

our voice

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca



MARCH 2008

Myspace exploring this on-line community

By Angela R. Myles

Would you like to know more about Myspace? Or have you ever even heard of Myspace? Beginning in the month of February the Education and Leadership Development Department in conjunction with our youth began examining this on-line world. The creators of Myspace.com describe the site as "a social networking service that allows Members to create unique personal profiles online in order to find and communicate with old and new friends." According to MySpace.com a member must be at least 14 years old. Myspace.com provides members with a pre-designed website for free. Each website is linked up to the Myspace.com network which connects 70 million members world wide. Once members have established a page of their own they can invite other people on the Myspace.com network.

The benefits associated with Myspace are its ability to connect people. The network makes it possible to easily find people with similar interests all around the world. Through Myspace.com it is possible to connect with literally hundreds of contacts on a daily basis.

There is of course a negative side to all on-line sites. Although Myspace.com does have a solid policy prohibiting pornography and indecent content from being posted on any member's site, it does not take responsibility for policing the network. Members have the ability to "Flag" offensive content and Myspace.com will delete the content promptly, but this depends on the action of the members. The Myspace.com website reads, *"MySpace.com...assumes no responsibility for the Content, no obligation to modify or remove any inappropriate Content, and no responsibility for the conduct of the User submitting any such Content."*

Throughout the month of March the FBI will be conducting trainings on Myspace with the students and staff in the Education and Leadership Development program.

New Project: Community Café

The Transitional Housing Program is currently writing grants to get support for opening a YWCA Community Café at 224 Gibson Street, across from the Broadway market. Joyelle Tedeschi, UB-MSW intern and part-time supervisor of the Transitional Housing Program, has taken the lead on this project. She has done a significant amount of work building relationships with residents of the Broadway-Fillmore district as well as service providers and business owners. It is our intent to reopen this building as a soup kitchen/community café and resource center in the Fall of 2008.

This area suffers from extreme poverty - 45.9% of its residents live below poverty. Moreover, 64.5% of female head of households live below poverty.

UB's Mosaic Newsletter is featuring their M.S.W. program and more specifically field placements in the March issue. Joyelle will be included in this article describing all her work on this community development project. Copies of the Mosaic's March newsletter will be available in the mail-room.

Stay tuned in the months ahead for updates on this exciting project!



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Music & Movement

The Makowski Early Childhood Site has a music teacher! A newly hired staff member has not only brought his love of children but also his gift and passion of music with him to the Makowski Site. Arthur Cunningham-Clark has taken on the role as the music and movement teacher in the Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K rooms. In his lessons, music is not only shared in sing along form but also with instruments and body movements to help the children learn and experience beat and tempo.



Gifts, Paper Airplanes and Cards for Shut-ins

March is the perfect month for thinking of others!!! The Children's Services students will be making small gifts, paper airplanes and/or cards to be delivered to nursing homes, children in hospitals and neighborhood shut-ins. If there is anyone who you would like us to remember, please contact 852-6120 ext. 105.

Training to Comply with DSS

February 18, 2007 we held several mandatory training sessions for the Children's Services Department. We offered CPR, School Age First Aide, the law regarding Breast Feeding and Civil Rights as well as DSS Rule and Regulations. On March 18, 2008 American Red Cross First Aide will be offer.

Spring Break Child Care is Available

If you are need of care during "Spring Break" we are here to help!!! There will be available space for school age children at School House Commons, 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo or Makowski Early Childhood Center at 1095 Jefferson Ave, Buffalo. Please call ASAP to 852-6120 ext. 116, as there is limited space available.



From the Desk of

KATHERINE LWIBAGA-MUKASA, C.E.O.
YWCA of Western New York

March is coming in like a lion – and hopefully is will go out like a lamb! But regardless of weather the work of the YWCA of Western New York goes on.

I am happy to report that our two daycares: the Early Childhood Center at the Makowski Center and School House Commons Early Childhood Center are humming along with new children being enrolled. It cannot be said too often that positive success in early childhood is critical in preparing children for a successful school experience. We need more early childhood centers that focus on the whole child.

Older children are also the focus of our work. We are looking forward to our annual Ray of Light event that honors the achievement of area young women. Thirty eight young women have been nominated for 1 of 4 scholarship awards that will be presented at our annual Ray of Light event on April 19th at the Convention Center. Prior to this wonderfully positive experience an invaluable workshop for these young women will be held on March 15th focusing on financial literacy and getting over the fear of doing math!

Our mission statement is very clear – we are to eliminate racism and empower women. Our staff are impassioned with a vision of a one stop center for impoverished people on the East Side of Buffalo in one of the most disadvantaged and underserved areas of Buffalo. This one stop center has been coined the Community Café because ultimately it will offer family style dining that emphasizes the dignity of our clients (disproportionately women single heads of households) and serve as a job training site for women in our Transitional Housing. Stay tuned as this program is developed!

Leader Luncheon will be here before we know it. The Planning Committee is hard at work soliciting sponsorships. Watch for the nomination forms in Buffalo Business First. You can download forms from our website.

Remember Spring is just around the corner.

Peace

Kathy

EDUCATION & TRAINING

February was a busy month for the YWCA after school program. Our focus was on career exploration, and our field trips to the Buffalo City Court, Makowski Day Care Center and Buffalo Fire Department opened our students' eyes to three very different career options. We also completed our monthly community service activity at Potter's Pantry, where we

helped to unload food donations and serve those who came into the pantry. While the students in our program always work hard, they also play hard, which they proved at our



**FIELD TRIPS
& CAREER
OPPORTUNITIES**

Valentine's day party. Our student council set up a wonderful celebration full of food and fun.

March is going to bring more exciting events including a field trip to Continental Beauty

School, community service at the Food Bank of WNY, and a guest speaker from the FBI to talk about MySpace. Almost all of our students use MySpace, so this educational presentation will definitely give them a new perspective on one of their favorite hobbies. We are looking forward to another action-packed month here at the YWCA after school program!

