

The Administration for Children and Families
New England Regional Office

Promoting Positive Youth Development Conference

September 4th –5th, 2002
Springfield, Massachusetts

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Conference Overview

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Region I Office hosted a two-day conference, “Promoting Positive Youth Development”, on September 4th and 5th, 2002. This event took place in Springfield, Massachusetts and was attended by 240 participants from across the six New England states serviced by the Region I office (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont). Participants came from the social service, education, labor, juvenile justice, health and mental health communities and included representatives from federal, state, and local agencies, foundations, institutions of higher education, and faith and community based organizations, as well as community leaders, youth, parents, and other key decision makers.

The purpose of this conference was to educate a wide range of stakeholders regarding ACF's Positive Youth Development initiative and provide information on how to effectively incorporate the initiative into a cross section of ACF supported programs such as TANF, Child Support, Head Start, Child Care, Child Welfare, Independent Living, and Runaway and Homeless Youth. By promoting a shared vision for youth – that every young person will grow up with the opportunity and support needed to become a healthy, caring, and economically self-sufficient adult – ACF hoped to highlight a critical element of breaking the cycle of dependency and emphasize programs related to strengthening TANF families in the following areas:

- *Promoting developmental and educational activities that enable low-income youth to develop the attitudes and competencies needed to avoid welfare.*
- *Promoting services designed to prevent high-risk behavior that leads to teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births.*
- *Promoting the involvement of the faith based and community organizations in the provision of positive youth development services to TANF and low-income families.*
- *Promoting programs which educate youth regarding relationship issues and which foster the development of stable and healthy families.*
- *Supporting the role of young noncustodial fathers of children on welfare.*

Speakers were national and regional experts in the field of positive youth development, as well as representatives from State, local, and community based organizations (primarily located in Region I) that have achieved notable success in implementing positive youth development initiatives. Youth participated on a plenary panel and as workshop co-presenters.

Background

The enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) in 1996 promised to significantly alter the social safety net for some of the most at-risk segments of the nation's youth population. These included minor parents receiving welfare, welfare recipients ages eighteen to twenty-four, young noncustodial fathers of children on welfare, and minors in welfare families. Over the past five years much has been accomplished in terms of shifting welfare from a program that promoted dependency to one that stresses self-reliance and individual accountability. In particular,

the work requirements, time limits on benefits, child support enforcement mandates, paternity establishment requirements, restrictions on minor teen's ability to receive benefits as the head of household, and efforts to reduce teen and out-of-wedlock births are significant policy changes that have had profound implications for many young people. This shift has created a much different social services environment for many young adults. It also presents new challenges and opportunities for agencies and programs targeting economically disadvantaged youth.

Parents age nineteen to twenty-four comprise approximately 30 percent of the total caseload affected by welfare reform. They are often lacking in work experience and caring for young children, and are therefore considered to be among the hardest-to-serve. Some states have begun to serve these young welfare recipients differently than adults, recognizing that these young people require nurturing educational opportunities, such as mentoring relationships, to achieve self-sufficiency.

In addition, thirty six percent of welfare families include youth between the ages of ten and eighteen, and 31 percent of all recipient children are in this age group. The ultimate success of welfare reform will depend on the extent to which it breaks the intergenerational cycle of dependency that has engulfed these families. Many states are attempting to break this cycle of dependency and poverty by providing developmentally and educationally enriching activities for youth, such as mentoring, community service, and school-to-work opportunities. These services meet two purposes of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program: they provide supervision for children that enable parents to work (TANF purpose two); and they provide structured, productive activities for youth during out-of-school hours that prevent high-risk behavior leading to teen pregnancy (TANF purpose three). By providing these services before boys and girls become premature parents, young welfare recipients, or noncustodial parents, the cycle may be broken.

State efforts are supported by research that suggests several promising strategies for youth in difficult circumstances that can encourage resiliency, help youth avoid behaviors that put them at risk, and enable them to become productive adults. To grow and learn in healthy ways and function successfully in the adult world, they, like all young people, need opportunities to: feel a sense of safety and structure; develop self-worth through meaningful participation and opportunities to give back; develop significant relationships with caring adults; and feel the pride and accountability that come with mastery of a skill or task. Together these opportunities embody the principles of positive youth development, an approach towards youth that builds on their assets and potential, and helps them help themselves to overcome the difficulties that may affect them.

We believe the next critical step in welfare reform is an emphasis on providing young TANF recipients, noncustodial parents, and children from low-income families the support needed to become healthy, caring, and economically self-sufficient adults. Such an emphasis on breaking the cycle of dependency among future generations benefits not only these youth, but all of society. America needs its young people to become a skilled, productive workforce and an educated citizenry that cares about other generations, the

common good, marriage, duty to country and issues larger than themselves. Investing in young people is both fiscally and ethically responsible because small investments now can ensure positive outcomes for youth later. We plan to direct our energy and resources, in partnership with States, local agencies, and community and faith-based organizations, towards improving outcomes for low-income children and youth by promoting the principles of positive youth development that have been proven to support youth in their transition to productive adults.

Conference Agenda

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Hugh Galligan, ACF Region I Administrator

Hugh Galligan has been Regional Administrator for the Administration for Children and Families in Boston, Massachusetts since 1991. Mr. Galligan brings more than 30 years of experience and accomplishments in public administration at the State and Federal levels to this position. As Regional Administrator, Mr. Galligan oversees the ACF Federally funded programs dealing with children, youth, families and communities. He has worked extensively to provide leadership, and develop partnerships at the community, state, and Federal levels to ensure that ACF's programs work well and achieve positive outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Hugh Galligan welcomed participants to ACF's first New England Regional Conference on positive youth development. He emphasized that youth development is about investing in our nation's most important resource - young people – and providing the support and resources to ensure that every young person has the opportunity to build on their assets and potential, to become the next greatest generation of parents, workers, leaders and citizens. He stated that this is a national priority for this Administration, but that the government, acting alone, cannot ensure that all young people acquire the competencies and character they need to seize the opportunities that lie ahead. The participants gathered at this conference serve on the front lines everyday – guiding, mentoring, parenting, teaching, coaching, and keeping kids safe. This is a tremendous opportunity to come together, share our experiences and learn from one another. It is time to recognize and celebrate the assets and strengths of our nation's youth. It is also time to be intentional about our commitment to youth who face difficult challenges. One quarter of our nation's youth are not getting what they need from their peers, their families and their communities. These youth and all youth need safe places to grow up in, support and guidance from caring adults, and opportunities to learn and serve and make a difference. They need caring role models and energized communities to help them grow into healthy, productive adults. If we do our best to provide this in every community, we will help not only those young people most at risk, but all the young people will benefit as well. This will also lead to stronger communities, today and in the future. Because one day we hope they will be adults who come back, give back and help others succeed in future generations.

