



# THE COLLABORATIVE CONNECTION

A Publication of the Washington, DC Healthy Families ♦ Thriving Communities Collaborative Council

August-September 2006

## Albert J. Browne Takes Helm as Collaborative Chair

**A**lbert J. Browne Jr., president of the Board of the Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative (EBFSC) and a consultant with Strategic Investment Partnership Development, took the helm as the new chairman of the Healthy Families/ Thriving Communities Collaborative Council during the Council's Annual Meeting in June. He succeeds Thomas Gore, who had been chairman since 2002. "I look forward to leading the Collaboratives in capitalizing on our successes, and building new partnerships as we continue to strengthen at-risk children and families," said Browne. "We are at a critical point in our existence as we celebrate 10 years, and complete a strategic plan that will establish an agenda around the next three to five years." Browne said that the Collaborative agenda will "seek to revolutionize the systems that serve children and families – fearing no challenge, ignoring no need, and leaving no stone unturned."



*Albert J. Browne Jr., new Collaborative chairman presents award to Thomas Gore, outgoing chairman.*

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Browne is a former vice president of the Community Preservation and Development Corporation (CPDC), a founding member of EBFSC. He has a successful

history of leadership in community revitalization; policy development; and innovative economic, technology, and educational program development.

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## Collaborative Annual Conference and 10th Anniversary Celebration

Plan to attend the first Annual Conference and 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Healthy Families/ Thriving Communities Collaboratives to be held as follows:

**Conference**  
October 12-13, 2006  
Kellogg Conference Hotel  
800 Florida Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC

**10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**  
6:00 pm  
Thursday October 12, 2006  
Kellogg Conference Hotel

### Building a Neighborhood System of Family Support: The Collaborative Movement

The conference will consist of two general sessions and a series of workshops, presented by Collaborative staff and partner organizations. The first series of workshops focus on the history of the Collaboratives, and those components that make Collaborative work

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## 25 Receive Family Development Credential

Twenty-five family support workers celebrated with family and friends their completion of the 13-week Family Development Credential (FDC) Program at a graduation ceremony on July 20. The Collaborative Council's FDC program teaches workers the family development process, which includes an assessment of the family's needs and strengths and a written plan that empowers families to be more self-reliant and better able to handle future challenges. All graduates of the program completed 90 classroom hours of instruction, passed a standardized exam, and developed a portfolio under the guidance of an advisor.

In addition, 10 people received the Leadership Credential, after receiving training which helps leaders (Board members, executive directors, supervisors, etc.) to identify the areas where empowerment-based change within the organization can begin to make meaningful differences in family support programs and agency-based outcomes.



Robert Jones, ERFSC, served as master of ceremonies.

In opening remarks, Louvenia Williams, executive director of the Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative, said, "The work that you do is essential to improving the quality of life for people in the District of Columbia."

Keynote speaker Marian Urquilla, executive director of the Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative, said: "Family work is sacred work because family is where love lives. When you are working with the sacred, you have to be prepared –



Rosalia Villata and daughter, Mary's Center, and Dr. Rachel Petty, UDC

it's not just a job. . . . FDC takes what your heart knows and teaches it to your mind. We need more people prepared to do the sacred work of family support in order to bring about social change."

Master of ceremonies Robert Jones, East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, spoke of the positive impact that the FDC program has had on his career, and stated that he "continues to use the principles of FDC not only in my work, but in my daily life."

The ceremony included testimonials from several FDC graduates, two of which were in the form of original poetry.

Rachel Petty, Ph.D., dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of the District of Columbia, said that UDC is creating a path to the baccalaureate level, which includes certificates. She said that the FDC certificate will merit seven college credits.

FDC graduates are listed on page 3.



2005 and 2006 graduates of the FDC program.

## THE COLLABORATIVE CONNECTION

Healthy Families • Thriving Communities Collaborative Council  
1436 U Street, NW, Suite 203 Washington, DC 20009  
Voice 202-299-0900 Fax 202-299-0901

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 fullest potential.

### Council Staff

Jacquelyn Henry, Executive Director  
Beverly Boothe-Mooring, Child Welfare Program Director  
Valeria Carter, Training Administrator  
Ramsey Daminabo, Chief Financial Officer  
Richard Flintrop, Public Policy Analyst  
Erica Henry, Foster Parent Association Administrator  
Elise E. Pressma, Research Associate  
Spencer Wilder, III, Data Administrator  
LeVorne Wilson, Program Assistant

### Council Members

Albert J. Browne, Jr., Chair  
Eugene Kinlow, Vice Chair  
Naomi Mitchell, Secretary  
Priscilla Francis, Treasurer  
Louvenia Williams, Director's Liaison  
Beatriz Otero, Chair Emeritus

Claude O. Barrington	Alberto Figuero-Garcia	Angel Reynolds
Angela Corale	Thomas Gore	Evelyn Robinson
Herbert Collins	Robert Graham	Lionel Taylor
Mark Dixon	Rev. Emily Guthrie	I. Toni Thomas
Karen M. Douglas	Rev. Ruth Hamilton	Bernadette White
		Jean Wilks

### Associate Members

Judy Meltzer, Deputy Director, Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Tom Wells, Executive Director, Consortium for Child Welfare Agencies  
Angela Jones, Executive Director, DC Action for Children  
Kinaya Sokoya, Executive Director, DC Children's Trust Fund

