

CENTERPIECE

 **SILVER SPRING**
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER EST. 1958

A COMMUNITY OF SUCCESS

Fall 2011

Transitional Jobs Program Granted Increase in Funding

State funding for our Transitional Jobs Program ("TJ") has increased to \$880,675, an increase of 38% over the original two-year grant. Program coordinator Debbie Buchanan is thrilled to know that even more trainees and companies will have a chance to benefit from this year-old program. Buchanan also looks forward to offering additional coaching sessions, as occurred on August 4th, when Silver Spring hosted a resume and cover letter writing class for the community at large.

The most recent 7th class of trainees was unique, as it was put together specifically tailored to specifications of employers Trinity Healthcare, Trinity Home Healthcare, Enrichment Opportunities, Advanced Painting and Construction, and Dreams & Visions Child Care. These five employers immediately hired TJ's six trainees.

Program Graduate Profiles

- One woman, who was residing in a women's shelter, worked through TJ to strengthen her resume writing, interviewing, and administrative skills, and is now employed as an officer manager

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Secretary of the WI Department of Children & Families Eloise Anderson joins Pereles, Inc.'s owners and Silver Spring Transitional Jobs staff at a press conference featuring the program's success.



Browning and Thurston Woods' CLCers enjoy the last day of summer programming at Lincoln Park.

Our Mission

Established in 1958, Silver Spring Neighborhood Center is a private, nonprofit organization committed to strengthening and enriching the Westlawn and neighboring community. We provide comprehensive and collaborative programs and services. These are identified by community residents and responsive to evolving community needs.

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at a housing development in Milwaukee. She found the position on her own. Since starting this job, she has linked TJ with two additional openings in its maintenance department. This single mom entered the program very talented in the hard skills for the workplace, but TJ needed to work with her on the soft skills of office etiquette. And to top it off, she was in a transitional position fewer than three weeks before moving to a permanent position.

- Daphne Watkins, 21, has worked in four different Silver Spring departments since November, including TJ, Youth Development, Early Childhood, and Drop-In Child Care. Although she lives close to the Center, she didn't know about it until her pastor introduced her to the TJ program. "I came over and enjoyed a wonderful experience. TJ taught me a lot of new things, professionally speaking, and how to be a grown up."

THANK YOU



Volunteer Thanner Baquero of the Milwaukee North Sunrise Rotary Club reads to children in our Early Childhood Education Center.



Jim Bartos receives a generous donation from the Social Justice Committee of Unitarian Church North in Mequon, following a tour of our campus.

Essay Wins 1st Place in National Contest

Be Cool, Follow the Rules Playground Safety

By Jada Hawkins, age 8

I'm going to tell you what playground safety means. Playground safety is when you don't fight or be mean. My rule is: do not fight. Fighting is not good. Playground safety is what you do to be safe – it does not mean jump off the swings, flip off the monkey bars, or jump off the climber. Playground safety is when you don't run on the climber, push someone on the swing, push somebody, walk in front of the swing, or throw wood chips. Playground safety is safe, respectful, and responsible. When you do playground safety, everything goes fine. When you do bad things, everything goes wrong. It's fun when you do playground safety because everyone gets along with each other and makes friends with people. On the slide, wait your turn so you don't bump anybody!

I like playground safety! Because it doesn't make a fight, it doesn't make an argument, and it doesn't make a problem. So that is why you have to do playground safety.



Jada Hawkins, 8, a participant in our ECEC, placed first in the 6-8 age group in both the local and national competition of the Housing Authority's Playground Safety Poster and Essay Competition. For this, she received gift cards worth \$125, and will be featured in the 2012 Housing Authority calendar. Way to go, Jada!



We Love Music!

Our kids spent several months learning about music with teachers from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, culminating in a drum making project and a marching band in the gym. We thank the Conservatory for choosing Silver Spring as a new site for their important community programs.



Congratulations also to (Back row, left to right) Jordyn Robinson, Alexandria Fields, Endia Anthony, Bria Brame (Front row, left to right) Jada Hawkins, Ronladell Bratchet.

COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (CLCS)

A big “Thank You” to the Helen Bader Foundation for the grant that permitted us to hire academic teachers for our CLC summer schools. Due to MPS budget cuts, which resulted in summer school cutbacks, our CLCs fulfilled the role by adding an academic component to our recreational program.

Our CLCs were at near capacity this summer, with morning academics a prerequisite for participating in many fun-filled activities in the afternoons. All locations offered the traditional arts and crafts and sports activities, but each CLC offered special programs as well. As in past years, all sites participated in the Super Reader program.

