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JAMAICA SERVICE PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS, INC.

162-04 Jamaica Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11432 - 718-657-6500

"a total community working together to serve the elderly...since 1972"

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Conlon Community Center: Where Seniors and Young People Come Together !

Conlon Community Center and PS 268 have joined together to sponsor an intergenerational program, bringing together 20 young people from the school and 40 adults from the senior center.

With changes in the family and parent's work responsibilities, this generation of young people often live in different cities than their grandparents and other older relatives. As a result, they have less exposure to older adults than previous generations of young people and miss out on some key opportunities. Older role models are important in helping our youth develop and lead successful lives.

For older adults, the loss of opportunities for relationships with young people has impacted their ability to carry out one of the most elemental functions of older people in society: to have a hand in shaping the future by helping to shape young lives. Relationships with young people offer older adults the chance to pass on the wisdom and skills gained in a lifetime of experience.

The program, led by Richard Secchi, Director of Conlon Community Center and Ms. Winkler, a 3rd grade teacher at PS 268, began with a 4 step introduction process to help the young people and older adults get to know each other.

First the young people vis-



Young people from PS 268 and the seniors at Conlon Community Center getting to know each other.

ited the seniors at Conlon Community Center and brought them decorated tissue boxes, as a gift, that they designed in school. In the next visit, the young people gave presentations about a famous person in Women's and/or Black History, while the seniors gave the young people gifts they had made in their arts and crafts programs.

The seniors next went to PS 268 to see the young people perform in a play and lend their support. And in the next visit the 2 groups will be working together at the senior center on arts and crafts projects.

The young people's response

to the program include "I like the seniors" and "When I leave, I think about them and what they are doing."

And what are the seniors saying? "I'm so happy when the children come and I can't wait to see them again" and "Working with them takes me back to my youth."

Richard Secchi, Conlon's Director observes, "This has been an incredibly positive experience. To see how excited the children and the seniors are together has been wonderful. It's been a real learning experience for everyone involved."

NEWSLETTER



*From the
Executive
Director:*
Carol J. Hunt

SENIOR CENTERS OF THE FUTURE...yours' or mine?

What will the senior center of the future look like?

Will it be filled with vibrant, excited, healthy looking mature adults with their gym towel thrown over their shoulders going to their state of the art fitness center and spa? Or will they look like the cast of Dynasty dressed in their tennis outfits engaged in the dynamics of family intrigue? Or will it be filled with your regular Americans, Archie and Edith Bunker settling in for an afternoon of TV in the lounge, bingo in recreation room and a game in the pool room?

In all likelihood the senior center of the future will first of all not be called a senior center! It will not have a majority of the members ready to jump on the treadmill after receiving coaching from a personal trainer. It may be called a community center or carry the name of the community activist that started the senior center some 40 years ago.

It will have the feel, touch and culture of the specific community in which it is housed. It could have flexible hours. It could have lunches and snacks. It could have computer training. It could have sculpture lessons. It could have painting classes. It could sponsor trips to Europe. It could have intergenerational programs. It could have book talks. It could have gardening. It could have services for the mentally frail. It could have respite programs and it could have *bingo!*

There is one aspect of senior center programming I think is a must for the future. And that is...for a center to be truly state of the art and be accepted as a quality place with a purpose and mission, it must be

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accredited.

Accreditation means that this place, regardless of the name, presents itself to the larger community as a place of excellence. It will be saying, this center has met nine national standards and qualifies it to be a place of **purpose**; a place that engages the **community**; a place of on-going **evaluation**; a place that has **programs** that meets the emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual needs of its participants; a place that adheres to self **governance**; a place that hires individuals with **administration** skills; a place that is conscious of fiscal **management**; a place that keeps and maintains excellent **records** and a place whose **facility** is one that a participant can be proud of.

The center of today is becoming the center of the future, each and every day. It must be one that believes in excellence in all aspects of its work. If it does not maintain an objective standard to reflect itself upon, it will not have a future.