### Collaboratives

**Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative**  
1816 12th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009  
202-518-6737 www.chsfsc.org  
Marian Urquilla, Executive Director

**East River Family Strengthening Collaborative**  
John Wilson Resource Center  
3732 Minnesota Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20019  
202-397-7300  
Mae Best, Executive Director

**Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative**  
1345 Saratoga Avenue, NE, Suite 2, Washington, DC 20090  
202-832-9400 www.ebfsc.org  
Louvenia Williams, Executive Director

**Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative**  
2041 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE, Washington, DC 20020-7024  
202-889-1425  
Perry Moon, Interim Executive Director

**Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative**  
1104 Allison Street, NW, Washington, DC 20011  
202-722-1815  
Karen Feinstein, Executive Director

**North Capitol Collaborative, Inc.**  
1420 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC 20002  
202-588-1800  
Charon Ellis, Executive Director

**South Washington/West of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative**  
1501 Half Street, SW, Apt. 31, Washington, DC 20023-3424  
202-488-7997  
Samuel Tramel, Executive Director

**Editorial and Graphic Services**  
Elaine W. Smith, EWS and Associates  
301-332-4224

# Graduates of the FDC Program

## Credentialed Instructors

Rita Smith-Stewart\*, ERFSC  
 Penelope Griffith, CHSFSC  
 Tawana Holland\*, NCCI  
 Valeria Carter\*, HFTC Collaborative Council  
 Jacquelyn Henry, HFTC Collaborative Council  
 LaTalya Palmer-Lewis\*, HFTC Collaborative Council  
 Margaret Pegram\*, The Perry School Community Service Center

## Advisors\*

Janet Avery, EBFSC  
 Tamitha Christian, SWWR  
 Sarah Maxwell, Child and Family Services Agency  
 Carol Pinckney, NCCI  
 Evelyn Turner, My Sister's House  
 Karen Wilson, FSFSC

## Family Development Credential

### Spring 2004

Kioma Alfred, GACREC  
 Yolanda Carter, NCCI  
 Shawn Dunn, FSFSC  
 Kim Hazard, ERFSC  
 Gladys Marshall, EBFSC  
 M. Krimhilde Morales, CHSFSC  
 Andrea Morgan-Bailey, FSFSC  
 Elena Padua, CHSFSC  
 Patricia Pressley (deceased), SWWR  
 Sheila Ramseur-Hannah, ERFSC  
 Diane Weldon, EBFSC

### Fall 2004

Emmanuel Blackwell, EBFSC  
 Venus Brevard, FSFSC  
 Raymond Coates, EBFSC  
 Barbara Dorman, SWWR  
 Virginia Floyd, FSFSC  
 Jacquirie Frye-Adams\*, FSFSC  
 Lisa Goode\*, SWWR  
 Deborah Gudger, EBFSC  
 Celestine Hardy, Resident  
 Robert Jones, NCCI  
 Maureen Morris\*, NCCI

Lita Nimmons, CHSFSC  
 Lakisha Palmer, FSFSC  
 Gerice Williams, CHSFSC  
 Anna Steward (deceased), FSFSC

### Spring 2005

Jacqueline Britt, CHSFSC  
 Bernadette Campbell, ERFSC  
 Oliver R. Carter, Resident  
 Silvia A. Diaz, CHSFSC  
 Sharon Easton, EBFSC  
 Willette Griffin, FSFSC  
 Germaine Hazel, Catholic Charities  
 Nadia Holmes, My Sister's House  
 Juanita Jones, SWWR  
 Tonya Kearney, My Sister's House  
 LaJuan Massie, FSFSC  
 Tracey Miller, GARCEC  
 Chanel Tibbs, Sasha Bruce Youthworks

### Fall 2005

Yolanda Cleveland, ERFSC  
 Juan Davenport, FSFSC  
 Victoria Harris, SWWR  
 Joyce Henson, ERFSC  
 Yusef Jacobs, NCCI  
 Marlana Matthews, SWWR  
 Gay-Nayle Oliver, FSFSC  
 Jacqueline Velez, CHSFSC  
 Selena West, CHSFSC  
 Charlie Whitaker, CHSFSC  
 Elizabeth Whitlow, ERFSC  
 Thomas Woodson, GARCEC

### Spring 2006

Denise Day, Mary's Center  
 J.C. Desmukes, SWWR  
 Wyneshia R. Hicks, CHSFSC  
 Paulette Jefferies, EBFSC  
 Felicia Jones-Joseph, EBFSC  
 Lakita Matthews, CHSFSC  
 Maria A. McCoy, GARCEC  
 Amin H. Muslim, EBFSC  
 LaShelle Richmond, Sasha Bruce YouthWork  
 Marla Sams, GARCEC

Ikena Sanders, SWWR  
 Sharon Wong, CHSFSC  
 Rosalia Villalta, Mary's Center

## Leadership Credential

### Fall 2005

Jacquelyn Horton\*, CHSFSC  
 Alexander Goodwill, GARCEC  
 Kristine Dupree, EBFSC  
 Shandra Parks, EBFSC  
 Andrea Morgan-Bailey\*, FSFSC  
 Dekevias Atkinson\*, Perry School Community Service Center

### Spring 2006

Melanie Conrad, NCCI  
 Sylvia Diaz, CSFSC  
 Patricia Sullivan, CHSFSC  
 Gerice Williams, CHSFSC



Yusef Jacobs, NCCI, and Dr. Rachel Petty

## Collaborative Annual Conference (from page 1)

unique. Other workshops focus on housing, fatherhood, youth, early childhood development, taking care of self, resources to support families, and more.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration will highlight the accomplishments of the seven Collaboratives and recognize residents, partners, and leaders in the Collaborative Movement.

