

# 21C County Connections

Rockland 21<sup>st</sup> Century Collaborative for Children and Youth

Vol. 4, No. 1 Winter, 2002

## Annual Symposium: All About Collaboration

We are very lucky that “collaboration” has become a vital part of our school/community culture. Without that commitment, many of our County initiatives — both large and small — never would have come to fruition. Rocklanders have learned the importance of collaboration in achieving our many goals.

So ... if we are getting so much better at collaboration, why did the Symposium Committee choose this as the theme for the 6th Annual Symposium on March 26th? (8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Rockland Community College) “We chose Collaboration because it is a critical element in a successful learning organization and can always be improved,” said Sherri Goffman, Symposium Committee Chair.

Margaret J. Wheatley (President of the Bekana Institute and author of *Leadership and the New Science*, and *Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*) talks about the magic of collaboration. Sherri relies on this vision to keep her collaborative juices running. “As leaders,” Wheatley tells us, “we play a crucial role in selecting the melody, setting the tempo, establishing the key and inviting the players. But that is all we can do. The music comes from something we cannot direct, from a unified whole created among the players, a relational holism that transcends separateness. In the end, when it works, we sit back, amazed and grateful.”

Marty Blank is the Director for School/Family/Community/Connections at the Institute for Educational Leadership, which brings people together to identify and resolve issues across policy, program and sector boundaries. He has worked with Rockland 21C as a consultant over the last year to help us better articulate our vision, mission, values and priorities as well as develop a governance structure reflective of those elements. When asked what the most important thing is for leaders to learn as they become effective collaborators, Marty quotes John Gardner, former Secretary of HEW and founder of Common Cause: “In a tumultuous, swiftly changing environment, in a world of multiple colliding systems, the hierarchical position of leaders within their own system is of limited value because some of the most critically important tasks require lateral leadership — involving groups over which they have no control. Leaders unwilling to seek mutually

workable arrangements with systems external to their own are not serving the long-term institutional interests of their constituents.”

According to Marty, “If educators and leaders in other sectors truly understood and acted on Gardner’s message, they would be working in close collaboration with an array of community partners to ensure that young people have the types of learning experiences, supports and opportunities that they need in order to succeed.”

At our upcoming Symposium, Marty Blank’s keynote address, entitled “Achieving Results Through Collaboration,” will highlight our collaborative accomplishments in Rockland, and will inspire us all to achieve ever-more tangible results in the future.

Symposium Committee members wanted to make the subject of collaboration come alive in a multi-sensory way. “Learning styles vary and we want to reach everyone who attends,” said Triny Hertzberg, Director of the Rockland After School Program. “I learn best when all of my senses are engaged.”

One example of how this will be accomplished is through the *Hudson River Playback Theatre*. This regionally acclaimed improv group will gather information about real life examples of collaboration from Symposium participants and will dramatize them. They will hold up a mirror that will tickle our funny bone, pull at our heartstrings and penetrate our brains. Every Symposium participant will have an opportunity to be involved in this creative process.

This year’s Symposium will include an array of excellent workshops to sharpen our collaborative skills and inform us of best practices and replicable models.

Whether you are someone who is collaborating with a colleague in your classroom, participating in one of the many community-based collaborations taking root, involved in one of the 21C-related collaborations, or participating in shared service settings ... you will find the tools you need, and the partners you seek ... at the Symposium. Look for your Symposium brochure in the mail or contact the Rockland 21C office for registration information.

Marty Blank working with the 21C Executive Committee on collaboration.



Lorraine Furey

### How are YOU Collaborating?

Let us highlight your important work in a *Collaboration Compendium* to be distributed at the Symposium. Please email your answers (do not exceed one page) to these questions to yolanda21c@aol.com by March 4th.

- What’s the title of your collaboration project?
- Which organizations are collaborating in this project? (please tell us about them and include contact information)
- Why did you create this collaboration? To what extent is your vision being realized?
- What’s involved in the ongoing work of keeping this collaboration going?
- How can others benefit or learn from your collaborative venture?

## Tell Us What You Think...

**The Big Apple Circus is coming back to Rockland in June. We are proud to be a sponsor for the second (what we hope is annual) year. Want to win some FREE tickets?**

**FREE  
Big Apple  
Circus  
Tickets**

Well, just take FOUR minutes (24 seconds per question!!) to fill out this form and mail it back to us ... and FOUR of you will qualify for a raffle to win FOUR FREE tickets each!!! (You can also email your answers to yolanda21C@aol.com. Just number them for us!)