Positive Youth Development: Perspectives From the Federal Level
Stan Chappell, Team Leader, ACF Family and Youth Services Bureau

Stan Chappell is the team leader for program support for the Family and Youth Services Bureau, a component of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). His responsibilities include serving as general manager of the National Youth Summit, strategic planning, partnership development, communications, website design and management, data collections, systems development, research and evaluation. He played a principal role in the creation of the interdepartmental statement of principles: *Toward a Blueprint for Youth: Making Positive Youth Development a National Priority*.

Stan Chappell reinforced the idea that positive youth development is a national priority. He quoted the Honorable Tommy G. Thompson of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, who stated at the National Summit on June 27, 2002:

“Three-quarters of American youth are making safe, sensible choices for their lives. And the remaining quarter may be at risk, but they’re certainly not lost. We’re doing everything we can to reach them . . . ACF is leading the way with the strategy of Positive Youth Development.”

Positive youth development is a strategy that focuses on young people’s strengths rather than their failings. The factors that foster healthy growth and allow most young people to stay out of trouble include:

- A sense of competence:
 ...being able to do something well
- A sense of usefulness:
 ...having something to contribute
- A sense of belonging:
 ...being part of a community, having relationships with caring adults
- A sense of power:
 ...having control over one’s future
- Access to basic needs:
 ...food, clothes, health care, safety, security

The key elements of positive youth development are:

- Providing youth with safe and supportive environments
- Fostering relationships between young people and caring adults who can mentor and guide them
- Providing youth with opportunities to pursue their interests and focus on their strengths

- Supporting the development of youths' knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, including study, tutoring, sports, the arts, vocational education, and service-learning
- Engaging youth as active partners and leaders who can help move communities forward
- Providing opportunities for youth to show that they care – about others and about society
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and teaching positive patterns of social interaction
- Providing a safety net in times of need

It is essential that we in ACF and all of us here today support positive youth development. Positive youth development helps young people become independent and engaged citizens. Young people add tremendous value to dialogues on various issues in the community, offering different perspectives and new ideas.

Positive youth development is also important because research is beginning to show that the brain undergoes change during adolescence and may be affected, both positively and negatively, by experiences. Positive youth development encourages resilience, focusing on youth's strengths to overcome challenging situations. It helps young people resist negative influences. In addition, positive youth development programs can provide prevention services that can serve to reduce teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol use, dropping out of school, delinquency, and youth violence. Providing opportunities for young people to become independent is a good investment, avoiding potential problems that could become expensive to deal with later. Young people are future decision-makers and will become the next generation of community leaders.

Attorney General John Ashcroft stated at the National Summit on June 27, 2002, "It's been said rather profoundly that children are 25 percent of the society but they're 100 percent of the future."

The National Research Council recently released a new report validating the positive youth development approach, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. This report reviewed existing theory, practical wisdom, and empirical research. It defined the areas in which young people need to develop positively to become healthy, productive adults. These developmental areas include:

- Intellectual
- Social
- Psychological and emotional
- Physical

Intellectual development refers to academic, vocational, and life skills. Social development refers to civic engagement and connections to parents, peers, and supportive adults. Psychological and emotional development involves planning for the future and having a sense of personal autonomy. Finally, physical development includes good health habits and good health risk management skills.

The National Research Council made several important recommendations in this report.

- Community programs for youth should be based on a developmental framework.
- Communities should provide an array of programs and opportunities to meet the needs of youth from diverse backgrounds.
- Communities should monitor the availability, accessibility, and quality of youth programs.
- Funders should provide resources to sustain community-wide youth programs.

Another study recently put forth by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development was the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. This study was designed to measure the impact of the social environment on adolescent health and examine the general health and well-being of adolescents. Researchers conducted in-home interviews with a national sample of 12,000 youth. The study offers data confirming what families, schools, and communities need to do to promote positive outcomes for young people.

The study found that when youth feel connected to their families they are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. Young people also fare better when they feel a strong connection to their schools.

So what does all this have to do with everyone here today? The Administration for Children and Families, the Department of Health and Human Services, and many other agencies have committed to putting the positive youth development approach into national practice. There are many new initiatives happening at the Federal level or on a national basis:

- Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative
- Leave No Child Behind
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- 4H Clubs
- Youth Opportunity Movement
- National Youth Network
- National Organizations for Youth Safety
- AmeriCorps
- Neighborhood Networks
- Child Care and Development Fund
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs
- State Youth Development Collaborations

In addition, many ACF programs focus on youth, including Head Start, child care, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program, the Runaway and Homeless Youth program, Independent Living, Community Services, National Youth Sports, Refugee programs, Native American programs, Developmental Disabilities programs, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, and Child Support Enforcement.

ACF recently demonstrated our commitment to this issue by hosting the first National Youth Summit in Washington, DC. This Summit was attended by almost 3,000 people from across the nation, celebrating youth. Designed to foster the creation of policy and programming based on the positive youth development approach, the themes of this Summit included: supportive families and communities; economic self-sufficiency and success; safe and healthy lives; and settings and opportunities for development and service. Many agencies and departments collaborated to develop this Summit, including the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, Transportation, Defense, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

I also want to tell you a little bit about an upcoming event, the first White House Conference on Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children. This event will take place on October 2, 2002 and is designed to promote public awareness of the cause of missing, exploited, and runaway children. This conference will bring policymakers, experts, key officials, community leaders, teachers, parents, and law enforcement together to share progress made and generate new ideas to help prevent the victimization of children. In closing, positive youth development gives youth access to supportive adults and to opportunities, prevention programs, and intervention services. It provides young people with a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and power through opportunities for them to be part of something greater than themselves. Thank you for all the work you do every day to promote positive youth development.

Youth Panel: Reflections on the National Summit and Moving Ahead

James Hilles, Dimock Community Health Center

Madeline Burgess, Rhode Island Council of Residential Programs for Children & Youth

Moderator: Frank Robinson, Partners for a Healthier Community

James Hilles is the Adolescent Coordinator at Dimock Community Health Center, one of the leading community-based health and human service agencies in Massachusetts, serving Boston's Inner City area. In this position, he works directly with young people in peer leadership and afterschool programs. Most recently he served in a lead role for the Read to Lead program, an ACF-funded program that provided summer employment opportunities to youth by matching them with Head Start classrooms where they spent time reading and working on literacy with Head Start children. James is also a graduate of the BEST initiative, a nationally recognized model that provides training and professional development opportunities for youth workers.

Madeline Burgess was a foster child for five years and now lives in an independent living apartment funded by the state of Rhode Island. She is currently pursuing a degree in social work at Rhode Island College. Madeline is employed at RICORP, the Rhode Island Council of Residential Programs for Children and Youth, where she works with the life skills program. She has worked on several projects such as assembling a survival guide for children living in the system and building a school to career partnership with UPS and Women

and Infants Hospital. She has also been a helping hand to DCYF, Department of Children, Youth, and Families of Rhode Island and is involved with the Rhode Island Speak Out Team and the Rhode Island Youth Advisory Board. Madeline was awarded the Youth of the Year award at the National Independent Living Association Conference in August 2001.