Conference workshop topics include the following:

### Collaboratives

- Asset Mapping – tools and strategies for identifying community strengths, gaps, and needs; using asset mapping to engage partners

- Service Delivery Partnership Development – the nuts and bolts of developing a neighborhood-based collaborative approach to supporting families
- Developing Capacity to Build a Neighborhood-Based Family Support System

### Housing

- Housing First*, A Model to Drive Practice – a Collaborative and national overview of the role housing plays in engaging and supporting families
- The District's Response to the Housing Crisis – public agency and advocate efforts to address housing issues affecting low- and moderate-income residents

### Fatherhood

- Collaboratives Supporting Fathers
- Why Bring Dads to the Table?

### Supporting Youth and Their Families

- Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System
- Collaborative and School Partnerships Address Truancy
- Youth Violence Prevention Strategies – The Collaborative Second Responder Initiative

### Early Childhood Development

- Parenting Education and Support

*Continued on page 5*

## Focus on Fathers

# 2006 Father of the Year and Essay Contestants Honored

By Lindsay N. Smith

The National Center for Fathering, in conjunction with the Washington Nationals, awarded its Father of the Year Essay Contest and Father of the Year awards to contestants in Washington, DC, June 16 at RFK Stadium.

This was the first year NCF held the contest in the District, and more than 1,000 students from 35 schools around the city submitted essays. Lafayette Elementary

School led the submissions with 276 essays.

“For the first time, children across all eight wards of the city were able to write about their dads,” said Al Way, keynote speaker and regional associate for the National Center for Fathering. “Continue to build on the legacy,” Way said. “I’m so excited to be a dad. Know that this is the most important thing you’ll ever do in life.”

Ten winners were presented with awards from each grade, excepting eighth and tenth. Each winner read their essay aloud with their fathers present. However, one contestant’s essay was especially poignant because his father could not be present. “When he died when I was twelve, my world ended,” wrote Joshua Davis, an 11th grader from H.D. Woodson Senior High School. “There was no more sunshine to guide me to the right. He meant the world to me... when he died I became the shadow of a father’s son.”

The NCF also recognized Kyle Von Stearns, the Washington Nationals’ Father of the Year. After the children submitted essays, the NCF sent questionnaires to the fathers. From these questions about parenting, the NCF selected



Father of the Year Kyle Von Stearns and son with Washington Nationals center fielder Marlon Byrd and NCF President Peter Spokes.

finalists for the Father of the Year award.

Von Stearns said the most important thing he does for his children is “demonstrating a healthy marriage.”



Al Way and Peter Spokes of NCF with Joshua Davis and motivational speaker Willie Jolley.

## Columbia Heights Takes Fatherhood Program to the Streets

The Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative’s Fatherhood Program changed the beat of community outreach by bringing energy, music, and food to life in the streets of Columbia Heights and Shaw.

To the surprise to all those that traditionally congregate at the Girard Park, on June 25, the Fatherhood Program kicked-off its summer engagement efforts by holding a community cookout and chess tournament. On this day, all were welcome to join in the music, the eating, and the learning. Men came out with their children and as others brought more family, the environment became even more festive. Current participants of the Fatherhood

Program joined the staff by volunteering to cook, and meeting and encouraging other men to join their community-building efforts. Although the ambiance and feeling was festive, staff were there for a larger purpose – to fill the service gaps men face on a daily basis.

Traditionally, men have not been the service seekers in their families. “The stigma that men face in seeking services is mitigated by bringing the services to the streets,” said Charlie Whitaker, CH/SFSC Fatherhood Program coordinator. “The men are not going to come to us; the fathers have lost trust in the services and in themselves. When we come to the park or the streets, it shows them that we care and that we are here for them. As men living in this community, we understand first hand their daily experience.”



CH/SFSC Program Participant Christopher and 18-month-old son

Whitaker said that the cookout provided a non-threatening environment where basketball games, chess playing and informal conversation was encouraged, while fathers and their families were connected to resources in their neighborhood and linked to services that men usually shy away from.



Charlie Whitaker, CH/SFSC Fatherhood Program coordinator

## Fathers Graduate First “Quenching” Training

Eight fathers successfully completed the Quenching the Father Thirst Training under the Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Fatherhood Initiative. The program, which was developed by the National Center for Fathering (NCF), addresses the role of the father, system barriers to fathering, and provides training in specific skills to help men become the best father that they can be.

At a special graduation ceremony, Al Way, NCF regional director, encouraged the graduates to put into practice what they have learned in the program. “There is nothing more important than setting a good example and giving your children the unconditional love that they need,” Way said.

The Quenching the Father Thirst training is being offered by all seven Collaboratives.

*Al Way, NCF (left), and Tom Woodson, GARCEC Fatherhood Initiative outreach worker, with graduates of the “Quenching” program.*



## GARCEC Holds Employment Seminar for Fathers



*Tom Woodson, GARCEC's, manager of GARCEC Fatherhood Initiative outreach coordinator, with seminar participants*

Among GARCEC's activities this year to assist men seeking employment was a special seminar for fathers who are on parole or probation. About 25 men received information and tips from representatives of DC Healthy Start, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, Wheeler Creek Minority Workers Training, Career Blazers of Washington, DC, Great Dads of Washington, DC, and CitiBank.