Seriously ... *Rockland 21C County Connections* has been published for 3 years. We care what you think and need your input! Tell us what you like about the newsletter, what you would change, and any new ideas you might have!

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Do you:

1. find the newsletter informative?  
Yes  No
2.  read the entire newsletter  
 pick and choose articles
3. have a favorite section or topic?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. think the newsletter helps build support for school/community partnerships?  Yes  No

### Does the information in it help you:

5. do your job better?  Yes  No  
If so, in what way? \_\_\_\_\_
6. find collaborative partners in the County?  
 Yes  No

### Can you tell us:

7. which section or topic you think we could do without? \_\_\_\_\_
8. a suggestion for a topic or recurring section?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. what else we can do in the newsletter that would be helpful or educational?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. when you would be most likely to read the newsletter? If it were:  printed & mailed  
 sent by email  posted on a Web site

Please mail the survey by April 1, 2002 to:

Rockland 21C  
65 Parrott Road  
West Nyack, NY 10994

## PARENT Viewpoint

### Nicole Hines, Nyack Parent

I dropped out of high school and got pregnant at the age of 15. I have a six year old and a two year old. When I first enrolled my older son in Head Start, I wasn't very happy, I wasn't interested in what others had to say. But I started hanging around Head Start because it was fun being around the kids. Then I got involved in the L.I.N.K. program (a partnership between Head Start and the Nyack School's Family Resource Center to help parents get involved in their children's education). The Nyack FRC staff, Head Start staff, and other parents in L.I.N.K. reinforced the idea that you have to be there for your kids or they won't prosper, and that my child's education is important. When my children see me involved, that helps them grow.

I started working as a sub at Head Start and then full-time as a Teaching Assistant. Through L.I.N.K. and my work at Head Start, I became more confident and open. Even my son's behavior changed for the better. Now I'm going to school to become a teacher.

To other parents, I would say that I know we all have obstacles to getting involved. For me, it was being a single parent with two children and no support. But stay strong and open-minded. Be there for your kids. They need it most. Without you, they're nothing.

## Pride Survey Results to be Presented in April

By Sally Borgman

During the last decade, Rockland County school districts, with community support, took significant steps to better understand the level of use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among youth in Rockland County, and the level of violent behavior in that population.

To obtain the information, over 7,000 Rockland 5th, 8th and 11th graders participated in the PRIDE (Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education) survey in 1996 and 1999. In 2002, the surveys will be administered during February and the cumulative results will be reported at two important forums — one for educators on April 26th at St. Thomas Aquinas College, and one for parents on the evening of April 24th in the Adler Room at the Palisades Center Mall. The Rockland Family Resource Center Network will be actively involved in encouraging elementary school parents to attend.

The parents' forum will provide a reality check ... letting us know what youth say about their alcohol, tobacco and drug use, and levels of violence. It will also give parents an opportunity to support one another and learn new prevention strategies. Last year's forum was attended by almost 200 parents, and their evaluations gave the Coalition for Drug Free Schools and Communities of the Rockland Alliance for Prevention high marks for a quality program providing vital information.

Why should we all be concerned? Previous PRIDE surveys indicated that beer, wine coolers, liquor, marijuana, inhalants and designer drugs were consumed by Rockland County youth at rates above the national average. It also revealed that about one in six of the middle school students surveyed had been repeatedly threatened with physical violence (hit, slapped, or kicked) by other students.

If you are interested in more information and suggestions for how parents and community members can help Rockland youth, please call me at 574-4940.

Sally Borgman is the Training Coordinator for Rockland Alliance for Prevention.

# First Annual Meeting of Rockland 21C

- *Inaugural Board of Directors Named*
- *Celebration of Accomplishments*

In March, Rockland 21C will return to the Nyack Seaport, where we first articulated an ambitious Action Plan in 1999. This time we will induct our first Board of Directors and tell the story of a County which embraced an idea — School of the 21st Century — and implemented it beyond the expectations of Yale University, where it was created.

This now national model was developed thanks to the hard work, dedication and commitment to collaboration on the part of the school districts, BOCES, non-profit partners, public partners and funders. Most notable in our success ... and what makes Rockland 21C distinctive ... is the pioneering role our County government has taken in leading this initiative and supporting its infrastructure and programs.

