

CENTERPIECE



A COMMUNITY OF SUCCESS

Fall 2012

Prevention is Better Than Problem Solving

By Maricha Harris

It's no secret. Teen pregnancy and poverty are interconnected. In fact, three major predictors of a child's likeliness to live in poverty are: 1) being born to a teen mother; 2) being born to parents who aren't married at birth, and/or; 3) being born to a mother with no high school diploma or GED, according to a 2004 report from the U.S. Congress Committee on Ways and Means. 64% of children who experience all three predictors are likely to live in poverty. In other words, a child is nine times more likely to live in poverty when born under all circumstances compared to those born under none of them.

In 2005, teen births represented 18.7% of all births in Milwaukee, making Milwaukee the second highest city in the nation for percentage of births to teens. It's no surprise Milwaukee's poverty rate for 2011 was 11.1%.

Sadly, without prevention efforts, teen pregnancy cycles—and the problems associated with them—are likely to continue. Daughters of teen mothers are 83% more likely to become teen mothers, according to Rebecca Maynard, author of *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy*.

Teen pregnancy is neither an individual nor a family problem. It is a community problem. Long-term, the cost of one Milwaukee teen having a baby is \$79,000. While statistics and stories about teen pregnancy and

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Browning Scores High For 2012



*Browning School, the K4 – 5th grade school which is attached to Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, finished the 2011-2012 academic year with notable accomplishments. Once again, as for the past three years, the WKCE (Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination) and MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) scores increased by 5% or more. The math and reading scores for the WKCE each increased by 5.2%. **Principal Sharon McDade** attributes these successes to the positive reinforcements used by teachers, parent involvement, and an attendance increase, from 88.9% to 90.1%.*

"We're grateful to have the CLC at Browning. The staff there not only helps our kids succeed academically with tutoring, they are much-needed role models who expect greatness from every child. It's a wonderful partnership...and it's working."

**Principal Sharon McDade,
Secretary, Silver Spring Board of Directors**

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Our Mission

Since 1958, building a stronger, safer neighborhood and community by helping individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency.

Our Vision

A national model and leader for comprehensive, community-based, collaborative, and culturally relevant system of services.

Administrative Staff

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poverty are disheartening, the good news is there is hope, and at the root of that hope is prevention.

The financial burden of teen pregnancy and the likelihood of generational poverty are major reasons to focus on prevention efforts. With sleeves rolled up, United Way of Greater Milwaukee and diverse leaders in social service, government, business, public health, education, philanthropy, and faith-based organizations aligned efforts in 2006 to prevent teen pregnancy.

Thankfully, these collaborative prevention efforts led by United Way are working, as births to teens 15 - 17 years old are declining. In 2006, this population was having babies at a rate of 52 births per 1,000 girls; that rate declined to 44 births per 1,000 girls in 2009, a 15% decrease.

Indeed, great strides have been made towards the goal to reduce Milwaukee's teen birth rate among 15 - 17 year olds by 46% by 2015. Silver Spring Neighborhood Center is one organization working to reduce teen pregnancy. In the past 11 years, 99% of the center's active youth have avoided teen pregnancy.

We all play a part in working to prevent teen pregnancy among future generations. That means parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, guardians, and the like all have a role. According to a 2010 periodic national survey by Bill

Albert and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 46% of teens consider parents the most important influence when they make sexual decisions. That means teens want sexual information from their parents.

Let's face it. Talking about sex may not always be easy, but it's necessary. Children are being bombarded with sexual messages every day, so it's crucial that parents have a strong and consistent message, too.

You can make talking with your children about sex easier. First, prepare. In order to communicate your own sexual values, you have to know them for yourself. Then decide what to say in advance. Second, relax. Don't feel pressured to know everything. Check out www.babycanwait.com to access a parent-child communication toolkit. The toolkit gives information on what is developmentally appropriate for your child as well as tips on how to have tough conversations. Third, begin now. October is Let's Talk Month. Plan to have an age-appropriate conversation now because children are our future, and it's our duty to help them delay pregnancy and achieve their life goals.

Maricha Harris coordinates United Way's Healthy Girls grant at Silver Spring Neighborhood Center. Under the grant, she facilitates *Making Proud Choices*, an evidenced-based teen pregnancy prevention curriculum for youth.

Spotlight on Spartans Boys Basketball Teams

Silver Spring Neighborhood Center is one of a handful of social service agencies in the United States that operates an elite level basketball program. This means that our youth have an exceptional opportunity to be recruited to play college ball by recruiters who only recruit at NCAA-certified events. While all of our team members also participate on high school teams, playing at Silver Spring permits their talents to be showcased in a way that furthers their education and life opportunities.

Beginning with our first 4th grade class in 2000, our Spartans AAU program has now seen four classes, totaling 28 young men, graduate from high school and enter college on full scholarships in excess of \$125,000, or more than \$3.5 million of value to our participants and their families. Two of the 28 graduates play on professional teams.

Our youth understand that in order to play on the Spartans, they must also maintain strong academic standards. The winning combination at Silver Spring is talent, academic standards, and sportsmanship.