Northwest Secondary CLC

Photography, iCamp, and cooking classes were big draws for kids, reports Coordinator Stephanie McKennis. Among the 85 students who participated this summer, each had many choices for making the summer weeks fly by. This included a weeklong Photography Camp where kids learned digital camera skills and how to develop black and white film. H2O Music, at Lincoln Center School of the Arts, provided kids a chance to make and produce their own CD. At iCamp, they learned to take used computers apart; rebuild them; and then got to take them home.

Thurston Woods Campus CLC

95 kids a week took part in fitness, wellness, strength, and

conditioning; Chess Club; and sessions on “Making Proud Choices.” Middle school students participated in the MPS EXCEL program, with field trips to Discovery World, where they studied aquatic systems; Bradley Tech High School, where they had a chance to work in the metal fabrication and wood shop; and a songwriting and CD production session of H2O Music. Elementary school students participated in Junior Achievement’s “Making Families Work,” a program focused on financial literacy. Coordinator Jeff Knox beamed as he talked about the summer’s successes.



Thurston Woods students participated in metal fabrication and manufacturing workshops through the MPS EXCEL summer camp program.

Burroughs CLC

85 youngsters enjoyed hip hop dancing classes and computers for fun, among other activities. Summertime field trips included the movie “Cars 2,” roller skating, swimming at Cool Waters, a trip to the U.S. Cellular Arena for a Milwaukee Wave game; and a final blast on July 29th at American Action Territory for go carting, bumper cars and boats, laser tag, and mini golf. Coordinator Bertha Turner says the Mini Chef cooking class was also a big hit.

Browning CLC

Coordinator David Muhammad chose science and math as focal points for academics for 89 kids this summer. These classes were highly praised during an MPS site visit. Among the CLC’s special offerings were classes for 4th and 5th graders in nutrition and agriculture, including a visit to the Hunger Task Force’s farm in Franklin, where they planted and watered vegetables. Field trips included visits to IMAX, bowling, and the Country Springs Water Park. Browning offered classes in martial arts and yoga, and an exciting intramural sports competition.

TEEN PROGRAM

Growing Our Own

The greenhouse and garden have yielded the biggest and best crop ever. Our teens worked hard this spring and summer preparing the soil, planting the seeds, watering, weeding, and nurturing a bounty of flowers and a bumper crop of tomatoes, bell peppers, cucumbers, and squash. In the process they learned about composting, organic gardening, and careers that require gardening knowledge. They also discovered that the vegetables they never tried before and thought they would hate actually taste great!

"These kids have grown up in a 'microwave society.' They expect everything to come to them right away," said Marvin Pickett, Growing Power program supervisor. "So when we asked them to participate in gardening, which involves delayed satisfaction, they thought it was a lame idea. When the program started, the only

way we could get them to buy into the idea was to bribe them by paying them for their work. But now they finally 'get it'."

Pickett, an avid gardener himself, has done a remarkable job of educating and nurturing 20 of the participants in our Teen Leadership Club.

He tells the story of one young man. On a walk-through of the greenhouse, Pickett noticed that some plants were struggling, so he asked the teen if he had watered the plants. The teen said "yes." Pickett asked the teen to stick his finger in the soil next to a wilting plant. It was dry. Pickett asked him again if he watered the plants, to which the teen replied, "Well,



Teens on greenhouse duty look forward to harvest time.

I watered some of them." And Marvin said, "Plants are just like children. If you take care of them and nurture them, they will grow up strong. And if you don't, they won't." Lesson learned.

The teens will sell the vegetables at their own Farmer's Market to raise money for the Club. The unsold produce will be donated to SSNC's emergency food pantry.



Excitement fills the air as the teens prepare to leave for the airport.

Historically Black Colleges Tour A Great Success

For a decade, a group of Teen Leadership Club members has gone on an August Historically Black Colleges trip. This year, thanks to a special gift from the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation, 10 teens travelled to six North Carolina schools. Among those visited were North Carolina A&T in Greensboro

and North Carolina Central in Durham. Students also raised money to help offset the cost of food and a trip to an amusement park.

Students must complete 25 hours of community service, maintain a 2.0 GPA, and attend 70% of the Teen Leadership Club weekly meetings

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in order to be included on the trip. Among other special things, this five-day trip is often the first time these teens have traveled by plane.

"This trip is an eye opener for our teens," said Assistant Executive Director Anthony McHenry. "They live in a culture which

often provides few expectations. Spending even a brief time in a culture where there are high expectations and where most people are making good decisions is a real plus," he explained.

The college trip also offers teens a chance to practice their public

speaking skills, as each participant must do a presentation about their experiences visiting campuses. This also sharpens their team building and leadership skills.

Special thanks to LaShonda Kendrick and "Mac" McHenry for chaperoning this year's trip.

