May 2017

UNION COUNTY YOUTH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

BUILDING SUPPORTS FOR OUR KIDS

"What We Learn Today Becomes Apart of Who We Are Tomorrow "

To get involved, contact us:

Tanya Johnson
908-354-3040 x251 or
tjohnson@caunj.org

Nicholas Scalera
973-893-6563 or
nick@scalera.com

OUR MISSION

*The **Union County Youth Services Steering Committee** is committed to increasing the number, availability, and accessibility of youth services to youth and young adults, and works to ensure that Union County's youth/young adults know how to secure the resources they need to develop and realize their potential for productive, self-sufficient lives as adults.*

Members of the Steering Committee represent public and non-profit youth-serving agencies, child advocates, volunteers, and faith-based organizations. They meet regularly to share information and resources, identify and close any major gaps in youth service programs, and to disseminate found resources through websites, media announcements, public forums and an annual conference.

GOALS

∞ Serve as a vehicle for fostering communication and networking among youth services providers and youth consumers

∞ Improve youth service effectiveness and outcomes.

∞ Share information, resources and expertise among providers and youth and parent consumers.

∞ Improve coordination of and access to services by youth and parents.

∞ Encourage development of an integrated youth and young adult services system.

∞ Improve utilization of existing youth resources and promote development of new services.

∞ Foster cross systems coordination, encourage collaborations and build linkages among youth service providers and resources.

∞ Stimulate use of innovative and evidence-based practice models through research projects and pilot demonstrations.

∞ Provide training and educational opportunities for staff working with youth and young adults.

∞ Develop and share standardized outcomes, performance measures and evaluation tools.

RESULTS

∞ The establishment of a strong county-wide foundation within the Union County Youth Services Steering Committee

∞ An annual Union County Youth Services Networking Conference that happens in October.

∞ Creation of a network that conducts and shares meetings and forums to share information, resources, and services for youth and young adults

∞ The development of the **Union County Youth Directory,** a computerized public database rich with resources for youth and service providers

∞ A group of strong advocates interested in participating in public information and awareness campaigns to encourage additional youth service groups to join in the cause.

MEET THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

SID BLANCHARD is the founder and executive director of Community Access Unlimited. CAU began in 1979 with a $90,000 grant to move 20 individuals out of institutions to community living and has grown the agency to no support over 6000 people throughout the state in areas of housing, support services, vocational supports, recreation, money management, advocacy, and more. Services in the home are provided to anyone in need including at-risk youth and adults with developmental disabilities, seniors and veterans.

In the most recent years, Sid has created more opportunities for increased community integration – starting three councils to join the interfaith community, youth services, and non-profit leaders with the common goal to bring upon community wide benefits together.

Sidney is a pioneer, leader, and ardent advocate in providing community supports for people in need. He is active in both local and national level organizations that further initiatives for individuals with special needs.

TANYA JOHNSON began her career as a childcare worker at the Berea Children's Home in Berea, Ohio. After 14 years in the Ohio social service world, she decided to make a change. After relocating to the tri-state area in 1998, Tanya began her career at Community Access Unlimited as a coordinator. Tanya worked her way through the ranks at CAU to become the Senior Assistant Executive Director of youth services in 2008.

Tanya has a passion for working with youth to help them grow into young productive adults. Through her passion Tanya has worked with aging out youth, runaway homeless youth and community based youth who have been successful in transitioning to adulthood.

NICHOLAS R. SCALERA has over 40 years' experience in youth and family services management. He was State Director of the NJ Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) from 1989-94 and DYFS Assistant Director from 1972-89. Previously, Nick worked as a public information officer for the NJ Department of Community Affairs (1967-72) and NJ Office of Economic Opportunity (1966-67) and was a reporter for the *Associated Press* (1966) and *Newark News* (1964-66).

In 1995, Nick formed Scalera Consulting Services, which works with public and private agencies that serve at-risk youth and/or vulnerable adults.