At this meeting, we plan to look to the future and encourage our new Board and partners to keep the dream alive and make it a reality. *All children ... cared for ... nurtured ... lifelong learners.* In our next newsletter issue, we will share the special moments of this day with all of you who contribute to our success and the success of our children and families!

## A Message From Harriet Cornell

### Setting Policy for Optimal Development of Children

What is the first thing you think of when you visualize an infant or toddler? Chances are it's something warm and happy. Our thoughts are less likely to turn to Washington or Albany, and how government actions or inactions affect that baby's health, safety and development.

Child development in the first three years of life is dramatic and lays the foundation for later cognitive accomplishments, social skills, self-esteem and respect for others. More than anything else, relationships matter to babies. It's important for them to be with people who offer physical safety, reassurance, comfort, language and feedback. Times have changed: In the year 2000, 60 percent of mothers with children under three were employed, compared with 34 percent in 1975. Among the many reasons: a large increase in single-parent families; the need for two incomes; work requirements imposed on welfare recipients.

The United States has not been a world leader in the realm of family policy. Public ambivalence about how families should balance employment and caregiving for very young children has impeded realistic debate about appropriate care of infants and toddlers.

During the past decade, two important policy initiatives strengthened the options available to families: parental leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and expanded subsidies for childcare. FMLA has a limited scope, applying only to employees who work in firms of at least 50 workers. Low income workers are least likely to be covered, and they can't afford unpaid leave. The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) provides subsidies to help low income families pay for childcare. Although the '90s saw a tripling of state and federal funding for subsidies, available funds reached only 12 percent of the 15 million children estimated eligible for assistance. The program does little to improve the quality of available care.

A recent Packard Foundation report on The Future of Children issues recommendations for stronger family supports and extending the reach of FMLA and CCDF. Their analysis stresses the role of government in offering all families equitable access to good caregiving options so they can give their babies the best start in life. Families can't do it alone. To help children achieve optimal development, we need government policies based on the real needs of America's children.

## Mark McNeill Receives Major NYS Award

Dr. Mark McNeill, Nanuet's visionary Superintendent of Schools, has been given the Distinguished Service Award for Educational Leadership by the NYS Coalition for After School Funding for his efforts to bring after school programs to all the children and youth in his district. Nominated by Sarah Chauncey, Vice President of the Nanuet School Board and Lauren Grennan, Family Resource Center Coordinator, for his "deep belief that the Yale 21C initiative, our Family Resource Centers, and our after school programs are critical components in helping all children succeed in school academically, emotionally, socially and physically. These programs have been integrated into the fabric of our learning community and are recognized and supported by parents, teachers, administrators, and most importantly, the children who give us our most important feedback on the success of these initiatives and food for thought as we reflect on next steps."

Rockland 21C congratulates Dr. McNeill, our longtime Executive Committee member, on this well deserved honor.



### Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth

#### Executive Committee

- Harriet Cornell, Chair**, Rockland County Legislator  
**Mary Anne Evangelist**, Nyack Public Schools  
**Dennis Fleming**, Rockland County Youth Bureau  
**Mark McNeill**, Nanuet Public Schools  
**Mary Jane Pauling**, Head Start of Rockland  
**Larry Pedersen**, Board of Cooperative Educational Services  
**Judith Savage**, Child Care Resources of Rockland  
**Debra Thomas**, Rockland Teachers' Center  
**C. Scott Vanderhoef**, Rockland County Executive

#### Committee Chairs

- Gail Fleur**, Public Relations  
**Sherri Goffman**, Symposium  
**Susan Vitale**, Integrated County Planning

#### Coordinator

- Mimi Hoffman**, Mimi21C@aol.com

*The Early Education and Care Team embraced Action Plan 4.6: Establish a countywide home visiting program for children from pre-natal to age five.*

Home visiting is a strategy for offering information, guidance and emotional and practical support directly to families in their homes. The following quote from a 31-year-old single mother in testimony before the United States House of Representatives in July, 1998, sums up what home visiting has meant to her and others like her: “Family members often give you advice and tell you what you’re doing wrong. My Home Visitor listens to me, she

## Home Visiting

lets me know how competent a mother she thinks I am, and she offers me suggestions and new ideas. To me, the relationship that she and I built while I was pregnant, and that she then extended to my son, has been the most important thing. It has truly enriched my life and my son’s life.”

