SWWR housing specialist, discussed assistance provided to SWWR clients.
- Juanita Jones, resident, discussed her experience in moving from Caper-Carrollburg public housing into the Ellen Wilson Hope VI housing complex.
- Antonia Fasanelli, staff attorney, Af-

fordable Housing Initiative, discussed how housing advocates assist people with legal problems.

- Ashley Lynch, ACORN Housing Assistance, explained how ACORN assists families with housing problems.
- Wilhemina Samuels, MANNA Home-buying Clubs, provided information on how families can purchase homes through the MANNA home-buying club.

The discussion started with a description of the housing services currently offered by SWWR which provided the audience with a snap shot of the demographic and socio-economic profiles of housing recipients. Perlia Smith said that many SWWR clients are on TANF or may have a low-wage job, and said that she has been able to navigate the system to help families qualify for housing. She said that she explains to realty companies and property managers how they will be guaranteed that rents will be paid, and has found that most of the private landlords or property managers are very receptive. She stated, however, that some are suspicious of Section 8 vouchers.

Juanita Jones said that she became involved in meetings in the planning stages

of the first Hope VI community development corporation because she saw that it would help stabilize her housing situation and enable her to move from an area that was uncomfortable and unsafe. Juanita now lives in the Ellen Wilson Dwellings,

where she says she has \$20,000 in “equity” credits.

Other panelists presented information housing redevelopment and revitalization in the Southwest area, a major contributor to the current lack of affordable low-income housing in the District.



Left: Juanita Jones in her home in the Ellen Wilson Dwellings. Right(above): More than 70 people attended the housing forum. Right(below): Panelists at housing forum.



Transitions

Consortium Bids Farewell to Tommy Wells...

By Elaine W. Smith

More than 200 people gathered at the Kellogg Conference Hotel for the Consortium for Child Welfare's farewell to Tommy Wells. Wells served as executive director of the Consortium for 15 years prior to being elected Ward 6 Councilmember.

In her opening remarks, Anniglo Boone, Ph.D., who succeeds Wells as executive director, said, "Rarely do you hear the name Consortium for Child Welfare without Tommy attached. It's almost as if it's part of his name." Noting that the salute to Tommy is especially fitting because March was Social Work Month, Boone continued, "Tommy is a true example of how social work advocacy, at its best, can affect change. He helped put a spotlight on the inequities within DC's child welfare system and changed the way child welfare practice is conducted in the city." Boone referred to Wells as a "leader, vi-

sionary, and all around great guy," and said to Wells, "We expect great things... from you because you have set the bar extremely high."

Leading the tributes to Wells was Sheryl Brissett-Chapman, Ed.D., Consortium chairman, and executive director of the National Center for Children and Families. Chapman said that Consortium members can celebrate in the fact that "we have each other and we have a presence in DC to support children and families." She said to Wells, "We will be in your face forever as child welfare agencies."

Fred Taylor, former executive director, For Love of Children, said, "We have never had someone who is equipped in experience and vision as we do now... We've raised you, and you raised up, and we are happy with the risk that you are taking."

Fred Phillips, Ph.D., president and CEO, Progressive Life Center, Inc., said that Wells seems to be an "aw shucks, gosh



Tommy Wells, Sheryl Brissett-Chapman, Ed.D., and Anniglo Boone, Ph.D.



Fred Phillips, Ph.D., Audrey Sutton, deputy director, CFSA; and Barbara and Tommy Wells.

darn it" type of guy, but "there is something stronger and deeper than that." Phillips said that although Wells seems to be at peace with himself and his surroundings, he has "a fire for change and social justice," which not everyone has to know. "We can feel it, and see it in your deeds...you are a quiet warrior...flexible when have to be, but tenacious when you need to be."

In accepting a plaque from the Consortium, Wells said that he loved his job at the Consortium. He said that so far the Council has been "ok," and that he believes that being chair of the Human Ser-

vices Committee is "one of the greatest jobs in the world," because he is leading child welfare and youth services for Washington, DC.

He reflected on his role in helping to think through the "front end" of the child welfare system, stating that "it is so important that the Collaboratives are here. He noted that since the establishment of the Collaboratives the time that youth spend in foster care has decreased and fewer people are entering the system. "I'm proud of all of you and the work that we've done together," Wells said.

...and Welcomes Anniglo Boone

Anniglo F. Boone, Ph.D., has been named executive director of the Consortium for Child Welfare, a coalition of 16 private nonprofit groups that aim to improve child welfare services in the District. Boone, a licensed clinical social worker, has dedicated her career to improving child welfare services by emphasizing the importance of advocacy, public policy, research and practice.

"As the Consortium transitions under my leadership you can expect a continued emphasis on innovation, creativity, cutting edge practice, and a new focus on research and outcomes," Boone said at the recognition ceremony for Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells, former Consortium executive director. "You can

also expect exciting model programs, increased resource development activities and collaborative efforts all designed to support our mission."

