

NEWS FROM...

Pathways/Senderos Center

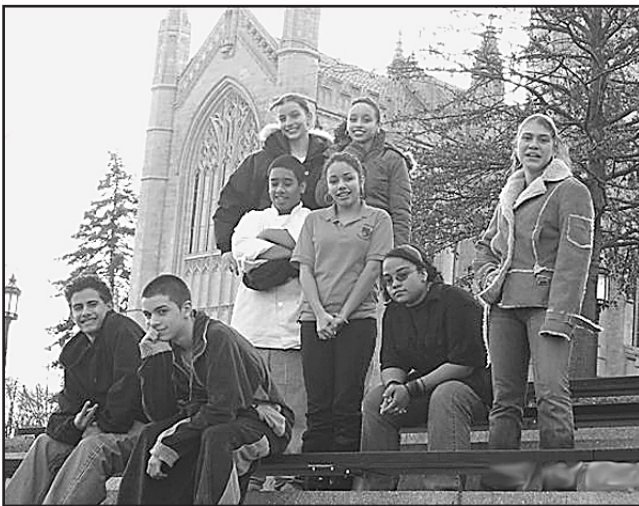
A Publication of Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc.



Volume 13, Number 1

Spring 2007

College Visits Inspire Our Students to Envision Their Futures



Alex Arroyo, Brandon Carrero, Jean Castro, Weyshla Castro, Angelica Zapata, Kathryn Carrero, Kassandra Burgos and Josette Sanchez tour Trinity College in Hartford.

Visits to many Connecticut colleges during the last several months were “eye-openers” for Pathways/Senderos students. Though most have been to Central Connecticut State University for activities with the Latin American Student Organization, this year’s visits to other institutes of higher education gave the youth insights on what it is like to live and study at a college. “One of the students asked me if they would be able to have a sleepover with a friend,” said Nick Jakubowski, Pathways/Senderos High School Coordinator. For the first time, Pathways/Senderos youth realized that college is not just taking classes to gain the expertise for a career, but also an experience in independent and responsible living, and making good life choices.

Pathways/Senderos was founded in 1993 with the goals that each student will graduate from high school without contributing to a pregnancy. Over the years, 100 percent of participants who remain in the program have graduated from high school, 67 percent of our students have continued to higher education and 94.6 percent have remained pregnancy-free.

The visits were planned so that more students might consider pursuing a college degree. Visiting campuses and personally seeing the vibrant activity made it possible for the students to briefly experience college life. Without a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, the visits would not have been possible or would have been very limited, said RoseAnne Bilodeau, Executive Director.

Jean Castro, 16, said he enjoyed seeing the campuses and the diversity of people. With an eye toward studying criminology or business, the University of New Haven could be the school for him, he said. On the other hand, he liked Wesleyan University in Middletown. Johnson & Wales could be an option, too, for cul-

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Happy Holidays!



Alisha Roldan, Krystal Garcia and Faith Roldan excitedly open their gifts at the Christmas party.

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Pathways/Senderos Goes to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Clinical Scholars Program Annual National Conference

By RoseAnne Bilodeau, Executive Director

Since Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc. Pathways/Senderos Center was first founded in 1993, this small-but-mighty agency has had remarkable success in assisting poverty-stricken youngsters gain the skills, self-discipline and self-confidence required to move forward in their lives – on to post-secondary education and career level positions in their adult-hoods – while simultaneously avoid the short- and long-term hardships brought on by parenting too soon and involvement in other risky behaviors such as teen violence, juvenile justice and substance abuse. Concurrently, this powerful agency has been recognized by some of this country's most prestigious leaders and organizations including President Clinton, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson and the House of Representatives Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, the Centers for Disease Control and the list goes on and on.

In November 2006, another stellar experience occurred. You may remember when reading our Fall 2006 newsletter that the front page article was about one of our founding board members and President Emeritus Nancy Howe, and the conversations about teen pregnancy prevention and its economic impact on the community and national level that she had with her daughter, Elizabeth Bradley, Ph.D., Director of the Health Management Program at the Yale University School of Medicine. From their discussions, Dr. Bradley, who also co-directs the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program at Yale University, realized that the social implications of teen pregnancy prevention could provide for previously unexamined scholarly research. She contacted two RWJ Clinical Scholars, Dr. Joseph Ross and Dr. Marjorie Rosenthal, to determine their interest in examining the financial impact of Pathways/Senderos' successful independently evaluated program. Both young doctors eagerly signed on to the project.

