

FALL 2007

CFCSJ

SUPPORTING THE STRENGTHS AND RESOURCES WITHIN
FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND INDIVIDUALS

focus

THEATER BENEFIT EDITION

Welcome, from the Board of Trustees

The Center for Family, Community, & Social Justice, Inc., provides state-of-the-art clinical supervision and training by a nationally and internationally known faculty of clinical supervisors. The counseling staff of the Center are highly dedicated professionals who offer family and adolescent counseling and case management, free of charge, to youth and families in economically disadvantaged communities in New Jersey. The Center leadership is grateful to community partner agencies for their collaboration and to the School Based Youth Services Program of The State of New Jersey, Department of Children and Families, Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships, for its support of

our mission and programs. Most important, in highly respectful, culturally competent counseling relationships, the staff of the Center supports the strengths and resources within individuals, families and communities to promote hope and possibilities for the young people of our state.

On behalf of the board of trustees, I invite you to join me in a celebration of the work of the Center staff and supervisory faculty. We thank you for your attendance and support of the Center's first theater benefit in collaboration with the Passage Theatre Company.

Curt Lindberg,
Chair, Board of Trustees



Curt Lindberg, Board Chair

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Theater Benefit Nov 4

The Devil's Music: The Life and Blues of Bessie Smith
Written by Angelo Parra Conceived and originally staged by Joe Brancato, starring Miche Braden as Bessie Smith, Passage Theatre Company at the City of Trenton's Mill Hill Playhouse.



Elizabeth in Trenton

The Elizabeth Family Empowerment Program (FEP) team visited the Trenton SBYSP Mental Health Clinicians and joined a group meeting of the International Program which is comprised of students from Africa and the Caribbean. (staff photo, L to R, Sonja Johnson (Eliz); Mary Drahofsky (TTN), Maria Fernandez (Eliz.); Shakina Jones, (TTN).



Young Proud Beautiful and Free

(Dedicated to The Young People of The International Program of SBYSP/Trenton Central High School)

Who are you?

A reflection of African pride
A reflection of each other's strength
A reflection of the world
A reflection

Of me, of us, of bright stars
In midnight skies
As black and as beautiful as your hands
Children of my Ancestors
I honor you inheritors of resilience
Inheritors of the power to survive

The blood of Mother Africa
Pumps through your hearts
Be proud of who you are
And continue to be proud
Be proud of who you are
And where you are from
Whether Liberia land
Sac Pa Se Haiti!
Ghana
Nigeria
Sudan

Today we celebrate
A jubilee of faith
United for a better tomorrow

When I look into your eyes
I see brown rich earth
Bright precious dreams
Brilliant minds
Jewels of hope
Gems of love
Remember that
Your promised land
Was born in your hands
Breathe life into your dreams

Be proud because
Africa is where Civilization began
Be proud of who you are

Young
Proud
Beautiful
And
Free!

María Teresa Fernández
(p.k.a. Mariposa) © 2007



The Director's Corner

Men [and women] often hate each other because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they can not communicate; they can not communicate because they are separated. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story (1958)

The Center for Family, Community, & Social Justice is committed to relationships. Barriers to effective, respectful communication can be evident in the most intimate social unit to the macro levels of society. We support the enhancement of communication within families, among colleagues, within organizations and communities. An ecological construct of human relationships teaches us that we need each other. Philosophers (Buber, Hegel) have taught that we evolve in relationship to "the other." Consequently, relationships are at the core of our teaching, learning and collaboration. We view human suffering within a relational context. From contemporary neuroscientists we are learning that the brain is a social organism, its development adversely affected by stressful environmental factors, its growth and healing sustained by positive relational contexts. Researchers have demonstrated that children who are exposed to violence exhibit suppressed immune systems. Yet, this compelling data continues to elude dominant discourse in our society about mental health and well-being; individual psychopathological paradigms still prevail. At the core of our work is belief that relational responses can heal even physiological phenomena. The primary unit of response is the family, in its diverse culturally-determined forms. Parents want to help their children. Many, of all cultures and economic classes may not know how or have lost hope. The most economically disadvantaged of our fellow citizens interface with oppressive helping systems so often that they are wisely cautious about inviting "strange" helping professionals into their families.

The Center is fortunate to have a distinguished faculty of consulting clinical supervisors, teachers in graduate and post-graduate clinical training institutions, nationally and internationally known teachers and scholars who subscribe to a contextual view of human struggle. We are privileged to be able to aspire to Dr. King's pursuit of authentic communication, at the level of supervision, counseling and community partnership. I wish to thank the Trustees of the Center for their belief in our work, the staff for their excellence and dedication, agency partners for your collaboration, and grantors for your support. To the faculty who give so generously of your time, energy and spirit, there are no adequate words of thanks: Deidre Ashton, Robert Lynn, Glenda Mendelsohn, CharlesEtta Sutton, and Norbert Wetzel. The heart of the Center is the relationship among all of us. The pulse of the Center is the Director of Operations, Mandy Leith. Her extraordinary skill and dedication maintain the practical and fiscal health of the Center; her contribution is invaluable. We are most grateful to the youth and families who allow us into their lives.