UWM-SSNC NURSING CENTER

Stress Management For All Ages

This year's summer class of nursing students conducted stress management classes for both Center staff and the 6th graders in the Early Childhood Education Center.

"Managing one's stress is important for all of us. But it's even more important for those who serve program participants. When a staff member comes to work all stressed out, he/she can't possibly give the 110% attention and effort that our clients need," said Shakoor Lee, mental health nurse clinician and summer instructor of the student nurses. "So the nursing students created a program to teach stress reduction techniques, tailoring a curriculum for staff and a curriculum for the kids."



Mental health nurse clinician Shakoor Lee helps students discover the calming effects of aromatherapy.

"For staff, the focus was on creating a 'pleasant atmosphere' for oneself," explained Lee. "If they appear present and enthusiastic, the feeling is catching...and the participants they serve will feel the same way."

Staff discovered the calming benefits of aromatherapy, art therapy, progressive relaxation, and thought-changing imagery. They also learned how sleep deprivation

and poor nutrition can compound stress, resulting in hypertension, anxiety, and depression.

For the 6th graders, each nursing student came up with a creative way to help the kids identify and manage stress. In addition to the techniques listed, the kids learned how Play-Doh play, yoga, and tasting indulgent-but-healthy foods like avocado and dark chocolate could make them feel better.

The nursing students also created a "Stress Release" bulletin board display and brochures to remind Center participants what to do. The Nursing Center staff provides ongoing stress reduction training for all who need it.

Stress Management Tip

Low blood sugar can make you feel anxious and irritable, while eating too much can make you lethargic. By eating small but frequent meals throughout the day, you can help your body maintain an even level of blood sugar and avoid these swings in mood.

TEAM SPORTS LEAGUES

JUNE

2011 Bobbie Recardo Classic Kudos to our 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th grade basketball teams for winning first place in their respective divisions in this two-day tournament held at SSNC, in which 36 teams competed. The annual event is named in honor of Bobbie Recardo, who served as our athletic director for 40 years.



JULY

World Basketball National Tournament Hats off to our 5th and 8th grade teams for their first place wins. This two-day event took place in Deerfield, IL.

USATF Regional Championship

Congratulations to the 47 youth who qualified for the 5-day regional competition in St. Paul, MN.

Hurray for the gold medal winners: Jalen Gillie, 17, placed first in both the 100 and 200 meter races; Joshua Dixon, 17, placed first in the triple jump; and Valerie Thomas, 16, placed first in the 100 meter hurdles and 400 meter hurdles. Joshua Dixon, Jalen Gillie, Aaron Parks, and Deon Polk won first place in the 4x100 relay.

AUGUST

AAU National Track Tournament 29 Spartans, ages 8-17, qualified for the 7-day national tournament held in New Orleans. High five to Joshua Dixon who placed 5th in the triple jump and Jalen Gillie who placed 7th in the 200 meter dash.



The 5th grade team shoots for more points.



Spartans Patrick Dixon, 13 (left in green) and Chris Caldwell, 13, vie for a win.

MANY THANKS...

to the volunteer coaches who tirelessly teach and mentor nearly 300 young athletes, and to the chaperones who accompany them to tournaments throughout the country.

Basketball Coaches:

3rd Grade Team - Reginald Blakely and Baron Crowder

4th Grade Team - Dennis Thomas and Eddie Grayson

5th Grade Team - Jeff Knox and Warren McCloud

6th Grade Team - Pierre Reynolds

7th Grade Team - Ewell Clinton and Thomas Lucas

8th Grade Team - Anthony McHenry

High School - Freddie Riley

Track Coaches:

David Conner – Head Coach

Lee Bullock

Jerry Gillie

Jerry Johnson

Marcia Roundtree

Keith McQuittle

Domonique Johnson

Charles Sutton



"Back to School" Family Night participants enjoyed live "positive" hip hop music and a DJ, poetry, games, and a free dinner. 510 students received backpacks filled with school supplies.

Angela Aguilar and Katie Wilson of Rotork, Inc. delivered 50 bags of school supplies donated by their co-workers for our "Back to School" Family Night event to Jim Bartos and Anthony McHenry.



Wish List

- Alarm clocks
- Large bulletin board
- Fax machine
- Sofas, tables
- Flat screen TV
- Basketball shooting arcade game
- Pizza ovens
- Hot dog warmers
- Pool table
- Sound system
- Weight room equipment
- Treadmill
- Stationary bicycles
- Elliptical machine
- Yoga mats
- Medicine balls
- Industrial-sized fans
- Punching bag
- New or gently used football cleats (for teens)
- 6 carpets
- 6 computers
- Window seats
- Books
- Educational games, audio tapes, videos
- GED calculators
- Basic skills & GED prep books
- Ergonomically correct chairs for computer lab



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