Scalera holds a BA in Social Studies from Seton Hall University and an MS in Journalism "Cum Laude" from Columbia University. In 2007, he established the Nicholas R. Scalera Scholarship Fund at Seton Hall University to help academically qualified students with substantial financial and social needs secure a college education.

Nick has received many honors, including: Humanitarian Award from Seton Hall University; Public Administrator of the Year from the New Jersey Chapter, American Society for Public Administration (ASPA); Man of Achievement Award for services to at-risk youth from Phi Kappa Theta National Fraternity; and Humanitarian of the Year from the Association for Advancement of the Mentally Handicapped (predecessor of Community Access Unlimited, Inc.).

THE UNION COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES STEERING COMMITTEE

Sidney Blanchard
Community Access Unlimited

Hawa Bonds
Union County Department of Human Services (DHS)

Danielle Cioffi
The Gateway Family YMCA,
Elizabeth & Five Points Branch

Pamela Capaci
Prevention Links, Inc.

Robert Charkowsky
Union County Office of Public Information and Communication

Kelly Collins
Family and Children's Services (FCS)

Karen Dinsmore
Union County Department of Human Services (DHS)

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Eric Graham
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Shan Reeves
Mental Health Clinician/Church Deacon

Audria A. Russell
Iris House

Cathy Waters
Urban League of Union County

Haydee Zamorea-Dalton, MSW
Middlesex/Union Area Office DCP&P

Community Access Unlimited Youth Services

Transitional Opportunities Program (TOP) provides a variety of residential support services through a continuum of care to at-risk youth ages 13-21. While residing in Elizabeth, youth receive a variety of independent living training and transitional living support services until they achieve the life skills needed to live independently.

Referrals: Youth living in any county of New Jersey are able to enter the program through a Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P) or NJ Division of Children's System of Care (CSOC) referral.

Levels of the TOP Program

Members are accepted at any level of the program depending on the assessment of data and the member's level of need.

Group Home: For youth 13 to 16 years old. There is 24 hour daily supervision including an awake overnight for youth who have been removed from their traditional family home. Staff support, practical one-on-one daily living skills training, and therapeutic services are rendered.

Supervised Transitional Living Program (STLP): For youth 16 to 18 years old. STLP provides 24-hour daily supervision and skills training in a group setting with awake overnight support.

Semi Independent: For youth 18 years and older. While living in a less structured setting, youth receive advanced daily living skills training and prepare for independence with minimal guidance from nearby support counselors.

Supported Housing: This is the highest level within TOP. Here graduates of the supervised transitional living program are afforded the opportunity to move into a CAU owned apartment for a term of six months or more as determined. During this period youth demonstrate the independent living skills they have acquired while maintaining a household. An account is set up in which funds may be applied towards securing another apartment.

Day Program: Eligible youth are not enrolled in school or who are unemployed. The Day Program ensures that youth are actively participating in an employment training workshop, a GED program, or volunteer job practicum.

Each member must be involved in a minimum of a 30 hour per week activity. Day Program uses materials such as Life Skills Curriculum and Employment Skills training.

All cases are evaluated on an individual basis.

Services TOP Members Receive

- 24-Hour Supervised Residential Living
- Community Services for adolescents in Union, Essex, and Middlesex counties
- Daily Living Skills Training (per individual need) such as:
  - Budgeting
  - Food Shopping
  - Laundry
  - Career Planning
  - Job Placement
- Case Management
- Advocacy and Outreach
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- NJ Approved Life Skills Curriculum

Communication Skills
- Written
- Verbal
- Interpersonal

Educational Counseling
- Vocational
- College

Employment
- Resume Writing
- Job Seeking
- Interviewing

Housing Assistance
- Apartment Search/ Rental
- Furnishing

Eligibility Criteria

- Youth have an involvement in a CSOC/DCP&P/UCM Case or are a self-referral
- 13 to 21 years of age
- Have the potential for self-medication
- Have the ability to participate in a day program—i.e. vocational workshop, competitive employment or school
- No psychiatric hospitalization within the last year
- No fire setting within the past 2 years
- No serious criminal behavior within the past year
- No serious physical violence within the past year
- Not actively abusing drugs or alcohol
- Wiling to comply with program rules and structure
- Only Tier 1 sex offenders

These criteria serve only as a general guideline.