2012 Highlights

- **Dwight Buyucks** completed his first year as a professional athlete.
- **Demond Smith** signed his first professional contract.
- **Quevyn Winters** secured a scholarship to division 1 Duquesne University.
- **Phillip Nolan** secured a scholarship to the University of Connecticut.

- The 8th grade team won the Spartan classic in Lansing, MI and placed in the top four in three other tournaments.
- The 9th grade team has placed in the top four in each of their events.



*Our 9th grade basketball team was named the Adidas Super 64 Gold Division Champs at the Las Vegas Championship Game in July. Pictured back left to right: **Coach Anthony McHenry, Romeo Bouie, Juafonyay Lyte, Matt Heldt, Dante Scaffidi, Asst Coach Martin Hogan.** Front left to right: **Darrel Riley, Andrew Davis, Nate Hubbard and Max Wojcik.***

Spotlight on Spartans Track & Field Program

Since the 1990's, Silver Spring Neighborhood Center has had co-ed track teams that participate in both the American Athletic Union (AAU) and the United States of America Track & Field (USATF) organizations. To date, approximately 800 youth have joined these teams, which include ages 6 - 18 and approximately

40% girls as team members. The teams compete in both the winter and summer seasons throughout the Midwest and at competitions across the country.

One of the unique characteristics of the Spartans team is its superb volunteer coaching staff. The track program was created



*Spartans **Helen Thames, Amanda Ford, Erica Hunt and Endaisha Burks** won first place in the 4 X 100 relay at the AAU regional track meet held in June in Oshkosh.*

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in 1993 by **Coach David Conner**, who has coached and managed the teams as a volunteer and devoted as much as 50 hours some weeks to the track efforts. During the years since 1993, he has recruited 23 additional volunteer coaches to assist the program and spark its growth. Conner served Milwaukee Public Schools as a math teacher in both junior and senior high schools, while coaching football, wrestling, baseball, and track. While at Alcorn State University, he ran track and participated on both the football and baseball teams, earning a place in the Hall of Fame. Now 78 years of age, Conner shows no sign of slowing down his level of commitment and enthusiasm for the Silver Spring Spartans.

In 2012, 7 seniors earned full-time college scholarships and 6 seniors earned partial college scholarships, out of a total of 16 graduating team members. This high ratio of scholar/athletes demonstrates that track is not only a successful program while youth are at Silver Spring, but that participation often opens the door to a college education.

THANK YOU!

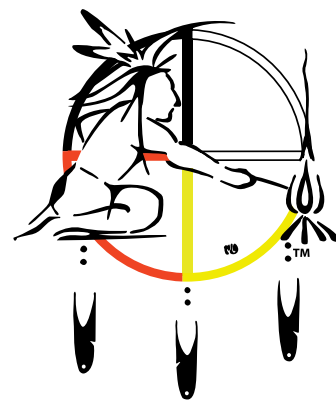
Many thanks go to friend and volunteer Mary Kossik for taking hundreds of photos at the Center and around the neighborhood for our upcoming annual report and this newsletter.

College Tour



Teen Leadership Club members visited historically black colleges in late August. (left to right) **Crystal Jester, Kerra Trice, Jewel Lewis, Shakiel Jefferson, Kevin Spight, Deanna Brown, Terrell Wilks, Chris Johnson**. Second row left to right: **Jacob Evans, Jeffery Nickerson**. Campuses on the tour included Spellman University, Morehouse University, Clark Atlanta University, Alabama State University, Alabama A&M University, and Tuskegee University. This annual trip was once again generously sponsored by **Forest County Potawatomi Foundation**.

Forest County Potawatomi FOUNDATION



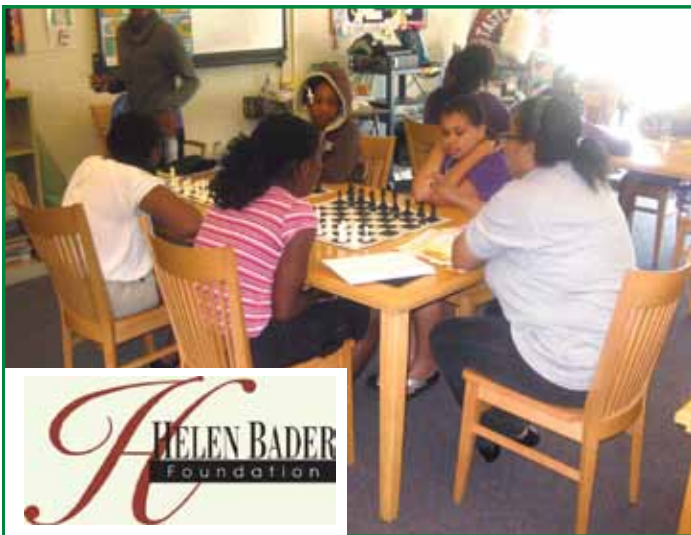
In June, **Forest County Potawatomi Foundation** awarded Silver Spring Neighborhood Center \$50,000 for our Youth Social Development Programs, including \$7,000 toward the cost of our August college trip. The Foundation has supported our programs for more than a decade. We greatly appreciate this terrific sponsorship, which ranks among our largest foundation gifts in 2012 and a doubling of our \$25,000 grant received in 2011.