Home visiting is not a service unto itself. It is a strategy for *delivering* services. With this in mind, our Team reviewed several national models used for home visiting for children from pre-natal to age five. The members identified what they thought was most wanted and needed in a home visiting model for Rockland County. A survey was disseminated to *parents* asking them what

they wanted in a home visiting model. The survey was available in English, Spanish and French. The results were as follows (respondents could check more than one answer):

I would allow someone to come into my home to:

- Assist me with any questions or concerns I may have about parenting.....8%
- Assist me with any questions or concerns I may have about my child’s/children’s needs.....9%
- Discuss any health concerns about my child/children .....8%
- Assist me with my new infant.....6%
- Discuss child development.....13%
- Introduce learning activities.....15%
- Discuss discipline .....12%
- Other .....1%

I would not want someone to come into my home .....21%

Two models for home visiting that seem to meet some of these criteria are 1) Parents As Teachers (PAT) and 2) The Parent-Child Home Program. On two separate occasions representatives of PAT

have visited Rockland County to share information about the program and explain its successes in other areas of New York.

The program uses instructional home visits, group meetings, regular developmental screenings and linkage with other services to: assist parents in giving their child the best possible start in life

through increased knowledge of child development and appropriate ways to foster growth and learning; give children a solid foundation for school success; prevent and reduce child abuse; and increase parents’ feelings of competence and confidence.

The home visiting component of PAT, seen as the heart of the program, involves personal visits by credentialed parent educators who provide timely child development information, model and involve parents in age-appropriate activities with the child, and



## Moving Toward Implementation

Once Rockland 21C’s Early Education and Care Team finished their study, it became clear there were many ways to implement the program. For example, should there be *one* agency in Rockland County responsible for home visiting? If so, how should it be chosen? Is it appropriate for several home visiting models to be used? If so, what if they were utilized in the same community? If there is a funding opportunity, how do we determine the best strategy toward proposal submission?

These questions aside, the value of home visiting to our community was clear to a growing number of 21C partners. It can make a big difference for many Rockland families. Moreover, as districts increase their commitment to Universal Pre-K, they seek ways to work with much younger children. There seemed to be consensus ... as long as the model is evidence-based, that it has a track record of success, that it will lead to academic success, and the implementors have the necessary skill set ... our collective goal should be to bring this approach to Rockland in a manner which will allow for expansion as resources develop.

Rockland 21C brought experts on two of the most popular models — *Parents as Teachers* and *Parent Child Home* — to an informational meeting this past November 14, at the BOCES Instructional Center. The meeting, which was hailed as a great success thanks to outstanding presentations by Brian Hall of Julia Dykman Andrus Memorial (Parents as Teachers) and Sarah Walzer and Michele Morrison of Parent Child Home, sent attendees back to their organizations to plan in earnest. School districts began to explore the ripple effect of training volunteers, such as retired teachers as home visitors, as well as training home visitors who wore other hats in their school community (bus drivers, hall monitors, teaching assistants). And FRC Coordinators began to consider seriously how they could play a meaningful role in this initiative. Finally, Head Start of Rockland, already poised to establish a home visiting program as part of their new Early Head Start initiative, felt prepared to move forward. It was clear, just as with the Family Resource Centers, it will make sense to develop home visiting programs which are responsive to their specific communities. At the same time, it will be important to develop a learning community which shares their growing expertise in the field of Home Visiting.

What role will Rockland 21C play in this initiative? Feedback forms pointed toward a clear direction. Meeting participants believe funding is the largest barrier to establishing sustainable programs. Rockland 21C was asked to identify suitable funding or financing opportunities, and provide the resources to develop competitive applications. And, once programs are up and running, 21C can help establish a learning community of home visiting programs.

By Jane Brown and Nicole Modafferri

respond to parents' questions and concerns. Often beginning before birth, and through age two years, visits are made weekly, biweekly, or monthly, depending on family needs and program budgetary restrictions. These services are offered with less intensity from ages three to five.