Boone began her social work career as a direct services social worker at DC Child and Family Services Agency, and advanced to become a senior policy associate at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). She served as the special assistant to the associate commissioner at the Children's Bureau, located within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and as an adjunct faculty member at Howard University's School of Social Work. Most recently, Boone has served as a research consultant to CFSA and NASW. Boone is a rec-

ognized and sought after researcher. She has conducted child welfare research in several areas, including disproportionality of African American children in child welfare, kinship care, and advocacy. She has published articles on the topic of kinship care as well as co-authored a federally funded report on child welfare systems across the country.

A graduate of Bowie State University, Boone also received a doctorate from the Howard University School of Social Work where her dissertation received national recognition from the Society of Social Work and Research.



Anniglo Boone, Ph.D., executive director, Consortium for Child Welfare

Transitions

New Hires

East River Collaborative



Charon Ellis has joined ERFSC as deputy director. She is a native Washingtonian with a passion and commitment to children's safety and well-being. Charon has more than 18 years

of experience as senior executive, policy analyst, human resource specialist, and trainer with several non-profit organizations and government agencies throughout the Washington metropolitan area and the state Ohio. She received her bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology from the Wilmington College, Wilmington, Ohio. Charon received her master's degree in public policy from University of the District of Columbia.

Nicole Carter-Matthew is ERFSC's new supervisor in the Family Services Division. Nicole a graduate of Grambling State University comes to ERFSC from Nations Capital Child and Family Development, where for one year she was family services manager. Her hometown is Houston, Texas.

Kareem Nixon is a new family support worker in the Family Services Division. Kareem is a graduate of Virginia State University and comes to ERFSC from Pressley Ridge, where for three years he provided case management. He has been in the social service field for over five years.

South Washington Collaborative



Alisha R. Bolden, family support worker, is team leader for SWWR's Strong Family Empowerment Group, formally known as Parents Anonymous. Prior to joining SWWR

Alisha held positions with Tyrka & Houck, LLP, and DC Office of Tax and Revenue. Recently Alisha received a Parent Leader of the Year Award from DC Children's Trust Fund. A native Washingtonian, Alisha graduated from HD Woodson Senior High School and received her associate's degree in paralegal studies from Parks College in Arlington, Virginia, graduating Suma Cum Laude



Joan A Irabor, family support worker, works with CFSA staff, other agency social workers and the Collaborative members to help families develop skills necessary to prevent inci-

dents and reoccurrences of child abuse and neglect. Joan supports quality education and is an advocate within the Washington DC Public School System. Currently, Joan serves as a volunteer for Telling Stories Project and as a Cross City Parent Leader. As a leader, Joan is making the school a more welcoming environment for teachers, students, administrators, and the community at large. As a certified nursing assistant, Joan provided personal care to patients in a hospital setting. A native of Nigeria, Joan received a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of the District of Columbia, and obtained an associates degree in computer information systems from Washington Saturday College in Washington, DC. Joan is a certified CPR instructor, GED examiner, and Avon representative.



Dorothy A Walker is SWWR's new office administrator/human resource director. Prior to joining SWWR, Dorothy served as a business educator with Prince

George's County Public Schools. Most of her career was spent at AT&T where she held such positions as project manager, billing system support supervisor and manager of the AT&T Wholesale Markets Customer Care Center. Dorothy's responsibilities at SWWR include assisting the executive director, event planning, overseeing the development and implementation of policies and procedures for human resources, and administrative functions. Dorothy is a graduate of Columbia Union College where she received a bachelor's degree in business administration. She received a master's degree in corporate and community affairs/human resources from Trinity College in Washington DC and a master's certificate in project management from George Washington University.

Employment Opportunity

The **DC Metropolitan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (FAPA)** has an excellent opportunity for an experienced manager to lead the organization as its first executive director.

FAPA is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to strengthening foster, adoptive, and kinship families. The executive director will be responsible for day-to-day operations, as well as membership development, fund raising, event planning, fiscal management, and long-range planning. The executive director also serves as the organization's spokesperson and liaison with local government agencies and other organizations.

The ideal candidate is a multi-tasker with excellent leadership, organization management, membership development, fund raising, and written and verbal communications skills.

This position reports to the Board of Directors. Send resume with cover letter to FAPA at 1436 U Street, NW, Suite 203, Washington, DC 20009, or fax resume to 202-299-0901.

Financial Literacy Day

April 21, 2007– 10:00am-3:00pm

Upper Room Baptist Church,

60 Burns Street, NE, Washington, DC

For Children, Teens, Adults, Business Owners

Keynote Speaker **Florence King**, president, FMK Credit Education Center (formerly of Equifax, one of the three credit scoring agencies) will explain what goes into your credit scoring, how to improve your credit scores, and will discuss what the scoring agencies do not want you to know!

Informative workshops will cover banking services for kids, choosing a checking account, tracking your money, the importance of savings, making credit cards work for you, your rights as a consumer, borrowing basics, and homeownership.

Bankers and housing counselors will be available all day to provide information and answer questions.

RSVP: 202-529-5505

Arrive early — all workshops will start and end on time!

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