Our academic/community partnership was further strengthened when the University of Connecticut Medical School's Family Planning department also joined our ranks as additional

researchers. Our three groups gathered data, discussed our findings, drafted and revised documents, and finally, submitted an abstract of the findings to the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Annual National Conference, in hopes of selection for conference presentation.

We were selected! What a tremendous honor to present to such a prestigious, elite audience of this country's premiere physicians including the president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA. This most informative event was hosted at the beautiful Lowe's Coronado Bay Resort in San Diego, Calif. I could never say enough about the wonderful treatment that I received. The conference was perfectly organized and coordinated. The conference planners and attendees were the absolute most supportive, kind, intelligent, gracious people.

I spoke about the Pathways/Senderos Center, our youngsters and their successes. Dr. Ross presented his cost effective/benefit analysis. Our presentation was warmly received. There were questions from the audience and a great deal of enthusiastic support. We left feeling triumphant and celebratory.

Since then, the research article has been submitted for publication. Unfortunately, we cannot disclose our findings until the paper is published. We will continue to keep you informed of this very exciting study and its implications for the future growth of the Pathways/Senderos Center.

We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation and sincere thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Bradley, Dr. Joseph Ross, and Dr. Marjorie Rosenthal, Yale University School of Medicine; Jane Palley and Rosemary Richter, University of Connecticut Medical School, Family Planning; and Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, President and CEO, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. You have helped promote the importance of independently evaluated, teen pregnancy prevention models. THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!

RoseAnne Bilodeau

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NEWS BRIEFS

Stop by the Best Car Wash in Town!

Pathways/Senderos students will be using soap, water and elbow grease to make your car shine! Stop by Pathways/Senderos, 100 Arch St., on Saturdays, April 28, June 2, July 7, Aug. 11, and Sept. 8, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Cost is only \$5 for cars and \$8 for vans.

Student Art Exhibit May 2 - 16

Following the success of the students' first art exhibit in City Hall last May, a second exhibition has been scheduled for May 2 to 16. The opening reception will be Wednesday, May 2, 5 to 7 p.m., and the public is invited. The artwork is for sale.

Since last year's art show, our students' creativity has continued to blossom, said Kathleen McKeown Sauer, member of the board of directors and coordinator of the event with Mary Ciccarillo, an employee in Mayor Timothy Stewart's office. When the youngsters were asked several months ago if they would like to have a second show, they were eager. "The ones who participated last year were happy to do so again this year and our new kids were excited about the opportunity," said Kathleen. Mary has also been volunteering at the center, teaching the students the unusual paper art of quilling and the show will feature works using this media.

Channel 3 Features Pathways/Seneros

Our students were thrilled when a Channel 3 television news crew visited the center to film a segment on the program's success. The clip, which aired in December, showed student activity on a typical afternoon after school and included interviews with RoseAnne Bilodeau, student **Jean Castro**, and former participant and current outreach specialist, **Awilda Rodriguez**. The news story can be viewed on a link from our Web site: www.Pathways-Senderos.com.

Celebrating Our Students

We will be honoring our participants with the annual end-of-year celebration on May 31 after school. As is customary, each student will receive staff recognition for their achievements and program participation. One outstanding participant will receive the Nancy Howe Award, named in honor of the first board of directors' president who has continued to serve on the board for 14 years. The award winner will be selected based on academic achievement, community involvement, personal character and commitment to the program. The recipient will receive a \$100 check and his or her name will join those of previous winners engraved on a plaque displayed in the center's common room. Parents, board members and staff are invited to the celebration.

Congratulations, Senior!

This year, we have one graduate, **Reggie Roberts**, 17, who started at Pathways/Senderos when he was in sixth grade. Since that time he has matured into an independent young man who has already distinguished himself in many ways, including being active in Jr. ROTC and being chosen the city's 2006 New Britain



College student, Awilda Rodriguez, receives a book scholarship from Executive Director RoseAnne Bilodeau.

Youth of the Year. Last summer, Reggie had the unusual experience of working at the Bronx Zoo. He is exploring the many opportunities that are available to him after he graduates. He recently reflected on his involvement in the program.



"I've been with the program for so long; I've seen and been a part of all the changes. Of all things I will miss though will be all the experiences and support the staff and participants have provided me. I wish that I didn't have to leave after I graduated and although I don't, it wouldn't be the same. Pathways/Senderos is a wonderful place and experience that I am glad I have been a part of," he said.