Frank Robinson, Ph.D., is a public health professional with 20+ years of Community Health Education experiences in a variety of public and private agencies. Early in his career he directed the development of local and regional systems operated by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. For the past 12 years, Dr. Robinson has served as the Executive Director for two citywide public health prevention initiatives in Springfield, MA. For the period 1991 - 1995, he directed the City of Springfield's Community Partnership grant for substance abuse prevention. Currently, he oversees a broad public-private partnership that operates under the umbrella of Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. In the current role, he oversees a broad-based multi-sector initiative aimed at improving school health services, immunization status for pre-school-age children, health insurance enrollment for children, and capacity and services of youth development organizations.

This panel featured young people who attended the National Youth Summit in Washington, DC on June 26-28, 2002. The intent of the panel was to discuss their own reflections on the Summit, share their experiences and insights, and set the stage for conference participants to understand youth issues through the eyes of young people, thereby providing perspective for the remainder of the conference.

Panelists expressed enthusiasm about the National Summit and indicated it was a great opportunity to come together with people from across the nation and learn more about issues important to them. It is important for the government to be focusing on young people and their needs. They liked the variety of topics that were addressed at the Summit, and the space provided specifically for young people where they could go to interact with one another.

They pointed out that often those that work with youth or are making decisions about youth, actually overlook what the young people themselves have to say, and programs are thrown at them instead of engaging with them to really hear what their needs are and what type of support and empowerment they need. It is important to really take the time to hear and learn from youth.

They also addressed a variety of relevant issues in response to audience questions, including working smarter with fewer resources in a time of budget cutbacks, and the goal of professionalizing the field of youth work.

One panelist also specifically addressed the needs of young people in foster care, and emphasized the importance of safe, permanent homes for youth, regardless of age. All

young people need support and guidance, the security of a permanent family, to help them grow into healthy, capable adults.

Keynote Address

Brad Lewis, Corporation for National and Community Service

Brad Lewis is the Community-Based Program Coordinator and a Program Officer for Learn and Serve America at the Corporation for National and Community Service, an independent federal agency where he has served for the past 8 years. He manages a grant portfolio in the North Central region of the United States and the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse as well as working on Youth Voice and Technology initiatives for Learn and Serve America. A past grantee of the Commission on National and Community Service, Mr. Lewis received his Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW) from Columbia University in 1983 and then worked in New York City and Connecticut for the next 10 years. Positions he held included directing youth leadership/service-learning programs, after-school/teen travel/residential summer camps, and Assistant Executive Director of a community YM-YWHA. He also served as a Governor's appointee on the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee and more recently as Adjunct Faculty at the University of Maryland Graduate School of Social Work and Field Instructor for the Howard University Graduate School of Social Work.

I am here to pose three questions in relation to positive youth development. I am also here to offer three answers. The questions are simple: What? So What? Now What? More specifically: What is positive youth development and how did we get here? So what is so important about it? Now what do we do about it?

What is positive youth development and how did we get here?

I was asked to set the stage and talk about how we got here, so please indulge me putting on my "teacher's hat" for a moment while we briefly trace the development of this set of concepts over the past 20 years.

Positive youth development is the latest term for youthwork. How did we come to this term, and what is it all about? The field has shifted a couple of times over the past 20 years and it's actually well chronicled in several places. One place is a monograph by Skelton, Boyte and Leonard called: "Youth Civic Engagement, Reflections on an Emerging Public Idea" (2002).

Following the release of the 1983 publication of "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" (a report to the nation and the Secretary of Education by the National Commission on Excellence in Education), Skelton, et. al. identify the prevailing view of youth was that they were "at-risk." The publication focused on the broad environment of education and other societal changes, but the ripple effect, they report, was a narrowing of the nation's focus to youth. "A nation at risk quickly became youth at risk. The National Governor's Association and the Chief State School Officers

established task forces on problems such as teen pregnancy and dropouts. The National Council on Foundations, United Ways, followed by school systems and nonprofit youth serving organizations across the country picked up the theme of youth at risk. State and federal policy and funding streams increasingly emphasized treatment and resolving the deficits in young people. Consequently, approaches that stressed youth flourishing and development or even problem prevention were often shunted aside in a growing chorus of voices that emphasized remediation and treatment.”

However, they go on to note that several forces emerged which helped to shift that paradigm. Notably, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, W.T. Grant Foundation’s Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship and the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. These shifts in popular thinking toward youth development and youth civic engagement, and away from risk-based models also coincided with the passage of the 1990 National and Community Service Act, which brought into being the precursor of my agency, which became the Corporation for National and Community Service, in 1994.

Our mission is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the nation’s educational, public safety, environmental, and other human needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results and to encourage all Americans to engage in such service. In doing so, the Corporation will foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

In 1994 we started AmeriCorps and continued funding programs in the Senior Corps and in Learn and Serve America, the program I work with which annually engages over 1.5 million young people in service-learning – community service tied to curriculum.

While the nation, in the late 1990’s seemed to return to blaming young people, this time for their disinterest in American political life, we also saw a rise in youth volunteerism and service. Skelton, et. al. note that this time the blaming shifted more quickly, however, and fell to the public and civic institutions that discouraged young people’s involvement. I would note the devaluing of youth participation and civic engagement as prime factors, as well. In addition, while the focus was shifting to the contributions that young people could make, we were also beginning to recognize that youth are citizens today, not just “CIT’s” or citizens-in-training.

Here we are, today, with a decade of federally supported youth service as well as many other funded youth development efforts behind us and where have we come in terms of positive youth development?

It seems to me that we have taken a Buddhist path. Buddhist in the sense that there are many paths to the same summit and youthwork, I would submit, has done just that.

I reviewed numerous current works in the youth development literature in preparing for this talk. If we look at just four of the better-known “paths” we find common ground in

all of them. These four paths are: 1) the document that this conference is largely based on: “Towards a Blueprint for Positive Youth Development”; 2) the 5 Promises that underlie the work of America’s Promise, an organization that came out of the Presidents’ Summit in 1997; 3) the “5 Basics” espoused by Communities In Schools; and 4) the “Sample Framework” put forward by the Forum for Youth Investment – all share these very sensible ideas.

They all seem to agree that good youth development programs include at least 5 critical elements. Youth need (in no particular order): a healthy start; caring adults; safe places; marketable skills; and opportunities to serve. It doesn’t get much more basic than that. Each of these sources goes about these goals a bit differently, and each adds their own flavor to the mix of services and methods, but they all include each of these elements.