For more information, contact:

Intake Department, Youth Services at Community Access Unlimited
80 West Grand St. Elizabeth, NJ 07202

908-354-3040 | info@caunj.org | www. caunj.org

Helping you live independently in your community... that's THE cau ADVANTAGE

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Additional Available Services

Union County Youth Shelter

The Union County Youth Shelter provides short-term (max. 30 days) placement for youth that are referred from the Family Crisis Intervention Union, Juvenile Detention Intake Unit, Juvenile Criminal or the Family Courts of Union County.

Services Provided:

- Outreach
- Emergency shelter
- Self-care/daily living skills training
- Individual counseling sessions with trained staff
- Nutrition education
- On-site classroom w/NJ Certified Teacher
- Recreational activities
- Referrals to community resources
- Therapeutic assessments upon request
- Medical follow up
- Medication monitoring
- Vocational training
- Supervised completion of court assigned community service hours
- Linkages to family support services
- Transportation to appointments, probation and court appearances.

Hope Chest Program

CAU collects new and like-new household items to provide youth members or people with disabilities who are graduating to independent living and need these items when setting up their first household. Donations of sheets, bedding, small kitchen appliances, dish-ware, bathroom essentials, and other household products are accepted and most appreciated!

Youth Self Advocacy Programs:

Member Action Committee (M.A.C.)
MAC is an advocacy group run through the Transitional Opportunities Program at CAU.

The group is run by TOP members with the assistance of staff advisors. Monthly meeting are held to discuss trends, ideas and issues that are happening in TOP. During these meetings special events may be planned, changes to rules or procedures may be suggested, and on a quarterly basis, MAC gets to meet with the Administrative Panel to directly discuss issues regarding TOP and advocacy for members.

M.A.C. Attack: M.A.C. Attack is a business run by youth. These youth conduct various presentations regarding making good decisions in life, teaching others how it feels to live in the system, and teach people about relationships. Presentations are made on a local and national level.

Parent Enrichment Program (PEP)

PEP supports families through the provision of parent education classes, medical and health care linkage. Services are tailored to support women who are pregnant, parents who are young adults/teenagers, parents with children who have a disability, parents in alcohol/substance abuse recovery, parents who have a disability and parents who need vocational training.

The PEP program connects members to resources on:

- Health and nutrition
- Prevention of abuse and neglect
- Discipline
- Child Development
- Home Safety
- Community Safety

For more information, contact:

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Congratulations to our TOP Supported Housing member Ashley Afolibi for receiving her US Citizenship!!!

2017 CWLA Conference

Our TOP Members were privileged to attend this year's **2017 CWLA National Conference.** The highlights of the conference focused on *Successful Strategies to Address the Needs of Children, Youth, and Families. This conference gave a* prime opportunity for influential service providers, leaders, advocates, youth, and families to meet and promote excellence in policy and practice toward today's critical topics and their effect on children, youth, and families nationwide. Our members eagerly shared their ideas with others; they met with senators and other political figures and were also given the opportunity to give a presentation entitled ***"Living in this System".*** Our members learned a lot and are eagerly looking forward to attending the next conference.

CAU 's TOP Members

receives a special visit

from Assemblyman Holley

YOU can help fight Hunger!

In Honor of Community Action Month

FOOD DRIVE

To Benefit Members of Community Access Unlimited

Personal Items Needed Too!