Dining For a Good Cause

The first women's luncheon, held in May 2006 in conjunction with National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Day, was a wonderful opportunity for many of Pathways/Senderos' female supporters to meet and socialize at an afternoon luncheon. It also raised important funds to support our College Book Fund. Buying books can be a huge burden for our graduates who are attending college and each semester \$300 per student is put into a school fund to be used for textbooks and course materials.

Due to last year's success, a luncheon supporting the College Book Fund is planned for Monday, May 7, from noon to 1:30 p.m., at Great Taste Chinese Restaurant, 597 W. Main St., New Britain. Tickets for the program, which will include a full luncheon and guest speakers, are \$60 per person and can be purchased by calling RoseAnne Bilodeau at (860) 229-2776 or emailing Lori Jacques at nbtp@snet.net by Wednesday, May 2. For those who are unable to attend, donations will be graciously accepted.

Come join us for a great afternoon with others who hold the same passion for the Pathways/Senderos program.

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Want more information on volunteering? Call Executive Director RoseAnne Bilodeau at (860) 229-2776.

2006 Donors List

Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc.

We wish to thank our donors for their generosity and vision. The essential support system that our youngsters receive puts them on the path to success now and in the future.

This list reflects donations made through December 31, 2006. If we have inadvertently omitted any donor's name, please accept our apologies and notify Executive Director RoseAnne Bilodeau immediately. We will acknowledge your generosity in the next newsletter. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

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Thanks to our donors' commitment, vision and belief in Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention Inc., we have successfully served the underprivileged youth and parents of the Arch Street area for 14 years. We are proud that during that time, 100% of our participants who stay in the program graduate from high school and 94.6% have remained pregnancy-free, while 67% continue on to higher education. Others have begun full-time employment. Without your generosity and your support, it is probable that these successes would not have materialized. Please realize that your contributions positively affect local youth, your community, and ultimately, the future. Remember that our first program participants are now college graduates, property owners, taxpayers and leaders.

We hope that you have taken the time to browse the donor list to see who our many wonderful supporters are; you will find your friends, neighbors, and business associates. Our Gift Clubs enable us to more completely recognize and acknowledge your gifts. The donations you make this year are totaled when identifying your Gift Club placement in the 2007 Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc. Pathways/Senderos donor roster. The Gift Clubs are: \$500+ Los Amigos De Senderos (Friends of the Senderos), \$100-\$499 Los Amigos De Futuro (Friends of the Future), \$1-\$99 Los Amigos De Nino(a)s (Friends of the Children).

Why don't you set your sights on joining one of our gift clubs in 2007? Invest in the future of your youth and community!



Our Kids Shine

...In Middle and Elementary School:

The second half of the school year has been a busy one for our middle school students. In addition to their daily components here at Pathways/Senderos, they have also been participating in some additional activities. Dr. Jim Watson from the Hospital of Central Connecticut gave a Job Club presentation for the students about his career, why he decided to become a doctor and what he had to do to become a doctor. They visited the local Emergency Medical Services where they learned about cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other lifesaving techniques, what an Emergency Medical Technician does and also had a tour of the facility including the ambulances. The students visited the State Capitol in Hartford where they had a chance to see their government in action and also had the opportunity to meet state Rep. John Geragosian. Currently the students are participating in a month-long nutrition program facilitated by a nutritionist from the University of Connecticut.

The middle school students continue to do well in school. For the second quarter, we had nine students on the honor roll: **Tatiana Afanador, Tavares Neal, Samantha Figueroa, Shaun Dhupan, Faith Roldan, Deleris Rivera, Gio Lopez, Jeffrey Chavez and Alisha Roldan.** A number of the middle school students are also involved in various extracurricular activities including serving on the Student Council and playing for their school's basketball team and other basketball leagues here in New Britain. - *By Heather Mills, Middle School Coordinator*

...In High School:

With the school year winding down it is always good to look back and reflect upon what our high school students have been achieving. At E.C. Goodwin, two of our freshmen decided to make a difference for their class by becoming class officers: **Weyshla Castro**, President, and **Kyara Roman**, Secretary. Junior **Angelica Zapata** was selected to be a delegate from E.C. to take part in the National Skills USA competition, a showcase of high school students' talents in their areas of technical expertise. If she wins the regional competition for automotive technician, she will proceed to the next level to vie for the national title of Best High School Automotive Tech.