There’s another underlying assumption here, which in some cases has risen to the level of a defining feature. That is that we also agree that youth are to be taken seriously. One of the programs we’ve funded through my agency is Youth As Resources of Southwestern Indiana. Their program is built on youth as funders and their stationary has long had a graphic of a well-worn pair of sneakers with the label: “Our communities’ best resource wears sneakers.” I’ve always liked that. Because they know youth are resources today. Youth have roles that can contribute now. You may begin to see why I say: “You do one of the most important jobs in the world, today”.

So what is so important about positive youth development?

We can see that today’s environment defines positive youth development as including 5 critical elements and a core underlying assumption that youth are key resources in addressing community needs. The literature is also quite clear that positive youth development has provided some valuable lessons that can help guide us in our work.

At the national level, I would say that while we have youth policy in some areas (Education, Juvenile Justice, and Child Welfare policies, for example) we don’t have a unified national youth policy. We do have policy statements from a number of states in the US on positive youth development, however, and they also help make the case for the importance of the policy, programs and practice in the field, as well as provide some suggestions for what might be included in such a policy.

Some make the case for intentional inclusion of the larger community. For example, the “State of Wyoming: Framework for Youth Development”, as reported in Ferber, Pittman & Marshall’s “State Youth Policy: Helping All Youth to Grow Up Fully Prepared and Fully Engaged,” 2002, states, “Positive youth development must be achieved through coordinated and comprehensive community-based actions.”

This point is amplified in the work of Milbrey McLaughlin in her work: “Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development.”(McLaughlin, 2002) When I heard her speak at the Coalition for Community Schools forum, last June, I was struck by the similarities of message, once again. She makes a compelling case for the

value of community-based organizations in positive youth development and adds: “The successful outcomes we detail are based in a deep and articulated faith in the capacity of young people to be resources for the community and energetic agents in their own positive future.” We’ve heard that before.

Others would say that another suggestion for what might be included is that while prevention and remediation are critical, youth development aims higher. “Promoting Positive Development in New York State” states its goal is to foster ... physical and mental health; competence at school, work and in the community; confidence; character and connectedness with family and peers. Sound familiar?

A third suggestion for inclusion might be to stress youth voice. The “Kentucky Youth Development Partnership” says that youth are involved in the planning, governance, and assessment and delivery of youth policy and services. Hmmm, more common ground.

These statements, and those in such states as Iowa, Alaska and others show that state-level youth policy is being made and that the themes that we just discussed crop up in state policy again and again. Health, career, safe spaces, caring adults, & youth involvement continue to be the dominant messages.

Lastly, in the “So What” category, we come to our assumption of youth involvement and the idea of “youth civic engagement as a public idea”, as Skelton, et. al. put it. They note a turning point in civic engagement in 1996 with a Wingspread Conference, which articulated “Principles of Vital Practice for Youth and Civic Development”

Their “Emerging Best Practices” included, among other things, that:

1. Young people are producers,
2. Respect for young people’s intelligence, talents, experience and energy,
3. Youth and adults develop committed, reciprocal relationships,
4. Contributions of youth work to community and institutional change, and
5. Youth people’s efforts connect with the large civic challenges and questions of meaning in our time.

You do one of the most important jobs in the world, today. The good news is that you are not alone in your efforts. In addition to the great work you do, there has been movement in the promotion and development of the idea of youth development and civic engagement among funders, K-12 and higher education institutions and others. Examples include publications from groups such as: the Kellogg Foundation, AmeriCorps, Campus Compact, the National Alliance for Civic Education, as well as the formation of affinity groups by national funders such as the Grantmakers Forum on Community and National Service.

Scales and Leffert (1999) compiled the effects of participation in youth organizations on young people. They learned that youth voice and leadership by young people leads to:

- Increased self-esteem, popularity, sense of personal control, and enhanced identity development;
- Greater communications in the family;
- Less involvement in risky behaviors like drug use and juvenile delinquency; and
- Better academic achievement.

So we know that positive youth development is good for young people. But goes deeper and broader than that. There is evidence that adults benefit, that organizations benefit and that communities benefit, as well.

“Youth Voice: A Guide for Engaging Youth in Leadership and Decision-Making in Service-Learning Programs” (a resource written by a youth and adults in partnership), outlines research that supports this key feature of positive youth development. Dr. Shelley Billig, of RMC Research, reviewed numerous studies on service-learning and concluded that outcomes are maximized when students are given greater degrees of responsibility for planning, decision-making, problem solving and assessing their learning. (Billig, 2000).

Further, a study by the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, found that there are a number of effects that young people can have on adults and organizations by being included in decision-making roles (Zeldin, Kusgen McDaniel, Topitzes, Calvert, 2000). Some of the effects highlighted in the study on adults are:

- Adults view the competence of youth, and perceive them as critical to organizational improvement;
- Adults enhance their commitment to the organization;
- Adults feel more effective and competent in working with youth; and
- Adults develop a stronger sense of community.

The effects on organizations included:

- Youth involvement becomes the organization's expectation;
- Young people clarify the organization's mission;
- Organizations become more connected and responsive to youth in the community;
- Organizations are more appealing to potential funders; and

You do one of the most important jobs in the world, today.

Now what do we do about it?

This set of concepts, our critical elements, is clearly useful, important and gaining greater acceptance. Therefore our third question must be: Now what do we do about it? In other words, how do these ideas affect our policies, our programs and our practice and what can I do about it?

Policy

In the policy arena, we must focus broadly on the factors we know to be most important and useful. Pittman, Diversi, and Ferber, in their 2002 article “Social Policy Supports for Adolescence in the Twenty-First Century: Framing Questions” [Journal of Research on Adolescence, 12(1), 149-158], offer instructive principles to help shape and inform policies for the 21st century.

They are:

1. Social policy has to focus on positive outcomes and non-academic outcomes as clearly as it focuses on negative outcomes and academic success.

In other words, policies should not only aim to prevent youth problems, but also to promote youth development and engagement in their communities. Also, while academics are crucial, so are other areas such as personal, social, vocational, physical and civic development.

2. Social policy should be firmly connected to older and younger populations.

Policies have to be written in a way that presents clear pathways and trajectories of support from birth through adulthood. Investing in early childhood is necessary, but not sufficient and we need to consider making policy and investments that are early and sustained.

3. Social policy should reach across a range of settings and systems, providing a full range of services, supports and opportunities.

Young people grow up in communities, not just schools and not just youth programs. Therefore, community-based organizations, service agencies, businesses and employers are settings for interactions that can contribute to or undermine development.

4. Social policy should prominently feature the voices and actions of young people themselves as agents of positive change.

An important part of the social contract, says Pittman et. al., should be to foster a perception of adolescents as agents who are able to contribute to the construction of a better society.

The point is that youth need advocates. And that is why you do one of the most important jobs in the world, today.