Annette Osborne of Career Blazers explained that employers are looking to hire people who have a high school diploma or a GED, and urged attendees who don't have either to attend one of the numerous free programs that offer training for the GED. She also said that employers are looking for people with a positive attitude, who have a willingness to learn, and who come to work on time and leave on time. “To be successful in your job, you have to be mature and flexible, you have to take initiative and take ownership of your work, finish tasks, and bring new ideas,” she said.

Osborne said that the jobs that are in great demand right now are computer technician, medical office support, medical coding and billing, and general office support. “If you are looking for a job, you need to be looking for one that is in demand.”

Many of the attendees expressed concern about the stigma of being an ex-offender and the application process. They also expressed concern that many times after an internship, there are no more opportunities. Tom Woodson, GARCEC Fatherhood Initiative outreach worker, said that internships are opportunities to “sell yourself” to the employer, and “be sure you are meeting all of your expectations.” Woodson also said that Congresswoman Norton is working on removing some of those barriers to employment so that there are realistic opportunities for ex-offenders.

## Collaborative Annual Conference

(from page 3)

### Resources to Support Families

- Accessing Resources in DC
- Family Economic Success

### Other Topics

- Family Development Credentialing – a mini-course in the Family Development Credentialing training program

- New Communities – the progress of the mayor's initiative to rebuild communities and support families
- Taking Care of Self

The Collaborative Council has received support for the conference from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. For more information, or to register, please call 202-299-0900.



## Research and Training Center

The Web site of the Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health in Portland, Oregon offers a host of resources designed to promote effective services for families and their children with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders. These resources include publications, data trends, news, discussions, and a free subscription to the digital newsletter *rtcUpdates*, and more.

The current featured discussion is "Single Moms Raising Children with Disabilities: A New Challenge?" Each featured discussion includes research on the topics, which visitors are encouraged to read before joining the discussion. Past discussion topics include: "Bad Conduct, Defiance and Mental Health," "Current and Future Uses of Technology and Children's Mental Health," "Making the Most of Transitions: The Challenges for Children & Adolescents with Mental Health Difficulties," and "Family Homelessness & Children's Mental Health."

Subscribers to *rtcUpdates* receive occasional e-mail messages from RTC containing information about RTC's recent research, publications, and information about developments in the field of children's mental health.

To learn more, visit [www.rtc.pdx.edu](http://www.rtc.pdx.edu).

## Annual Meeting (from page 1)

As vice president of CPDC, he was the chief socio-economic architect behind the community and economic revitalization of the Edgewood Terrace community in Northeast Washington, DC. He directed the organization's workforce, educational, technology, resource development and strategic partnership initiatives. He is credited with making CPDC one of the most acclaimed community development corporations in the country. Prior to joining CPDC, Browne spent 10 years as a senior manager and director for Covenant House.

Other Council members installed during the Annual Meeting were:

- Eugene Kinlow, Vice President – Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative;
- Priscilla Francis, Treasurer – Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative;
- Angela Carole – East River Family Strengthening Collaborative;
- Karen Douglas – East River Family Strengthening Collaborative;
- Alberto Figuero-Garcia – Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative;
- Rev. Ruth Hamilton – South Washington/West of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative; and
- Evelyn Robinson, Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative.

Annual Meeting keynote speaker Eugene Kinlow told participants that if they look 10 years into the future, news headlines will reveal that the Collaboratives are being disbanded. "Our jobs are to make sure that not one single child in the District of Columbia is abused or neglected. If we do our jobs, we will be out of business," Kinlow said. Awards presented to outstanding residents representing each of the Collaboratives, and a mayoral proclamation was presented to the Collaborative Council by Brenda Donald Walker, deputy mayor for children, families, youth, and elders.



*Outstanding Resident Award recipients, Collaborative executive directors, and Deputy Mayor Brenda Donald Walker. Outstanding Residents of the Year Awards were presented to: Lillian Barnes, ERFSC; Beverly Estes, NCCI; Philip E. Panell, FSFSC; Angel I. Reynolds EBFSC; Mary Turner, GARCEC; and the 1461 Girard Street Tenants Association, CHSFSC.*



*Annual Meeting mayoral proclamation is presented to Collaborative Council. From left: Beatrice Otero, Eugene Kinlow, Thomas Gore, Uma Ahluwalia, Jacquelyn Henry, and Albert Browne Jr.*



*2006-2007 Board members are sworn in.*

## Collaboratives Address Truancy Through Y-TRIP

An increasing number of children are missing school, according to the District government, and the city is moving aggressively to address truancy by mobilizing community organizations. The Columbia Heights/Shaw, Edgewood/Brookland, Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East, North Capitol, and South Washington/West of the River Collaboratives joined the city's efforts this year through the Youth Truancy Reduction Intervention Project (YTRIP), a program that focuses on reducing truancy in five middle/junior high schools. The Collaboratives work closely with administrators of their target schools to identify students who are truant, and to provide intensive attendance monitoring and family-based services to the students. Y-TRIP employs the Family Group Conferencing approach, which allows families to identify strengths and weaknesses and to design a family plan to address student attendance and academic performance. This approach affords the student and their parents the opportunity to develop outcomes that are realistic and attainable, and encourages both students and parents to take an active role in solving the student's truancy problem by following the terms outlined in the plan.