From the Director of Training

By Norbert A. Wetzel

My task is to facilitate the process of training the teams that perform the most significant part of the mission of the Center. It turns out that the Center is a learning community including the families to whom we consult.

The surprise without which there is no learning comes daily from the students and the families. The families' narratives affect the teams who in turn share the stories with supervisors and faculty. Our weekly and monthly conversations in supervision and training are the places where the transformative power of these stories often startles us. We support the teams as they assist the families to discover hidden strengths and unnoticed opportunities for movement.

All of us learn from the students and families. During this year we are giving each counseling team the opportunity to teach us about what they are learning from the families they encounter daily.

Families and students served by the Center live in communities that are under stress in multiple ways. The Lakewood FEP team designed a survey to learn about the priorities the people in Lakewood are most concerned about. The team then organized a retreat for families from the community to explore the issues, such as violence in the community, needs for adequate housing, family - school communication problems. This retreat, attended by almost 50 people, is an excellent example of how families become empowered to address larger community issues."



At the working retreat for parents of the FEP program within the Lakewood School Based Youth Services Program, Asbury Park, July 2006. From left, George Paulsen, LPC, Sr. Family Systems Specialist and Associate Supervisor, Kamess Haki, Sr. Community Resource Specialist and Norbert A. Wetzel, Consulting clinical supervisor and Director of Training.

Partners and Grantors

- Department of Children and Families, Division of Prevention and Community Partnership, State of New Jersey
- Camden Regional School District, Camden School Based Youth Services Programs, Ms. Sharon Shields
- Irvington School Based Youth Services Program, Ms. Beverly Canady, The Bridge, Inc.
- Lakewood School Based Youth Services, Mr. Dominick Riggi, Preferred Children's Services, Ms. Gina Polese-Grosso
- Elizabeth School Based Youth Services Program, Ms. Jeannette DeJesus,
- Trinitas Hospital
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- Bridgeton School Based Youth Services Program, Ms. MaryAnna Ledden
- Paterson School Based Youth Services Program, Ms. Paula Howe
- Division of Addictions Services
- Trenton School Based Youth Services, Ms. Melda Grant, Trenton Regional School District
- Plainfield School Based Youth Services, Ms. Kathy Brown-Bragg

Family Systems Specialists (FSS) are licensed Masters Level Counselors, Community Resource Specialists (CRS) are BA or BS level counselors. Mental Health Clinicians (MHC) are Masters Level Practitioners. Practicum students are doctoral or masters candidates.

Abimbola Omisore, FSS, Plainfield
Amanda Shuebrook, CRS, Brick Twnshp
Anna O'Conne, FSS, Brick Twnshp
Atiba Sonnebeyatta, CRS, Camden
Benita Smith CRS, Camden
Al Mumin Bey, CRS, Camden
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Elissa Santoro, CRS, Plainfield
Gail Pearsall, FSS, Atlantic City
George Paulsen, Senior FSS and Associate Supervisor, Lakewood
Jose E Garcia, CRS, Paterson
Kamess Haki, Senior CRS, Lakewood
Keith Byers, CRS, Atlantic City
Maria Fernandez, CRS, Elizabeth
Mary Drahofsky, Mental Health Clinician, Trenton
Melissa Harvey, CRS, Brick Twnshp
Nefessa Nettles, FSS, Camden
Norman Parrish, CRS, Camden
Onya Croxton, CRS, Camden
Ryan Downs, FSS, Camden
Ruchi Jain, Practicum Student, MA Counseling, Farleigh Dickenson U.
Shakina Jones, Mental Health Clinician, Trenton
Sonja Johnson, FSS, Elizabeth
Sophia Greenberg, FSS, Paterson
Tahira Lesure, CRS, Irvington
Tania Peterson, FSS, Brick Twnshp
Terri Turner, CRS, Camden
Tracey Newman, LCSW, CRS, Camden
Yair Kramer, Practicum Student, PsyD Candidate, GSAPP, Rutgers U.

Center Staff and Supervisees

To all of you who support the Center, Thank you!

Friends:

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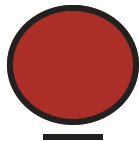
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EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

November 1, 2007-Center Director Hinda Winawer, Director of Training Norbert Wetzel, Ms. Sharon Shields, Director of School Based Programs in Camden, and Nefessa Nettles, Family Systems Specialist, presented their work at the Plexus Institute Conference: **Communities and Health Care—Opening the Dialogue: Harnessing Complexity and Relationship Centered Care to Improve Health, Baltimore, MD.**

June, 2008-Center Faculty, Staff and Partners to present at Annual Meeting of the American Family Therapy Academy, Phila, PA



The Center for Family,
Community, and
Social Justice, Inc.

166 Bunn Drive Suite 105
Princeton, NJ 08540
www.cfsj.org