Programs

Our programs, and those who design them, must make use of the research and incorporate the things we know work.

First, assessment must include not only needs, but also assets of our youth, our institutions and their communities. If we continue to focus on deficits we will continue to watch where we've come from and neglect to look ahead to more positive destinations. (Have you ever tried to ride a horse, or a bicycle, facing backwards? You see what I mean!) This point of view is also supported in the literature (see American Youth Policy Forums' Center for Workforce Development publication from 1995 entitled: "Contract with America's Youth: Toward a National Youth Development Agenda.")

Second, our programs must clearly outline goals and objectives as well as the methods to achieve them. Those factors lead to evaluation strategies that are easy to follow. Those of you who write grants may have noticed that Fannie Mae has released new guidelines for 2002 that includes desired outcomes for their grants that applicants will align with, if they want to obtain funding. You must document and evaluate. The expression has never been more true that: "if it isn't written down, it didn't happen."(Annoying, but true!)

We must also look, in our programs, to flexible strategies such as service-learning. This method, for which my agency annually invests \$43 million in funding, allows for many goals to be achieved through engaging young people as the problem-solvers.

Practice

We all have the opportunity to put this learning to use in our work. Whether we work in a policy office in Washington or a street outreach program in Springfield, we can, and if we're smart will:

- *Involve youth and communities* in assessment, problem-solving and implementation of programs,
- *Evaluate our work and document it* so that we can add to the knowledge base and help others to get it right,
- *Identify and include allies* to add to our numbers and strength, and
- *Recognize excellence* in youth, youth workers and institutions so that they remain energized.

Conclusion

Skelton, et. al. perhaps said it best when they said:

"youth ... engagement means taking young people seriously enough both to challenge and respect them and to encourage their potential. Young people are capable of remarkable, many-sided civic contributions to the health of our communities and to the flourishing of our democracy. But young people need mentors, coaches, teachers and above all, allies in this work. They need, by their side, a new generation of adult leaders

who believe in their capacities and who themselves are bold enough to open the space for young people's authentic citizenship."

We are those allies. We have the chance and the challenge to lead by example. Your stories may all be different and we have to find our own path, but we can make a difference in young people's lives. Our work is to figure out how we're going to help advance the field. You have knowledge and expertise and stories to share. Take the time to meet someone new in a workshop or a hallway and tell them what you do that's on the cutting edge, that's working, that made a difference in your community.

You may ask what keeps me going? Why am I still in the same job 8 years later? Let me tell you about Melissa at Hill Junior High School in Minnesota. When I stopped at that school on a site visit a few years ago, I asked this very active student leader what she might do if she got to high school and they didn't have service-learning there. She thought for a moment, clearly perplexed that that might actually be the case and replied: "Well, they will when I get there!" Melissa keeps me going.

I think we can agree that creative ideas can, and have, changed the world. It is also reasonable to say that young people are frequent producers of creative ideas. Given those facts, our work with young people today can change the world. You may be working with our next Einstein, or Freud, or Kennedy, or Bush.

Guess what? You do one of the most important jobs in the world, today.

The State Role in Promoting Youth Development

Glenn Daly, Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Valerie LaMotte, Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

Cheryl Mitchell, Vermont Agency for Human Services

Moderator: Thomas MacLellan, National Governor's Association

Glenn Daly is the Director of the Office of Youth Development (OYD) at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services. Glenn chairs the Massachusetts Youth Development Advisory Council, (YDAC) which is funded by a national demonstration grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau. YDAC membership includes state youth serving agencies, community agencies, advocates and youth. YDAC initiatives include state college tuition waivers for foster youth, linkages between youth development and e-government, and the development of a youth policy framework for the state.

Valerie LaMotte has worked for over 25 years with the State of Connecticut, first with the Connecticut Justice Commission and then with the Office of Policy and Management, the Governor's budget agency. She is responsible for planning and coordinating interagency efforts in juvenile justice, improving school attendance, drug education, violence prevention, combating underage drinking and community youth development. Ms. LaMotte oversees approximately \$8.5

million of federal and state funds annually that support over 100 subgrants to local, state and private agencies. Ms. LaMotte has a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law and is a co-author of Assessing Outcomes in Youth Programs: A Practical Handbook, September 2001.

Cheryl Mitchell is presently the Deputy Secretary of the Agency of Human Services. This is the umbrella Agency responsible for the Departments of Health; Developmental and Mental Health Services; Prevention, Assistance, Transition & Health Assess; Medicaid, Aging and Disabilities, Social and Rehabilitation Services, Rate Setting (for nursing homes); Corrections, Drug and Alcohol Services; Child Support and Economic Opportunity. The Secretary's Office coordinates planning, program development, financial management, and personnel for the departments. It also serves as the liaison with the Governor's Office, the Legislature, the non-profit community, advocacy groups, and the other Agencies in state government.

Thomas MacLellan is a Policy Analyst with the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices, where he is responsible for issues related to youth development and juvenile and criminal justice. In addition to providing technical assistance to States in these and other areas, Mr. MacLellan heads the NGA's Youth Policy Network, an 11-State initiative designed to help States improve outcomes for youth. He also runs the Governor's Criminal Justice Policy Advisor' Network. Mr. MacLellan has authored numerous reports on school violence, violent juvenile offenders, juvenile offenders, juvenile justice and substance abuse, and family violence. He is a member of the advisory committee for the Urban Institute, the Johns Hopkins Sar Levitan Institute, the National Crime Prevention Council, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Youth Development Research Fund, the Howard County (Maryland) Police Department, and the American Farm Center Foundation.

Thomas MacLellan began by providing an overview of the National Governor's Association (NGA) Youth Policy Network overseen by NGA's Center for Best Practices. The Center engages in a range of projects designed to improve state capacity to promote the social development of youth and prepare them for careers and lifelong learning. The Center focuses its youth development services on: developing state school-to-work systems, with a particular focus on private sector involvement, skill standards, and linkages among school-to-work, workforce development, elementary and secondary education reform, higher education, and economic development; improving youth employment and training programs, with a particular focus on services for out-of school youth; enriching services for teen parents within the context of welfare reform and advancing state strategies for reducing teen pregnancies; disseminating multifaceted prevention, intervention and youth corrections strategies designed to reduce violent juvenile crime; and promoting the incorporation of youth development principles into state youth-related policy and programs and performance management systems.

NGA started its Youth Policy Network (Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) in the spring of 2000. The network is a ten-state, two-plus-year initiative designed to help states improve outcomes for youth through youth development strategies. NGA provides technical assistance and covers travel and meeting expenses for representatives from the ten participating states.