At New Britain High School, our students are excelling in many different areas. **Mathew Correa** and **Michael Martinez**, freshmen, just finished excellent seasons on the boys' basketball team. **Josette Sanchez**, freshman, was selected the Freshman Attendant for the Homecoming Court. **Moises Marquez**, sophomore, completed his first season on the Junior Varsity Cheerleading Squad and is currently taking part in New Britain High's production, "Oklahoma." **Ciro Martinez, Jean Carlos Sanchez, and Karina Lopez**, juniors, have been steadily working at jobs. **Ciro** is a group leader for the Parks and Recreation Department at Lincoln Elementary School. **Jean** works at McDonald's and **Karina** is currently employed by Walgreens.

The high school students have been taking trips to Connecticut colleges in order to stimulate their desire to go onto higher forms of education. Their visits have included Trinity, Wesleyan, University of Connecticut, University of Hartford, and the University of New Haven. These trips have given each student the opportunity to experience a college campus, talk with college students and see firsthand what it would be like to be part of a college environment. All of these college excursions have aided each individual's desire to become immersed in the college culture and environment. (See related story on page 1.)

- *By Nick Jakubowski, High School Coordinator*

Capital Workforce Partners

Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc. is very appreciative of the support that Pathways/Senderos has received from Capital Workforce Partners which has made it possible for our students to develop essential skills for successful employment. Capital Workforce Partners is a Workforce Investment Board that serves 37 area municipalities by coordinating comprehensive programs to develop a skilled, educated and vital workforce.

In Summer 2006, a \$3,500 grant from Capital Workforce Partners funded the Pathways/Senderos' Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program. In addition to the funding Pathways/Senderos received, all students were paid a \$700 stipend for their work over the six-week program. The students learned how to plan, implement and complete work goals by using essential skills such as writing business proposals and time management. Two achieved project goals were painting the Center and creating the program's Web site, www.Pathways-Senderos.com.

"Pathways provides a supportive environment for youth in their neighborhood in New Britain. The staff members are engaged and encouraging, and they reinforce the same program components that Capital Workforce Partners and our partner employers deem necessary for success in the workforce and in education," said Jackie McGravey, Capital Workforce Partners Future Workforce Division Manager.

Continued year-round funding will make it possible for students to participate in after-school and work-oriented school vacation activities, as well as the 2007 Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program, all with the goal of developing portfolios of work that demonstrate the values and skills they have learned. With these skills, the students will have a competitive advantage with potential employers.

Thank You, Sponsors



Pedaling for Pathways, with a few changes, experienced great participation and interest in October with participation from students, program families, staff, board members, town officials and citizens. This fundraiser is possible only through the support of the American Savings Foundation and our other generous sponsors. Thanks to them, the bike/walk-a-thon raised \$13,500 for the program.

Visit to the Capitol

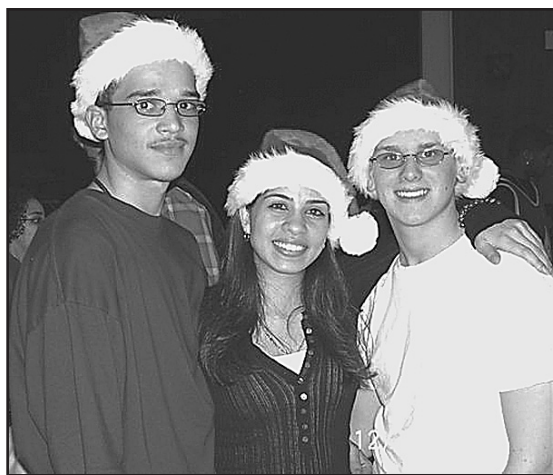
Our youngest program members, with Middle School Coordinator Heather Mills, learned firsthand about our state government when they visited the State Capitol in Hartford during February vacation. Their guided tour began in the Legislative Office Building and continued into the Capitol where they learned about the architecture and history. After seeing various artifacts, they visited the legislative chambers to learn about how laws are made and see the legislators in action. Heather said the trip was an exciting experience and helped the students to understand how the legislative process affects them.

The Christmas Party

Presents...presents...presents. That is probably the only thing kids think about during the Christmas season and the kids here at Pathways were no different. The Christmas Party has to be one of the events that everyone looks forward to the most and it was amazing. We danced and we had an amazing cake made by our very own, **Reggie Roberts**, and his father, Reggie Roberts. The food was delicious. We had chicken, pernil (roast pork), rice and beans. The staff went all out with Christmas hats and we even had Santa make an appearance. The DJs were Jesus Lopez and Jesse Paradis, former employees, and they played every type of music.