*EBFSC Truancy Camp participants learn Hip Hop dance.*

Tony Dugger, NCCI director of community engagement, said that the NCCI sessions disclosed many issues ranging from student apathy for attending school to lack of parental supervision.

During the summer, each Collaborative participating in Y-TRIP conducted a six-week academic and recreational camp in their target schools.

Seven students participated in the NCCI Summer Enrichment Program. According to Dugger, all students who started completed, and at least one student had near perfect attendance.

NCCI's summer program involved tutoring in math, English, and reading, as well as participation in cultural sensitivity workshops. Students also experienced field trips and were often rewarded with extra fun activities like movies, bowling, and Six Flags. "Although students were paid a stipend, they appeared genuinely interested in the principles of the program, evident by their new commitment to wanting to do better this upcoming school year," said Dugger.

The Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative Summer Truancy Camp was attended consistently by at least 10 students. The program



*EBFSC Truancy Camp participants end Rights of Passage session.*

included life skills training, Rights of Passage, Hip Hop Dance, and music production. At the conclusion of the program, students displayed their talents at a special program which was attended by their parents, school administrators and others in the community.

"The program was a success, said Ange Anglade, Edgewood/Brookland program director. "Students who had been truant all year long, came every day for the six-week camp."

Anglade said that all of the summer programs were well-received by students and made positive changes on how they viewed the importance of academic success.

Collectively, the Collaboratives graduated about 25 students from the summer programs.

## Board of Education Adopts Emergency Truancy Policy

The DC Board of Education has issued an emergency truancy policy, recommended by the Truancy Task Force, to address problems of truancy and patterns of absenteeism throughout the DC Public Schools. The policy:

- Reinforces that students shall remain in school until the official close of the school day at 3:15 pm unless such dismissal is related to a lawful reason for absence.
- Clarifies that secondary students with five or more unexcused absences in a class during a single advisory will receive a grade reduction in that subject and secondary students with 10 or more unexcused absences in any class during a single advisory will receive a grade of "FA" (failure due to absences) in that subject.

- Establishes that elementary and secondary school students with 30 or more unexcused absences will not be promoted.
- Establishes that certain unexcused absences shall be referred to the Student Support Teams, the Child and Family Services Agency, Office of the Attorney General, or DC Superior Court for suspected educational neglect.

The DC Public School system reported a 23.5 percent truancy rate during the 2003-04 school year, which was more than quadruple the national average. The school system's strategic plan calls for a 5 percent truancy rate by 2014.

"Children need to be in school to learn and if they miss school, they miss out on valuable classroom

time, said Joanne Ginsberg, at large School Board member. "We want to make sure that parents and students begin to place a high value on attendance and ultimately that will lead to increased academic achievement."

The Truancy Task Force includes Board of Education members Tommy Wells and Joanne Ginsberg as well as the presiding Judge of the Family Division, and representatives of CFSA; Court Social Services; the Charter School Center for Student Services; the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; Public Defender Services; Metropolitan Police Department; Office of the Attorney General; Office of the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families, and Elders; Council of the District of Columbia; and the DC Public Schools.

# Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative

## Mural to Live On Through Digital Booklet

The Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs has provided the Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative with a small grant to digitize the Columbia Heights Mural, located at 14<sup>th</sup> and Irving Streets, NW. The mural will soon be dismantled to make way for the new DC-USA retail development project.

The Columbia Heights Mural is the first project of the PROUrbanYouth Program that was initiated in the summer of 2002. The Mural encircled a large empty parcel located at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> and Irving St NW. It was painted on 250 plywood panels that extended over 1000 feet. The design for the Mural was a deliberately slow process that ensured young people from all over the Columbia Heights neighborhood had an opportunity to offer their ideas and drawings for the Mural. With the support of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, leadership of the project was placed in the capable hands of community-based muralist Cheryl Foster. In several sessions beginning in May 2002 and running through late July 2002, Foster engaged over 200 young people in the Mural design process. She invited young people to reflect on their lives and give artistic expression to the tastes, sights, smells and sounds of everyday life in Columbia Heights. Individually and collectively, the drawings became a powerful and inspiring window into the lives of the young people. They represent the myriad of life experiences, challenges, ideas and dreams young people too often hold tightly within themselves. Once completed, the drawings were assembled into a continuous and comprehensive description of life in Columbia Heights. On several hot and steamy nights in July and August, the muralists pencil sketched the assembled drawings onto the plywood canvas, to prepare them for painting.



*Art from the Columbia Heights Mural*

Over a four-week period in August and September 2002, Columbia Heights residents of all ages and ethnicities participated in the painting of the Mural. The Mural tastefully and colorfully combined traditional painting, graffiti art and multilingual messages of hope and peace. Residents would stop on their way to and from the METRO to lend a hand at painting and offer encouraging words for the project. Mayor Anthony A. Williams and Councilmember Jim Graham offered their support and artistic touch. A delegation of students from the Ukraine also stopped by and lent a hand. The Mural quickly became a gathering space for all to share their ideas and skills.

The grant from the Office of Latino Affairs, and the leadership of CHSFSC will enable the spirit and

beauty of the Mural to live on. CHSFSC is digitizing each of the panels and developing a digital booklet that will capture the essence of the Mural. A small group of neighborhood youth and professional artists will develop a marketing and development plan that will ensure that the Mural, in its many colors and configurations, remains a permanent part of the neighborhood.

### COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

#### Congratulations Jonathan

Congratulations Jonathan Rodriguez (17 years old), administrative assistant at the Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative for successfully graduating from the Latin American Youth Center's Next Step Charter School.

Since joining the CHSFSC, Jonathan has acquired training in the areas of customer services, technology support, community-outreach and voter registration. He is also a graduate of the DC Primary Care Association's Health Ambassadors Program. In the fall, he will attend the University of the District of Columbia. The staff and partners of the CHSFSC wish Jonathan, his daughter Ava, and his family the best of luck.



# East River Family Strengthening Collaborative

## Making a Difference in the Community Through Hip Hop

By Rachel Lewis and Joy Jensen

“Dare 2 Make a Difference (D2D),” the second annual Hip Hop Summit was held Saturday, June 24 at the Friendship Collegiate Academy, attracting 350 youth and adults. The music-fueled day, mixed with workshops and resource-sharing, was designed to reduce youth violence in the community by examining Hip Hop culture and discussing issues facing DC youth ages 13-24.

The event, which last year was organized by the East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, was organized this year by the East of the River Partnership for Youth Empowerment, a coalition of community partners from Wards 7 & 8. “This year, we were fortunate to team up with the Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative and other partners like Marshall Heights Weed & Seed, which allowed us to expand and serve youth with added resources,” said Mae H. Best, executive director of East River Family Strengthening Collaborative and Summit chairperson.

The afternoon concert talent showcase featured a star-studded roster headed by Atlantic Recording Artist Trey Songz, Russell Simmons’s new artist Black Buddafly, and a host of some of the most talented young performers in the area, including DC’s own Hueman Prophets. DJ Flex, a well-known radio host, answered questions from the crowd and spoke of the importance of literacy. “If I don’t read, I don’t condition to my eyes, and I can’t take it to the next level ... you gotta read to get ahead,” he said.

Singer/actress Tanya Blount, a native of Washington, was the headliner and special honoree of the day. Best known for her hit “Through the Rain,” she rose from life in a single-parent home to superstardom. On Saturday, though, Blount turned the spotlight on the audience asking, “Who wants to be a star?” Several local talents took a turn at the mike or stage throughout the day and Blount proved herself to be an inspiring of



Summit attendees en joy concert.

a speaker. When asked why she had agreed to be so giving of her time, Blount cited the organizers of the Summit, whom she said “see the need to educate, inform, transform, and evoke the positive—it’s a no brainer.”

The event was also attended by special guests DC Councilmembers Marion Barry and Kwame Brown and representatives of several DC government agencies.

A key component of the D2D Summit were workshops for adults and youth with topics focusing on issues that challenge today’s youth from violence, drugs and HIV/AIDS, to peer choice and family structure.

Artherelle West, workshop organizer, said, “I want to instill in attendees the importance of having a vision.” She noted that several young people at the

conference took a pledge earlier in the summer to steer clear of risk-taking and to stay focused during the summer, and said that she hoped that the Summit would be a reminder for them to “stay to true to their pledge.”

The D2D Hip Hop Summit presented a unique way to engage the youth of Wards 7 & 8 via a medium they relate to and respect. One young woman from Ward 8 was moved enough by the Summit to write: *“I really enjoyed the whole event....The most powerful thing I took from the Summit was the message. I learned about how guns, drugs, peer pressure can lead to other things.... I also learned...that the music industry is 90% business and 10% music. If I could pick one thing that I took from the Summit, it would be it takes commitment, dedication, communication, and a community to make a difference.”*

## Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative

### EBFSC Hosts Series on Depression Awareness

EBFSC has partnered with DC Department of Health, Maternal and Family Health Administration to bring “House Parties” to the community. The goal of the House Party workshop series is to reduce the incidence of depression among women, in a supportive environment that fosters stress reduction, information exchange, and the development of leadership skills.

EBFSC hosts such classes as:

- Belly Dancing;
- Aromatherapy;
- Journaling;

- “Diary of a Mad Black Woman”;
- Q-n-A;
- Curves Gym workout; and
- Massage therapy for stress reduction.

As the second cycle of House Parties begins, workshops have been scheduled, including:

- Slam your Stress;
- Qi Jong;
- Conflict Resolution; and
- Introduction to Crochet.

The first six-week house party sessions was held at Jetu Apartments Community Center, with 10 women participating. “These House Parties have become a haven for some of the women, the only outing for others, and the only real interaction with adults for many of the stay-at-home moms,” said Ange Anglade, EBFSC program director. “The House Party concept enables us to teach many alternative methods of stress reduction that are fun, interesting, and that really work.”

For more information, please contact Jann’l Henry at 202-396-7380, ext. 4002.

## Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative FSFSC Partners in Program on Increasing Peace

As crime in the District of Columbia approached a level ultimately requiring a “crime emergency,” youth attending the kick off of “40 Days of Increased Peace/Safe Summer ’06” pledged to promote peace and participate in safe and structured activities. East of the River Clergy Police Community Partnership (ERCPCP), in collaboration with Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative, East

River Family Strengthening Collaborative, and others kicked off “40 Days of Increased Peace” on the last day of school, announcing their plans for activities geared toward reducing community and youth violence.



Tendani Mpulubusi of FSFSC distributes T-shirts.