Representatives from the Parent-Child Home Program also visited Rockland County recently to share information and discuss how it could be implemented in Rockland. This is an innovative, home-based literacy and parenting program serving families challenged by poverty, low levels of education, language barriers and other obstacles to educational success. Trained Home Visitors see families with children over 16 months twice a week for two years. In play sessions with the parent and child, the Home Visitor demonstrates parenting techniques. He or she emphasizes verbal interaction and learning through play, using carefully chosen books and toys. Families participating in the program assemble a library of high-quality children's literature and a collection of educational toys that they will use for many years.

### Lessons Learned:

There is no *one* home visiting model that meets *all* needs for families in Rockland County. Therefore, home visiting programs are best funded as *one* of the range of services offered to families with young children. Other service strategies should include: more high quality childcare, parenting classes in the community or on the job, and referral services for a host of needs and services.

### Next Steps:

Continue to research the best models for families in Rockland. Decide on the best model for each school district or community. Create funding streams to provide this service strategy. Implement the model slowly, following the guidelines of that model so that the integrity and quality of the model is not compromised.

### Resources:

- *Zero to Three: Home Visiting/Reaching Babies and Families Where They Live*
- *The Parent-Child Home Program Newsletter*

Team 3 Leaders: Jane Brown is Deputy Director of Child Care Resources of Rockland; Nicole Modafferri is Parent Counseling Services Coordinator of Child Care Resources of Rockland



## PARTNER

### Ronaldo L. Figueroa Director, Rockland Alliance for Prevention

As a community, Rockland County is just amazing ... ever evolving, steadily growing, and increasingly diverse in the cultures, faiths and languages of its residents. The most recent census only serves to confirm what we readily see everywhere — that more individuals and families of different ethnic and religious backgrounds are making this beautiful County their home.

With the increased diversity of our population also come special challenges for our local municipalities and school districts. Children and youth from immigrant families arrive here with disparate experiences, strengths, expectations, and levels of need. Many find their way here having survived tremendous hardship, trauma and loss. Despite their astonishing resiliency, these young people are often burdened with an abiding sense of fear, sadness and distrust. This is sometimes worsened by new experiences of bias and intolerance directed at them, at their families or at their ethnic/religious group ... by others here in Rockland County.

Those of us in positions to serve immigrant youth and families will be challenged to deepen our understanding. This means not only identifying basic cultural differences, or assessing their levels of social and cognitive functioning for participation within a school setting or the community. We also need to consider seriously and address the impact of poverty, crime, civil war, violence, abuse and other oppression that they have lived through. For this, it may be necessary to create and sustain connections with other local organizations comprised of individuals who are knowledgeable about (1) the various cultures, faiths and traditions, (2) the historical background and significant socio-political conditions commonly experienced by these families, and (3) the resources already available within ethnic communities in Rockland or the surrounding areas. Through these connections, we can work together to develop learning strategies and ancillary services that are culturally relevant and genuinely responsive to the needs of immigrant youth.

Our schools and neighborhoods benefit enormously every day from the contributions that immigrants make, and from the rich diversity within our towns and villages. As we evolve further into a microcosm of the world, we have wonderful opportunities to learn from each other and widen our perspectives. Those interested in learning how to serve immigrant youth and families better are cordially invited to attend the monthly meetings of the Rockland County Immigration Coalition. The meetings are held every third Tuesday, from Noon to 1:30 p.m., at the Kurtz Civic Center, 19 North Main Street, Spring Valley. For more information, call Volunteer Counseling Services at 634-5729.

### ATTENTION: All Science & Art Teachers, & Students!

## Forces of Nature: April 7 – June 2

Beginning on April 7, Rockland Center for the Arts is presenting *Forces of Nature*, an exhibition of contemporary art that is affected or created by the elements of nature: water, air, light, gravity and earth. The exhibit, curated by Lynn Stein and Daly Flanagan, interactively explores the sources of inspiration that artists find in the realm of natural phenomena and was created with school field trips and out of school time programs in mind.

**Artists: Kim Abeles, Michele Brody, Tim Prentice, Tim Watkins, Rosalind Schneider, Lisa Hein, Bob Seng, and others.**

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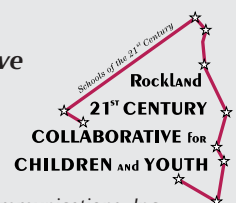
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FRC Contact Information*

## BITS AND PIECES

Do you want to be in the loop about the terrific programs and activities of our Family Resource Center Network? With all that's going on with the 21 FRCs, we just cannot get to everything in our newsletter. So ... we have created a bi-monthly e-newsletter, *BITS and PIECES*. Please subscribe by emailing [yolanda21C@aol.com](mailto:yolanda21C@aol.com). If you do not have Internet access, you can fax the 21C office (627-2934) and we will send the newsletter to you by fax.