The best part of the party was yes...the presents. They ranged from CD players, to PJs, puzzles, teddy bears, socks, sweaters and footballs. Personally, I had not been to one of the program parties for a while but being there again made me feel so happy. The way all these kids got along and danced and hung out gave me a strong feeling of home. And the way the staff treated the kids, it was amazing. I don't not think that there is another program that has staff that cares so much. To me, the party was not just a party or somewhere to go on a Friday night to get presents; it was like going home to my family and that is what the Christmas party was really about...Oh, and, of course, the presents.

- By Angelica Zapata, junior



Jean Carlos Sanchez, Iriana Garcia (Outreach Specialist and former participant) and Reggie Roberts celebrate at the Center's annual holiday party.



Daniel and Javier Burgos compete in a football throwing contest at Winterfest.

Making Nutrition a Part of Life

Proper nutrition is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. However, for many, there are several obstacles in the way when it comes to getting proper nutrition. After attending meetings of the New Britain Food Security Council, where the subjects of proper nutrition and educating people about it were continuously a topic of discussion, I realized that this was something that our participants needed to learn about. Through research I found the University of Connecticut Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). The EFNEP program is designed to improve the nutrition of low-income families and youth. Specially trained EFNEP Community Nutrition Educators work with small groups and help their participants understand the importance of proper nutrition.

In February, the middle school students had their first session with Angela Caldera, an EFNEP Community Nutrition Educator from the Hartford Area EFNEP. At their first session the participants learned about reading food product labels, serving sizes, and proper measurements. Students also had the opportunity to make their own healthy snack. Students followed a recipe, prepared fresh vegetables, measured ingredients, and then were able to eat the snack that they created.

The program will continue for four weeks. At each session they will continue to learn about proper nutrition, covering topics such as: making healthy choices, cooking tips, proper food handling, changing eating habits and making their own healthy snacks. At the end of the four weeks, each student that participated will receive a certificate that they completed the EFNEP program.

Our youth are not that different from other youth when it comes to nutrition. They would much rather grab a bag of potato chips than an apple for snack. However, through this program it is our hope that the students will realize what an effect proper nutrition has on their day-to-day lives. Once they have that understanding, they can use their knowledge to educate their families and peers and carry that knowledge into adulthood.

- By Heather Mills, Middle School Coordinator

Visit Our Web site: www.Pathways-Senderos.com

College - continued from page 1

nary arts, said this E.C. Goodwin student.

Kathryn Carrero, 16, is exploring her dreams too. Though she would like to be a veterinarian, she is also considering art or choreography as a career choice. Her brother, **Antonio Carrero**, who also attended the Pathways/Senderos program, is in his first year studying culinary arts at Johnson & Wales in Rhode Island. He is the first member of their family to continue schooling after high school graduation. Kathryn said she would prefer her higher education to be in-state. For now she is keeping school her main focus and employment to a minimum; occasionally she works for Barcodes, the in-house mailing business that provides students with jobs, job skills and life skills such as saving money, managing a bank account and keeping to a budget.

Angelica Zapata, 16, and Kathryn plan to go to college together. Angelica, too, envisions being a veterinarian. "I've always loved animals," she said. She has it all planned: take undergraduate pre-vet courses and major in biology. "Hopefully I'll get a scholarship," she said. She expects that college life is "a whole different world." No one in her family has gone beyond the freshman year in high school, she said.

Jean Sanchez, 16, who attends New Britain High School, said he looks forward to leaving Connecticut after graduation. "I don't like New Britain," he said. To save money for college, he is working at McDonald's and hopes to get a job at Stew Leonard's

when it opens in New Britain. Jean plans to attend Johnson & Wales in Florida and major in culinary arts.

To handle the skills and paperwork necessary to pursue higher education, Nick, teaches the students how to fill out college applications, write essays, and pursue scholarships and financial aid. Students and staff eagerly wait to hear of college acceptances.

"I'll be the first one in my family to go to college," said Jean Sanchez. "I want to succeed in life."



A group of high school students visit the University of Connecticut.

Established in 1993, Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc. (GNBTPP) is based on Dr. Michael Carrera's successful prevention model developed in Harlem, NY. The Carrera philosophy states "In order to create an environment where positive change can occur, it is necessary to influence multiple facets of young people's lives over a continuous and prolonged period of time." Because academic success is the key to teen pregnancy prevention, the core of this program integrates educational support with career/vocational preparation and family life education. To accomplish its goals, GNBTPP has created a public-private partnership involving all of the community's key stakeholders that maximizes existing local resources. Programming and participants at GNBTPP are evaluated annually by an independent social scientist to insure that outcomes are measured accurately.

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