Speakers at the event, which was held at the Richard England Boys and Girls Clubhouse on Benning Road, included ERCPC Executive Director Rev. Donald Isaac, Metropolitan Police Chief Charles Ramsey, FSFSC Interim Director Perry Moon, among others. “The majority of kids in this city are doing good things,” said Ramsey. “We must have programs and activities so that kids can have an alternative to getting into trouble. It takes a variety of approaches to solve the problem of youth violence. We need programs like this throughout the year.” A calendar of events for the 40 days was distributed, which included activities such as volley ball, double-



Youth attending kick-off event pledge to participate in positive activities.

dutch, movies, a gospel go-go, and softball. Students attending the kick-off event received T-shirts after signing the following pledge:

*“As a loved, valued member of my community, I will participate in safe and structured activities. I will promote peace and attend at least one 40 Days of Increased Peace/Safe Summer ’06 event or activity per week. I will not be involved in any violent incidents, nor will I engage in risky behavior.”*

## Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative House Parties Focus on Depression

During the month of June, the Collaborative hosted a series of six workshops to help women of child-bearing age in the community become more knowledgeable about depression and the stress that depression can cause. These workshops, called “House Parties,” were sponsored by DC Healthy Start. The goal was to provide the women with relaxation techniques and stress management tools that they could use every day to battle depression and stay mentally healthy.

The House Parties were held weekly, and, in keeping with the theme of relaxation and stress reduction, the room was decorated with fresh flowers, potpourri and scented candles. The atmosphere really helped the women feel at ease sharing and actively getting involved. One guest loved to take the flowers home every week because she said, “They make me feel better.” The first party, titled “Depression – It’s Not a Dirty Word,” was conducted by Gwendolyn West of Howard University, and it focused on the signs and symptoms of depression as well as resources on how to get help. Participants completed a depression screening and women identified as high-risk were referred for mental health services through the Mary’s Center for Maternal and Child Care, which is one of GARCEC’s partners. Other topics addressed during the series were:



House Party participants.

- Getting Healthy – Nutrition and Exercise Tips for Your Lifestyle;
- Parent Child Communication – Making it Work;
- Building Self-Esteem and Confidence; and
- Ten Secrets of Abundant Health – Tips for Getting and Staying Strong and Healthy.

Throughout the course of the House Parties, participants received various giveaways and resources including a journal to capture personal thoughts and a healthy living cookbook.

A new series of house parties began in mid-August. For more information, contact Shakira Gantt at (202) 722-1815 ext. 351.

### COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

*Pastors Newton and  
Lynette Gregorio  
Capitol Wesleyan Church*

GARCEC thanks the Capitol Wesleyan Church and Pastors Newton and Lynette Gregorio for their participation in a six-week series of dating violence prevention youth forums conducted in partnership with Sasha Bruce YouthWorks. Through their efforts, a group of teens were able to participate in the workshops, which centered on all the types of violence that can occur with a special focus on dating violence among youth.

Capitol Wesleyan Church is a two-time recipient of the GARCEC Community Grant for the “Backyard” summer youth program which is run by Pastors Newton and Lynette Gregorio. This program provides skill-building, academic enrichment and recreational activities, as well as additional supports for the youth and their families that include food, clothing and other assistance. They extend these services year round to individuals in need.

## North Capitol Collaborative, Inc. NCCI Recognizes Community Partners

North Capitol Collaborative, Inc., held its second Annual Family Services Luncheon on August 4, honoring 23 people from partner organizations who assisted in serving clients. "Collaboration with other organizations is an essential part of our existence," said Tawana Holland, NCCI clinical director of family services. "Whether you are receiving a certificate, a plaque, or a two-year award, you all must understand how important you are to our families, to our existence, and to the mission of our organization. Please, continue to be pleasant to our families when we refer them to you, continue to look at them as an extension of your family," she said.

Tony Dugger, NCCI director of community engagement, in discussing the importance of maintaining quality partnerships, said that there is "an urgency to overcome issues that plague parts of the NCCI community," including unemployment, crime, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, father absence,



*Gwendolyn DeVore (right) and Tabitha Lawrence (not pictured) received the "Putting Family First Award" for showing resilience, faith, and support in the face of great adversity in keeping their families together. Melanie Conrad is pictured with DeVore.*

and lack of education. "Ninety percent of our work is maintaining quality partnerships that provide essential services to families and lead to good results in overcoming these challenges," Dugger said.

NCCI honored its partners for donating food and clothing, assisting with youth employment, providing children with a summer camp experience, helping families with utilities, and more. Throughout the program, NCCI staff verbally expressed appreciation for their partners. But when tears interrupted two staff presentations, there was no doubt that this tribute was genuine.

NCCI 2006 honorees are as follows:

- Stephanie Cohen, Golden, Cohen and Braude
- Doroneth White, Lydia's House
- Beverly Johnson, Hyde Charter School
- Congressman Jessie Jackson Jr. and Sandy Jackson
- Denise Miles, Department of Employment Services (DOES)
- Peter Blue, DOES
- Chandra Artis, DOES
- Katrina Brickhouse, Perry School Social Services
- Thomas Davis, First Home Care
- Christina Nicholson, Sursum Corda Rental Office
- Judge Alec Deuell, DC Superior Court
- Gary Hines, Father McKenna Center
- Lanett Jackson, Washington Gas Co.
- Chamaine Robinson, Fleetwood Management
- Tyrone Jones, Rehabilitation Services Association
- Judge Juliet McKenna, DC Superior Court
- Kasandra Dodd, Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA)
- Tonya Edwards, CFSA
- Matthew Shannon, Esq., Shannon Attorney and Counselor at Law
- Jenette Chance, Bread for the City
- Inge Ashley, Martha's Table
- Tomeka Seaborne, Community Partnership
- James Jones, III, Gospel Rescue Mission
- Linda Mosely, Department of Human Services



*Tawana Holland presents award to Katrina Brickhouse of Perry School Social Services.*

## NCCI Job/Career Fair Attracts More than 700

NCCI's Third Annual Job/Career Fair, held June 21 at Shiloh Baptist Church, attracted 741 residents, who had the opportunity to meet with 19 employers and career schools.