May 1, 2017

Drop off at the CAU Main Office
80 West Grand St. Elizabeth, NJ 07202
anytime between 9:00 AM—5:00 PM

COMMUNITY ACCESS
UNLIMITED

For More Information, contact us
908-354-3040 | caunj.org | info@caunj.org

Save the Date!
May 18, 2017

You are Invited to Join the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council for:

A brief time of Interfaith Prayer

Followed by a discussion on the topic:

Church & State:
The 1st Ammendment & Religious Freedom

First Presbyterian Church
11 Springfield Avenue • Cranford, NJ

6:00P—7:30P

Light Refreshments will be provided ~ Sign-in begins at 5:30P

Special Guest Speaker:

Rebecca Livengood
(Attorney, ACLU)

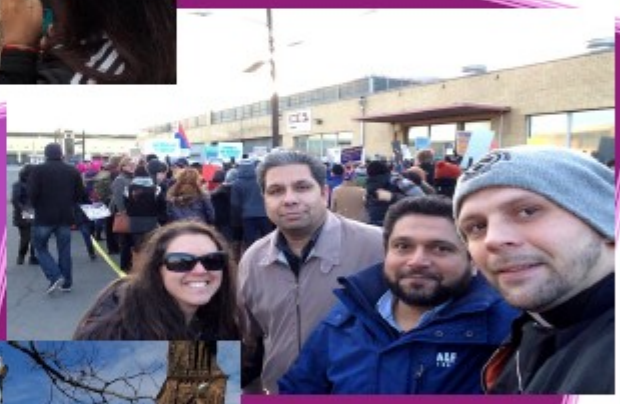
COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
(908 354-3040

Please Reserve Now!
E-mail or phone your RSVP to:
UCInterfaith@caunj.org
(908) 354-3040 x4324

FAITH IN ACTION!

Members of UCICC join other members of the community for several social justice rallies during the month,



A SERVICE OF THE
UNION COUNTY BOARD OF
CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

UNION COUNTY
We're Connected to You!

Start Your Career Today!

Join the Union County Youth Employment Pathways Program

Are you...

- Between the ages of 16-24?
- Currently not enrolled in school?
- A Union County, NJ resident?
- Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service

Programs include

- Career Planning
- Education and Training Programs
- Work Experience and more!

Professional & Personal Development

- *Gain professional skills for securing certification and employment*
- *Leadership development*
- *Entrepreneurial skills*
- *Financial Literacy*

Schedule an appointment today!

Tana Owens, Community Access Unlimited
Elizabeth, NJ, 908.482.0159

Jessie Redman, Urban League of Union County
Elizabeth, NJ, 908.351.7200

Luis Ramirez, PROCEED, Inc.
Elizabeth, NJ, 908.351.7727

Lesli Price, HomeFirst Interfaith Housing & Family Services
Plainfield, NJ, 908.441.7061

Winona Cleveland, Plainfield Action Services
Plainfield, NJ, 908.753.3519

UNION COUNTY Workforce Development Board MEANS BUSINESS

LIVE UNITED United Way
United Way of Greater Union County

LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of Greater Union County

WIOA 2016-2018 Union County Referral Form

Last Name _____ First Name_____ Date of Birth / /

Street Address_____ City_____Zip code_____Phone/Email_____

Eligibility: must meet ALL the following criterion below:

- **16 years old at the time of enrollment,**
- **Not attending any school,**
- **Citizens or Nationals of the United States Authorized to Work**

AND

CHECK ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ A school dropout;
- ☐ A youth that didn't receive a high school diploma or a GED
- ☐ A recipient of a high diploma or GED or college degree who is a low income and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
- ☐ An offender
- ☐ A homeless individual
- ☐ An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system, or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption; a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (flexible funding for 18 years old in foster care) or in an out-of -home placement.
- ☐ An individual who is pregnant or parenting;
- ☐ Individual with a disability;
- ☐ A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

Name of Person Making Referral:	**Phone number:** **Email address:**
Reason for Referral:	**Todays Date:** / /

REFERRAL INSTRUCTIONS: (1) Please fill out this form completely and email, or fax to one of the agencies below. (2) Send a follow-up email and include the name of the applicant. Please include in the subject line "YEPP Referral".