The network was started in response to a need voiced by officials at the state level. And, while there is no one cause for the increase in energy aimed at state-level youth policy, federal shifts such as the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs have encouraged state agencies to rethink the way they are providing and coordinating services. During the first year of the project, NGA hosted three roundtables with representatives from each of the ten state teams. Specific topics of these meetings included: defining "youth development"; developing a logic model; focusing on youth workforce issues and the challenges in developing comprehensive youth workforce systems. The Network also met for a fourth time and focused on developing outcome indicators and strategic messages.

The Network has developed six premises of youth development policy:

- Governors' leadership is essential in driving needed change.
- State policy creates much of the context for local action.
- Youth development efforts need to be collaborative and holistic.
- An individual or organization must have the authority to mobilize resources and be held accountable for achieving results.
- Youth development efforts should be clear about the outcomes they wish to achieve.
- Youth development efforts should be informed by research-based best practices.

Massachusetts

According to Glenn Daly, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services created the Office of Youth Development in 1999 to support and establish effective youth development programs at the state and local level. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services is a cabinet-level umbrella agency that oversees and coordinates 15 separate health and human service agencies that provide youth and adult social services, youth correctional services, and substance abuse and mental health services. The Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services is the Governor's chief policy advisor on all issues pertaining to health and human services in Massachusetts, including issues impacting youth. Additional goals were to increase collaboration among Massachusetts youth-serving systems, facilitate communication between State and community agencies and systems of care, and promote the youth development approach to serving young people.

A statewide Youth Development Advisory Council was formed with more than 25 representatives of government departments and agencies, advocates, community organizations and young people. Their common vision is "that all Massachusetts youth grow up to be healthy, caring, economically self-sufficient adults". Their goals include:

- All youth have access to resources that promote optimal physical and mental health;
- All youth have nurturing relationships with adults and positive relationships with peers;
- All youth have access to safe places for living, learning and working;
- All youth have access to educational and economic opportunity;
- All youth have access to structured activities and opportunity for community service and civic participation.

The Council has endorsed a draft Statewide Policy on Youth based on America's Promise and the proposed Younger Americans Act.

The Council also has a Youth Network Team, a diverse group of young people that represent various state agencies, student councils, community providers and municipalities. The Youth Network Team gives statewide and local youth organizations the opportunity to communicate, coordinate, and advocate regarding issues and state policies that impact youth of the Commonwealth. Recent activities include passage of a state college tuition waiver for foster youth and multi-youth agency teen dating violence prevention campaign that included distribution of campaign materials throughout the state as well as media outreach to editorial boards on teen dating violence and its effects.

Connecticut

Connecticut is another example of a state that has worked to develop a more coordinated approach to youth policy. According to Valerie LaMotte, Connecticut for Community Youth Development (CCYD) is a statewide project that fosters the development of youth ages 12 to 18 by providing training and information to direct service workers, supervisors, planners, youth advocates, youth funders, and program managers in Connecticut. CCYD is founded on the belief that youth are valuable, capable resources who should be encouraged to participate in a variety of community-based activities. This approach embraces positive youth development as an essential prerequisite for healthy communities.

Specific objectives designed to achieve this goal include:

- Build the capacity of state and local youth-serving agencies, associations and funding sources to implement youth development principles and to incorporate best practices for youth development.
- Promote a youth development approach that focuses on the positive abilities and assets of Connecticut's diverse adolescent population.

Connecticut for Community Youth Development involves the collaboration of several state agencies that provide services to youth ages 12 to 18. The CCYD State Level Steering Committee includes representatives from each of the following organizations:

- Connecticut Commission on the Arts
- Connecticut Department of Children and Families

- Connecticut Department of Labor
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Connecticut Department of Social Services
- Connecticut Department of Transportation
- Connecticut General Assembly Commission on Children
- Connecticut Judicial Branch
- Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
- Connecticut State Department of Education
- University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System

Since March of 1999, the Connecticut for Community Youth Development project has initiated and supported a number of initiatives in the area of youth development.

Highlights of this work include:

- Established an active State Level Steering Committee with representatives from twelve state agencies.
- Provided grants to support multi-town organizations in their efforts to expand the capacity of the youth serving agencies to incorporate a youth development framework.
- Sponsored Funders Events to encourage interaction and exchanges of ideas among representatives of public and private organizations active in funding programs for youth ages 12 to 18.
- Staffed a CCYD Funders Group of public and private funders that developed the CCYD Minimum Youth Development RFP Components.
- Provided challenge grants to private funders to increase private sector funding of programs for youth ages 12 to 18 years.
- Sponsored a statewide conferences and forums to share best practices and set priorities for the CCYD project.
- Provided one and two-day training sessions using in-depth activities that promote a youth development approach.
- Provided opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills at "Voice Your View" workshops and other statewide forums.
- Provided 30-hour training courses on youth development principles and best practices to youth workers.
- Provided 15-hour training courses on managing effective youth serving organizations.
- Sponsored the development of a handbook on Assessing Outcomes in Youth Programs.
- Involved graphics students in designing a project logo for CCYD.
- Updated youth development files at the Connecticut Clearinghouse and enhanced access to electronic communication with Connecticut Voices for Children.

Most recently, the project published *Assessing Outcomes in Youth Programs: A Practical Handbook*. The goals of this handbook are to:

- Offer managers and staff in youth programs guidelines for planning an evaluation of their program;
- Offer a tool to those who wish to conduct their own evaluation; and
- Provide funders of youth programs with a clearly defined set of positive youth development outcomes and indicators for measuring those outcomes.

A series of training sessions on how to use the handbook are currently in progress.

Vermont

Vermont has been a leader on positive youth development, particularly in the area of developing indicators to assess how well the state is achieving identified outcomes. The state includes youth assets data in its annual outcomes and indicators publication, the Agency of Human Services' *Community Profiles*. According to Cheryl Mitchell, the outcomes reported on are:

- Families, youth, and individuals are engaged in their community's decisions and activities
- Pregnant women and young children thrive
- Children are ready for school
- Children live in stable, supported families
- Youth choose healthy behaviors
- Youth successfully transition to adulthood
- Adults lead healthy and productive lives
- Elders and people with disabilities live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer
- Communities provide safety and support to families and individuals

Beginning in 2001, Vermont added assets questions to its state Youth Risk Behavior Survey, administered biannually to most students in grades 8-12. Other assets data come from the Search Institute survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors, in which more than 15,000 of the state's youth have participated.

In addition to data and outcomes, the State has engaged in a number of other efforts to promote positive youth development. It has encouraged the formation of regional Youth Councils statewide. The Agency of Human Services has made funds available to each of these Youth Councils to distribute as youth-initiated grants in their regions.

The State is also soliciting input from young people and working to increase youth involvement in decision-making. Vermont has two student members on the State Board of Education and 20 local school boards have one or more student members. The state plans to study the experience of these youth members to better understand the benefits to youth and communities, and the barriers to greater impacts.