Tony Dugger, NCCI director of community engagement, said that the largest age group represented was adults in their twenties; the second largest group was those in their forties; and more men attended than women this year, 384 to 291 respectively. He said that of the 384 men attending, 152 were fathers of minor children living within the District of Columbia, and that over 80% of the 291 women attending were single mothers.

Dugger said that early evaluations indicated that employers have staffing needs to hire four or more people, with 15 employers indicating they would hire

two or three from the NCCI Job Fair, and temporary staffing agencies indicating they would hire as many attendees as possible and maintain an on-going partnership with NCCI for future referrals.

The 67 teens attending the Job/ Career Fair provided mixed responses on how well the fair helped them. Some indicated that the jobs were too advanced for them; others reported more favorable outcomes with the career and training schools. Overall, participants rated the job fair "above average." Employers gave NCCI high points for its coordination and preparation of the community. Dugger said some employers felt the on-site workshops on "Interviewing Tips" were a big help for many residents. One employer said, "People really appeared comfortable and confident in their communications....Resumes were well prepared and people were ready for work," he said.



*NCCI Job Fair participant speaks with employer.*

# South Washington/West of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative

## Summer Camp Takes Children Around the World

By Rachel Lewis

“Around the World in 35 Days,” was the theme of SWWR’s 2006 Summer Reading Camp, which took place from June through August. Each week of camp was devoted to activities relating to a different country or ethnic group. The first and second weeks, students focused on the Republic of Liberia and

Senegal. Next, students learned about Native Americans, African Americans, and the Netherlands. SWWR staff wrote letters to embassies, many of which responded and were eager to contribute to the students’ efforts to learn about

the culture of their country.

Field trips to embassies

were

paired with book reports and other incentives for reading.

Tamitha Christian, SWWR clinical director, said that recent world events have “made this summer’s theme seem all the more important.” Christian said that the camp’s curriculum this year also included best practices from other disciplines, including mathematics. In order to provide measurable benchmarks

of each student’s progress over the course of the camp, Christian said that SWWR conducted pre- and post-testing.

The Reading Camp, which serves Ward 6 students, ages 6-13, has been conducted for nine years, but Christian said that this year’s camp “was the best one yet.” Christian said that at the end of camp students put together “an amazing presentation to show their friends and family all the wonderful things they had learned during their special trip around the world in 35 days.”



Left: Mission Group volunteers with campers. Above: Camper with reading tutor.

## Transitions

### New Hires

#### Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East



**Njeri Mitchell** has joined GARCEC as a senior family support worker. A graduate of the University of Maryland with a B.S. in social science, she has a background in educational therapy and youth services, has a special interest in working with at-risk youth, and is

involved with the Y-TRIP truancy program. “I am in full agreement with the Y-TRIP model that incorporates the family in support of the child’s education,” said Njeri. In July, **Adenike Coore**, formerly a University of the District of Columbia BSW intern at GARCEC, joined the Collaborative staff as a family support worker. Adenike, who is also a licensed practical nurse, brings a background and interest in behavioral health. She is expected to work predominantly with aftercare youth.



#### North Capitol

**Rietchie Von Earle**, community relations outreach specialist, has worked with different housing and development organizations. Most recently, she volunteered with the Sursum Corda community, working on the Northwest One Development

Project, and has also worked with Manna, Inc.. She has worked in the community for over 15 years.



**Rickie Wright**, the new fatherhood outreach specialist, has a long history working with youth as a boxing coach in the city, as a parents and fathers coordinator with Peaceaholics, and as a consultant with Friendship House.



**Barbara Jackson**, family support worker, has a bachelor’s degree from Delaware State University and comes to NCCI with expertise working with young families and mentoring children.



**Regina Harris**, family support worker, has a bachelor’s degree from Johnson C. Smith University in North Carolina, and comes to NCCI with experience working with youth and families in independent living and transitional housing programs.



**Candie Simpson**, intake spec, has a bachelor’s degree from Marshall University in West Virginia, and comes to NCCI with a wealth of knowledge in child maltreatment and family services.

## Employment Opportunities

**Mary’s Center for Maternal and Child Care**, has nine positions available. Contact [hr@maryscenter.org](mailto:hr@maryscenter.org).

- Family assessment worker
- Family support worker/home visiting
- Home visiting program coordinator
- Network administrator
- Nutritionist
- Registered nurse (CHS)
- Senior director of clinical services
- Senior staff accountant
- Training specialist

**Capital Area Asset Building Corporation (CAAB)** financial education counselor is seeking a full-time staff member to support its financial education and savings programs. Qualifications include a bachelor’s degree and at least two years experience in financial education. Send resume and a short writing sample to the attention of Brenda Estrella, Director of Financial Programs. Applications should be submitted by e-mail to [jobs@caab.org](mailto:jobs@caab.org) or by fax to (202) 419-1447.