Plainfield, New Jersey

Plainfield Action Services 510 Watchung Avenue Plainfield, New Jersey 07060 Office (908) 753-3519 Fax (908) 753-3540 Email: Winona Cleveland, Career Planner winona.cleveland@plainfieldnj.gov	HomeFirst Interfaith Housing & Family Services, Inc. 905 Watchung Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060 Office:908-444-7061 Fax: 908-222-2869 Email: Lesli Price, Career Planner Lesli@homefirstinc.org

Elizabeth, New Jersey

Urban League of Union County 288 North Broad Street Elizabeth, NJ 07207 Office: 908-351-7200 Fax: 908-527-9881 Email :Jessie Redman, Interim Supervisor JRedman@uloucnj.org	Community Access Unlimited 80 W. Grand Street Elizabeth, NJ 07202 Office: 908-482-0159 Fax: 908-354-2665 Email: Tana Owens, Director towens@caunj.org	PROCEED Inc. 1126 Dickinson Street Elizabeth, NJ 07201 Office: 908-351-7727 Ext 231 Fax: 908-393-7620 Email: Luis Ramirez, Career Planner lramirez@proceedinc.com

SAVE THE DATE

Union County Partnership for Transition

TRANSITION FAIR

Transition Fair for Parents/Students/Former Graduates/Professionals
Not Sure What To Do After High School?

Saturday, May 20, 2017

10:00 am-12:00 Noon

Arthur L. Johnson High School

365 Westfield Ave, Clark, NJ 07066

Representatives of Educational and Adult Services:

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, County Colleges, Vocational Schools, Community Based Agencies (Inroads to Opportunities, ARC), Branches of Armed Forces, …

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL:

Solo Okonkwo, Email: Solomon.Okonkwo@dol.nj.gov **Leila Molaie,** Email: Leila.Molaie@dol.nj.gov

New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJ DVRS)

(908) 965-3940

SEE BACK FOR DIRECTIONS

theNEWJERSEY
RECOVERY
FILM FESTIVAL
Experience Strength Hope

"RECOVERY THROUGH EXPRESSION"

VIP Screening of "The Wisdom To Know The Difference"

GUEST SPEAKER

DANIEL BALDWIN

Friday, June 2
VIP Reception 6:00-8:00PM
VIP Film Screening 8:00PM

An award-winning film named "Best Recovery Film of All Time" by the New York Times

COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: 908-354-3040 TTY/TTD: 908-354-4629
Fax: 908-354-2665 www.caunj.org

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Elizabeth, NJ

Help us go green. Please visit www.caunj.org to receive this newsletter electronically

Sidney Blanchard
Executive Director, Community Access Unlimited

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Assistant Director, Division of Youth Services, Union County Department of Human Services (DHS)

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Robert Charkowsky
Web Site & Social Media Manager, Union County Office of Public Information and Communication

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Pastor Pamela B. Jones
CEO/Executive Director, Communities in Cooperation, Inc. (CIC)

Jim Kimberling
Director, Human Resources & Development, Cooperative Counseling Services

Leila Molaie
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor/TCIS, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD)

Betsy Montalvo
Supervisor, Office of Adolescent Services, NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Shan Reeves
Mental Health Clinician/Church Deacon

Audria A. Russell
Program Manager, Iris House

Cathy Waters
Manager, Reconnections Program, Urban League of Union County

Haydee Zamorea– Dalton, MSW
Area Director Middlesex/Union Area Office DCP&P

THE UNION COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES DIRECTORY

is being updated and will be accessible via the county's website. If you have not already submitted an entry for each of your agency's youth service programs for inclusion in the *Directory*, please visit:

http://ucnj.org/youth-directory