This article is titled THE SENIOR CENTER OF THE FUTURE...yours' or

mine? You will have to make up your own mind as to your center of the future. As for me, my center must be a place of excellence because it has standards and have met them!

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JSPOA's "Centers of Attention"

Rockaway Boulevard Senior Center

Hats off to the crocheters at **Rockaway Boulevard Senior Center**. The "If The Hat Fits" project, undertaken by the crochet class, is making hats to donate to premature infants at Jamaica Hospital and for cancer patients at New York Hospital. For the seniors, being able to help those in need is truly a labor of love.

Congratulations to the **Rockaway Gospel Pearls** and **Rockaway Boulevard Senior Center** for the awards they received from the Bernard Fineson Development Center. The Bernard Fineson Center, composed of mentally and physically challenged adults, presented the Volunteer Appreciation Award to the Pearls after their rousing performance at the center.

The response from the audience was wonderful, as they sang and clapped with the performers. Reverend Peggy Ducker, Chaplain for Bernard Fineson, and Juanita Jones, program coordinator for special events, presented the awards, which included a Community Service Award to Rockaway Senior Center.



Edwin Mendez-Santiago, Commissioner, New York City's Department for Aging, with JSPOA's Action Coalition Chair, Clifton Rutherford at Age in Action in Flushing Meadow Park.



Jackson Center's Mrs. Ann Williams hosts the Spring Fashion Show.

Theodora G. Jackson Adult Center

Theodora G. Jackson Adult Center held its annual Spring Fashion Show on April 20, 2006. Thirty members of the Jackson Center participated in the Fashion Show while many members brought their family and friends out to support the event. Mrs. Ann Williams, who is one of Jackson's oldest members and who likes to be referred to as "Mama Williams" for being

95 years young, hosted the show. With approximately 150 people in the audience, it was a lot of fun for the models and the audience.

On June 23, 2006, **Theodora G. Jackson Adult Center** will take a trip to Baltimore to visit the Black Wax Museum, the Eubie Blake Jazz and Cultural Center, Orchard Street Church and the Billie Holiday Park.

Friendship Center

On April 28th, **Friendship Center's** seniors and staff celebrated the dedication of 35 volunteers who give their time and support to the seniors by hosting a wonderful brunch for Volunteer Recognition Day. Each volunteer received a gift basket in appreciation for their work. As people at Friendship Center say, "our volunteers help put the "Friend" in Friendship Center."

South Jamaica Senior Center

Andrew P. Jackson, a professor at York College and Director of the Langston Hughes Cultural Center, and Cheryl Wade, a professor of Law at St. John's University were guest speakers during South Jamaica's Black History Month Celebration.

They were invited to speak about the Black Experience and issues affecting the black community. Center members were very active in the discussion and loved the presentations given by the speakers.



Cheryl Wade, Andrew P. Jackson and James Christian, President, South Jamaica Advisory Board at South Jamaica Senior Center's Black History Month Celebration.

Southeast Queens Street Named for Long Time JSPOA Board Member



Barbara Waldon

Over 100 friends, family and Southeast Queens community leaders gathered on Saturday, March 4th to honor Barbara D. Waldon by naming the Cambria Heights block where she had lived, on 222nd Street between 115th and 116th Avenue, The Barbara D. Waldon Place.

Mrs. Waldon served over 30 years as a volunteer and member of the Board of Directors at JSPOA. She was also on the Board of the Queens Museum. Waldon won an Emmy as the Television Art Director for News 12 Long Island and was an award winning Art Director at Marwell Advertising.

Her husband, a former U.S. congressman and state legislator now serving as a judge in the State Court of Claims, Alton Waldon, Jr. said at the ceremony, "It is impossible for me to express my gratitude on this occasion."

JSPOA Executive Director, Carol Hunt remembered Waldon for her design of the JSPOA logo, her avid fundraising on behalf of the seniors and her concern for the community. "For all that walk past this street and for all of us here, we say, 'Thank you, Barbara.'"



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