Moreover, the state is also working to develop model initiatives to better meet the needs of young people. As part of their *Youth Health Initiative*, public and private

organizations are collaborating with youth and parents to make sure that every young person gets a yearly checkup which includes both a risk and strength (protective factor) assessment. In one pilot, the community partnership group is linking with a pediatrician to ensure that every young person who wants a mentor will get one.

“Building Bridges: Head Start and Positive Youth Development”

Savoui Graham, ABCD Bridgeport

Rob Waldron, Jumpstart for Young Children

Debra Gass, Franklin Community Action Corporation

Moderator: Dee Bertozzi

Savoui Graham currently serves as the Director of Employment and Fatherhood Services at the Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) in Bridgeport Connecticut. Responsible for oversight and coordination of various initiatives directed towards enabling low-income families to become more self-sufficient. Primary responsibilities include designing employment and counseling programs that serve non-custodial fathers, displaced homemakers, TANF recipients and the Head Start community. Also works to establish and develop community partnerships to secure a viable system of service delivery for the hard to serve population. Most recent accomplishments include providing leadership with the Early Head Start Fatherhood Demonstration Project (ACF Initiative), and conducting training with the Exploring Parenting Curriculum of the National Head Start Association. Mr. Graham received his B.A. Degree from Central Connecticut State University in 1987 in Communications and Business Study.

Robert L. Waldron is the President and CEO of Jumpstart for Young Children. Robert brings more than 10 years of education-based leadership experience to Jumpstart. His portfolio includes leading a national organization, demonstrating effective management skills, and championing education for all children. Most recently, Rob served as a Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He worked to enhance the quality and accountability of Web-based curricula for children pre-K to sixth grade and created national technical guidelines for curriculum software developers. Prior to his fellowship at Harvard, Rob served as CEO of SCORE! Learning Centers, the second largest after-school tutoring company in the United States. From 1996 to 2001, he scaled the local after-school education program to a national organization that currently delivers services to children across the country. Under his leadership, the organization grew from 13 centers and less than \$2 million in revenue to over 150 centers nationwide with annual revenues exceeding \$50 million. He has been called a “truly remarkable leader” by the Washington Post Company and been featured in many publications, including the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Debra J. Gass has been the Director of Franklin Community Action Corp's Parent-Child Development Center in Franklin County Mass. for the past 15 years. She is recognized throughout the country as a pioneer of Head Start in Family Child

Care Homes and blended Head Start/state-funded full-day childcare quality models. She has also directed Volunteers of America childcare center in No. Hollywood, CA and taught in Appalachia. Debra holds a Master 's degree from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena.

Dee Bertozzi is the Assistant Secretary for Children, Youth and Family Policy at the Massachusetts Executive Office for Health and Human Services. Prior to this, at EOHHS, she was the Director of Child Care and Head Start Policy. Her work was focused on improving the way services and supports for children and their families are designed, delivered, coordinated and organized. Ms. Bertozzi has worked in community programs as both a teacher and administrator for over twenty five years. Prior to coming to the state, she was the early childhood administrator for the Medford Public Schools and the Director of the Medford Family Resource Coalition; a community based collaboration serving children and families with over 60 member agencies; including social services, education, mental health, and family support. Ms. Bertozzi has both a Masters of Education and a Juris Doctorate. She is a member of the Massachusetts Bar Association.

This session was designed to provide information to participants on how they can effectively incorporate the principles of positive youth development into ACF supported programs, with the focus on Head Start. By highlighting existing creative partnerships, participants were encouraged to think broadly about how they could explore new collaborations in their own work.

Savoui Graham discussed Good Guys, an Administration for Children and Families Region I initiative designed to support young fathers in Head Start. Building on the Head Start tradition of delivering comprehensive, high quality services designed to foster healthy development in low-income children, Region I initiated the Good Guys program to support and enhance the roles of fathers in Head Start. The program aims to provide fathers with opportunities for greater involvement in their children's lives and help fathers understand how important they are to their children. ABCD Bridgeport has had tremendous success with this program, reporting positive outcomes on children, fathers, families and staff. Specifically, the Bridgeport program offers a series of educational workshops for men entitled MAN – Men Are Needed. Topics include the importance of father involvement with their children, the social and emotional needs of their children, the role of a father, and the importance of literacy and reading to young children. Because ABCD Bridgeport is a larger social service agency, it is also able to provide or refer fathers to needed support services such as family literacy programs, health services, and employment and job training services. Some positive results reported from the program include being able to break down men's negative perceptions of social service agencies, giving men a second chance for self-discovery, and giving men new and more options and helping them use these opportunities to be involved with their children and families.

Rob Waldron discussed the recent partnership between the Administration for Children and Families Region I Office and Jumpstart. Jumpstart was founded in 1994 at the intersection of two national trends-public need for quality early childhood programs and

the emerging national service movement recruiting thousands of college students to community service. Jumpstart connects these trends by recruiting, training, supervising, and supporting college students to work with Head Start and other early childhood programs to provide one-to-one attention to young children struggling in preschool.

Jumpstart is an outcome-based model that offers both summer and school year programs for children. During the school year Corps members work one-to-one with young children for individual attention twice a week. Over the summer, Jumpstart runs a full-time program designed to reach children who would have no other summer learning opportunities. The program provides a unique opportunity for college students on work-study to participate in community service while in school. Members work one-to-one with a young child to help him build the skills necessary to school success. They also build relationships with families and communities; develop teaching, leadership and professional skills; and work on an AmeriCorps team of their peers.

Jumpstart focuses on three major goals — school success, family involvement, and future teachers. By focusing on the child, and his or her family, and college students, Jumpstart provides a comprehensive program to ensure children enter school prepared to succeed. This year, Jumpstart will serve more than 4,500 children in 30 communities across the country. Nearly 1,000 college students serving as AmeriCorps members participated in Jumpstart during the 2001-2002 school year. Jumpstart continues to grow every year through new partnerships with colleges and universities.

Jumpstart has been cited as a model program by President George W. Bush, former President and Mrs. Clinton, former Secretary of Education Richard Riley, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, and many others. Jumpstart has also been featured by *Education Week*, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Worth*, and MTV.

ACF's Region I Office also funds Early Care and Education Recruitment and Retention Grants. These grants are designed to promote youth interest in the field of early care and education so that working with young children and families is a viable career choice. In addition, a primary goal of the grant is to promote positive youth development, exposing youth to role models and providing them with skill building and leadership opportunities. The young people involved benefit from mentoring, career counseling, direct experience working in classrooms, and attending educational seminars.