We gratefully thank **US Bank** for its continued generous support of our Adult Education Program. Our Adult Education Family Literacy grant from the Wisconsin Technical College Systems Board requires matching funds, and the Bank's \$25,000 is the largest match we've received to date.



The **Wisconsin Bike Federation** conducted a two-week bike camp at Browning CLC during August. 20 students learned bicycle safety in a hands-on program. The group practiced their new skills during afternoon trips extending as far north as Brown Deer Road.



Thank you to the **Helen Bader Foundation** which, once again, helped support additional weeks of summer education and recreation at our Browning Community Learning Center and Thurston Woods Campus Community Learning Center.



What's more exciting than a new backpack filled with school supplies? 485 kids received them, thanks to corporate sponsors **Avnet Electronics**, the **House of Corned Beef**, **Rotork Process Controls**, **US Bank**, and **Target**. There were over 600 people who attended this annual event. A hotdog dinner was served, compliments of our neighbor, the House of Corned Beef.

Our Work Pays Off! We continue to have the city's best record for teens – with only three pregnancies out of 800 teen participants and only one felony conviction during the past eight years.

Thank you, United Way, for your trust in us and generous funding.



SUMMER AT SSNC



Working towards their GEDs.



*Learning patience, sportsmanship, and eye/hand coordination?
No. We're just playing Foosball!*



*Our emergency food bank knows
no season.*



Look what I made!



*Learning fine motor skills? No.
Just having fun with my ball!*



Building friendships.

In Fond Remembrance

Ellene "Tudie" Parks was a guiding light for Westlawn. Serving for many years as the president of the Westlawn Resident Council, Parks died suddenly on June 15 at age 53. Although she didn't live to see the redevelopment completed, Parks was involved from the outset with the Housing Authority's plans to create a new face for Westlawn. She represented the residents and their

needs at every juncture. Parks also organized Christmas parties, neighborhood cleanups, and back to school drives. In planning for her successor, Tudie taught current president Jackie Burrell what she needed to know to run the Resident Council.

Executive Director Jim Bartos credited Parks as the prime mover

behind the annual Christmas party. "She'd spend days wrapping gifts in her office," he said. "And she taught our kids the value of patience, as no gifts would be given out until the night of the party."

Parks is survived by her daughter Shantell Stone and a son Christopher.

Kathy Johnson Will Be Missed

Kathy Johnson, adult education coordinator and lead instructor since 2003, completed her service to Silver Spring on September 14th. A teacher since 1971, Kathy plans to pursue part-time employment closer to her home in Oconomowoc.

Under Kathy's leadership, English as a Second Language was added to the curriculum, as well as computer classes, which have become an integral part of our instruction. She also restructured Adult Ed's free drop-in day care in collaboration with the staff of SER Jobs for Progress.

Of the more than 1,000 students who have participated in Adult Ed since 2003, Kathy is proud of all of them, especially those who made the effort despite huge personal obstacles, and those who achieved

more than they had ever imagined possible.

Unlike some other teaching areas, adult education always involves having a keen personal knowledge of the student. "It's important to know when to be assertive and when to hold back. We are teaching the whole person, not just focusing on academic subjects," said Johnson.

Kathy initiated the agency's Job Board and maintains it with the help of the drop-in day care teacher. Throughout the Adult Ed curriculum, there are references to the world of work, resume writing, and job search. After all, an adult's education is geared toward obtaining a better level of work and greater self-sufficiency.



Aside from her "day job," Kathy has been an indefatigable party organizer, volunteering with IT manager Eric Woulfe to create wonderful Annual Achievement Dinners, staff holiday parties, and an occasional Mardi Gras party.

We thank Kathy for nine years of teaching in our community and of sharing her optimism and talents with our students.

Fond Farwells

We recognize **Lynn Kasza's** retirement this fall after five years of service to Silver Spring Neighborhood Center. She began in 2007 as the Business Manager in our Early Childhood Education Center and was promoted to Director of Finance & CFO in fall 2008. Thank you for all that you shared with us, Lynn, and happy trails!

We say goodbye to **David Muhammad**, Site Coordinator of the Browning Community Learning Center since December 2010, and wish him well in his new position as Site Coordinator working with Urban Hispanic Youth Programming at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee.

NEW FACES

Welcome to Our Family!

Domonique Barley is the new community learning center site coordinator at Browning School.

Margaret Grady is the job coach in the Transitional Jobs Program.

Patricia Schmal is the new Adult Education Coordinator.

James Wilbern is the new community learning center site coordinator at Northwest Secondary School.

We're #1!

The Wisconsin Department of Children & Families recently rated SSNC and UMOS as the leading Transitional Jobs Programs in the state.

Please accept our apologies if you received this newsletter in error. To be removed from our list, please contact us at 414-463-7950.

Thank you, United Way,
for your trust in us and
generous funding.



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