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## Classroom Labs for Professional Training

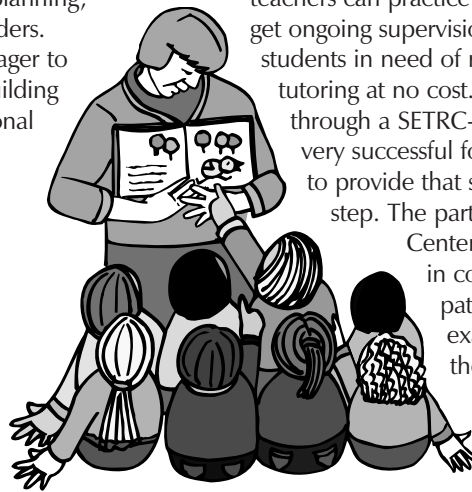
By Stuart Goldstein

For more than 10 years, the New York State Education Department has funded a statewide professional development network known as SETRC (Special Education Training and Development Center). This is the story of how Rockland SETRC began a collaboration (which is still in its formative stages) with Rockland 21C.

At its inception, SETRC was considered a resource library, and most of its funding went into purchasing videos and texts, with occasional “big name” conferences. Back then, our concept of professional development was far less student-centered and not at all results-oriented.

Today, the SETRC network links its work closely to student performance. Professional development needs of school districts are based on data analysis, comprehensive planning, and the input of all local education stakeholders.

To that end, Rockland SETRC has been eager to work closely with individual teachers and building administrators in all aspects of their professional development (planning, implementing and follow-up). During my tenure as Director of Rockland BOCES SETRC, one of the most consistently requested areas for Professional Development has been reading instruction. Elementary teachers, administrators, parents and special educators all realize that there continues to be a variety of reading approaches available to classroom teachers, that not all approaches are a good match for all learners, and that literacy skills are



the pre-requisite for success in all other academic areas.

In an effort to meet the needs of reading specialists, regular classroom teachers and special educators, SETRC offers training in a variety of “multi-sensory” approaches to the teaching of reading, as well as instruction in language arts geared to the State’s English Language Arts exams. Feedback from teachers about new skills they learn has generally been positive. However, there has been no opportunity to practice these new skills in a supervised, classroom setting.

With the help of Rockland’s school districts, Rockland 21C and the Family Resource Centers (now a vital part of many of our County elementary schools), SETRC is developing that ongoing “classroom laboratory.” Through this partnership, teachers can practice their new multi-sensory reading skills, get ongoing supervision and training to hone their skills, and students in need of reading support can get quality small group tutoring at no cost. This model of service was developed through a SETRC-funded summer reading program that was very successful for both teachers and students. The effort to provide that service year-round was an obvious next step. The partnership of SETRC and the Family Resource

Centers, and other after-school programs — in collaboration with Rockland 21C and participating elementary schools — is a working example of how service can be provided to the benefit of all. For more information, call SETRC at (845) 627-4726.

*Stuart Goldstein is Director of Rockland BOCES SETRC.*

## Haverstraw Collaborative Hosts Community Roundtable

Rockland 21C’s Youth in Transition Team had a great idea: a community roundtable for out-of-school youth and their families. Co-chair Al Moschetti and 21C Coordinator Mimi Hoffman met with the newly formed Haverstraw Collaborative to see if that group would be interested in hosting a roundtable which would give families information about available educational and vocational resources.

The Haverstraw Collaborative was eager to help. More than 20 community representatives discussed the subject of out of school youth — parents didn’t know where to turn and worried about risky behaviors; youth workers felt that many of these kids had so much potential if only they would “hang in”; all agreed that being an English language learner in your teens could be disheartening.

A date for the roundtable was set (February 27th at 7 PM); a site was secured (the new Community Action Program/CAP office), and help was volunteered for flyer copy, translation, and refreshments. Most importantly, a commitment was made to have over 40 people in attendance.

Many Haverstraw Collaborative members felt that in 90 minutes they had garnered information and made personal connec-

tions worth *gold* to themselves and their constituents.

Roman Rodrigues, Haverstraw’s new County Legislator had many new site visits on his calendar. Pete Fata, Reach-Out’s Counselor learned about a credit counseling resource, immigration counseling, and a soup kitchen. And, as Pete said, “Finding out that these resources are within walking distance for the people I work with makes them so much more useful. Now there is a much better chance they will use them. Transportation will not be an issue.”

Sgt. Claude Gatti, of the Village of Haverstraw police and volunteer Collaborative Administrator, shared his vision: “In the future, I hope these meetings will include more and more community members, not just those who represent public or non-profit groups in our community. I believe as we develop as a grass roots organization, we can be very effective.”

Marion Breland, Reach Out Director, facilitated the meeting and will serve as the contact person (429-5731) for those wanting to get involved with the Collaborative. Buena Suerte/Good Luck

*The Haverstraw Collaborative was modeled after the Nyack Collaborative. A Spring Valley Collaborative has begun meeting as well.*

## Naomi Adler, Esq., President/CPO United Way of Rockland County, Inc.

### *How do your previous professional accomplishments enhance your new role as President and Chief Professional Officer of United Way?*

As a former Assistant District Attorney specializing in domestic violence and child abuse prosecution in Rochester, New York, I learned about successful ways to help build community coalitions and reduce violence. After I left the practice of law to work in the not-for-profit field, I raised funds and advocated for education and social welfare. Here, I have been called upon to be an advocate, coalition builder and fundraiser, and I am really enjoying the challenges associated with this position.

### *You come to Rockland with a fresh perspective. What have you encountered here that you didn't expect to find?*

I was surprised how difficult it is to find affordable housing and quality childcare. The high income statistics seem to mask some of the other needs in our community,

including a significant number of children living in poverty, major transportation issues, and a growing number of senior citizens who need assistance.

### *United Way is known for developing initiatives which are replicated in various communities around the U.S. Are there any you would like to explore for Rockland?*

I am interested in building a coalition of agencies to facilitate an emergency loan program, and *Success by 6*, an early childhood initiative. Both sustain families and build healthy communities.

### *As a parent of a young child, and a newcomer to Rockland, how could a Family Resource Center be of help to you?*

I have already received great childcare referrals from the FRC, as well as help from Child Care Resources of Rockland. I had a hard time finding childcare, but finally did, and it's a wonderful situation.



The FRC is also a source of information about exploring Rockland as a family.

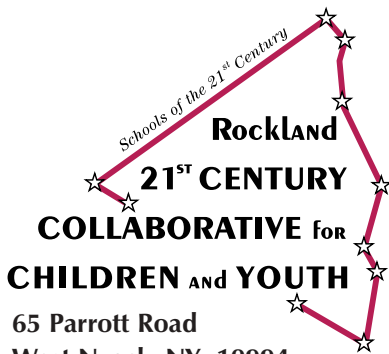
### *What would you like our readers to know about United Way?*

United Way makes a difference in a variety of ways. We promote volunteerism, provide telephone

referrals for health and human services assistance, assist in disaster relief, and educate the public about important philanthropic initiatives, including corporate gifts in kind. We also give financial support to more than 30 non-profit agencies who serve one out of three (approximately 100,000) Rocklanders. This year we will be encouraging schools to participate in our day of community service called the United Way Day of Caring.

### *Please tell us about your interest in music?*

I was brought up in a very creative family. Singing, which has become an outlet of religious expression as well as a hobby, can be a great stress releaser to me as well. Lately I'm having fun singing and playing with my one-year-old son Joshua in a weekly music class.



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## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- February 26 ... Immigration Coalition Meeting**  
Noon, Kurtz Center
- March 21 ..... United Way of Rockland Annual Meeting**  
1 PM, Nyack Grande; RSVP Mary Antonelli, 627-0200 x14
- March 26 ..... 6th Annual 21C Symposium at RCC** (see page 1)
- April 5 ..... Nyack Hospital Annual Women's Forum**  
Grandmothers Raising Grandchildren
- April 7 ..... Youth Fest / RCC Open House**  
RCC Field House; For more info call 638-5166
- April 11 ..... ACOR's County Executive Arts Awards**  
RCC Cultural Arts Theater; For more info call 426-3660
- April 24 ..... PRIDE Survey Parent Forum** (see page 2)