Debra Gass spoke about one of these grants, the Career Development for Teens program at Franklin County Action. The project provides opportunities for high school youth to learn about and become involved in activities related to the spectrum of career opportunities in the field of early care and education. The Head Start program partners with a youth serving agency and an institution of higher education. Program activities include: students working in classrooms (including paid internships); mentoring; attending college classes; speakers; seminars on topics such as "Education Options" and "How to Apply to College"; college-level writing instruction (including preparing students for college writing requirements and Placement Exams); career counseling; participation in career fairs; participation in Workforce Investment Board Youth Councils; promoting youth development skills; and offering a college-level course on

Early Growth and Development in both Spanish and English. The program has generated a lot of interest among local youth, benefited the Head Start classrooms, and is considered a great success by all involved.

Findings From the National Academy of Sciences: What Makes a Good Youth Development Program?

Chris Ashford, Academy of Educational Development

Christopher Ashford is Senior Program Officer with the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC. Over the past 12 years he has been involved in both mainstream and alternative education, developing, running, and evaluating effective programming initiatives for under-served youth. He is currently in charge of developing an on-line resource for alternative education practitioners called Transformational Education. This practitioners driven resource brings together education, youth employment, juvenile justice, and social services for the specific purpose of supporting at-risk and vulnerable youth from across systems. He has a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education where he studied Education and Human Development. With over six years of classroom experience, Dr. Ashford is interested in creating local opportunities for youth to successfully negotiate multiple systems as they transition into adulthood.

Chris Ashford defined youth development as an ongoing growth process that engages all youth in meeting their basic needs to be safe, feel cared for, valued and useful. It also includes being able to develop the social and educational skills and competencies that will help them become fulfilled adults who contribute positively to their communities. In an effort to support positive development of youth in America, the AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research has identified seven elements to build and sustain a youth development infrastructure:

- Strategic planning
- Information collection and dissemination
- Space analysis
- Financial investment
- Capacity building
- Informed/organized constituency
- Research, documentation and evaluation

Ashford focused on two of these elements – information collection and dissemination, and financial investment.

Information Collection

Easily accessible information is a critical element of local infrastructure development. Diverse baseline information coupled with developmental indicators and outcomes can help locales identify where they are starting, where they want to go and if they are getting

there. Early on, communities need to commit to collection, analysis and dissemination of baseline information that is “owned by the community”. A cross-section of public, nonprofit and private sector community leaders are needed to support this process and to model the use of such information for planning purposes, visioning, decision making, monitoring changes and improvements, and expanded accountability for positive youth and community outcomes. There are many tools, surveys and assessments that can be used in this process. There are also indicators and benchmarks that can help determine what path a community is on and if it is effectively attaining its vision.

Financial Investment

The accelerated trend of the past decade toward empowering our nation's young people to succeed has fostered a new awareness and commitment to this most valuable resource. Unfortunately, the money required to support this commitment and realize change has not kept up the pace. Our youth cannot truly be a priority until we back up our good intentions with the funding needed to demonstrate this priority.

Securing the financial resources necessary to provide the supports and opportunities our youth need to become healthy, productive members of society requires answers to some basic questions:

- How much do we currently spend?
- How much should we spend?
- What are the best mechanisms to harness and equitably distribute the necessary funds?

Some progress has been made through new initiatives in education finance reform and services integration, providing more effective delivery of social, health and educational services for children and youth from the classroom up to the government level. However, the issue of increasing financial commitment to youth development continues to be addressed in targeted and fragmented ways. Many would contend that this is the "nature of the beast" and that the meager available resources should support the development of those youth in most desperate and immediate need. This is understandable in light of current limited funds, but we must not lose sight of the ideal: adequate and secure funding for the developmental supports and opportunities that all youth need on the road to a productive, healthy and economically viable adulthood.

Of the limited data and general information available on youth development services and spending, we were able to reaffirm the following observations:

- Spending is fragmented amongst a vast array of disparate government entities and is undertaken in the absence of a comprehensive strategy for youth.
- Spending is primarily for programs providing crisis intervention rather than development.
- Spending primarily targets at-risk youth as opposed to all youth.

The follow were found to be potential root causes of these trends in spending:

- Devaluation of adolescents —Providing the supports our adolescents need will require a critical examination of, and change in, society's attitude toward them. Unfortunately, adolescents are often the forgotten and undervalued segment of America's youth population.
- Lack of consensus on youth development —Both the terminology and concept of youth development have yet to take widespread root in the policy and funding arenas. The use of the term itself is often inconsistent or unclear which, amongst the other problems this causes, makes it difficult to translate youth development into more dollars for all youth.
- Lack of integrated structure around the delivery of services and funds for youth —Fragmented programs and funding for youth must become more responsive and accountable for all youth. This will only come about with a comprehensive and integrated strategy and structure grounded in developmental principles and practices.
- Lack of adequate and protected funding —Funds are not protected and dedicated in the manner necessary to sustain the long-term, comprehensive process that is youth development. Increased funds for youth development will be most effective only if they are adequate and secure.

In moving away from these circumstances and toward the ideal of adequate and secure funding for developmental supports and opportunities for all youth, we must seek ways to apply tangible and "fundable" numbers to our ideal. An examination of the time and costs associated with youth in non-family, out-of-school circumstances points to an estimated cost of \$2.55 per hour or \$3,060 per youth, per year (1,200 hours). This calculation provides a baseline annual sum of \$144 billion to provide youth development supports and opportunities to all school-age children and youth in the United States. The Center's method for devising such a baseline number is just one way this could be done. There needs to be further investigation and collaboration on applying other concrete costs and financing mechanisms to youth development.

Hopefully, the information and ideas presented here will lead to increased efforts at all levels to determine the resources we must be prepared to invest in our youth. We can support the move toward the ideal by:

- Seeking new types of information —Information we need to move ahead includes: data on youth development services and opportunities now in existence at local, state, and federal levels, and the costs associated with them; developmental indicators; formulas and methods for calculating youth development costs.
- Building on the after-school momentum —Public attention to, and investment in, quality after-school opportunities for school-age youth could provide the necessary vehicle for increasing public understanding of, and commitment to, youth development on a larger scale.

- Making a sustainable public investment —Youth development is an investment that must be made by each sector of the wider community—public and private. Examination of the federal-state matching, local dedicated taxes and incentives for business and philanthropy could lead to models for providing adequate and sustainable funding for youth development.

Finally, we will be unable to reach our ideal of adequate and secure funding for developmental supports and opportunities for all youth without strong leadership. National intermediaries must work to cultivate this leadership at all levels of government, and at the grassroots, by creating constituencies. Ultimately, these leaders and constituents are the only ones who can bring about increased public investment and commitment to youth development.

Mr. Ashford ended the session by engaging the audience in a lively interactive question and answer period on the above topics.

Pushing The Youth Development Envelope

Henry M. Thomas, III, Urban League of Springfield

Brad Lewis, Corporation for National and Community Service

Najma Nazy-at, Youth Services Consultant

Moderator: Thomas MacLellan, National Governors Association

Mr. Thomas is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Springfield, Inc. He has worked in the Urban League movement for twenty-nine years. He began as Youth and Education Director in 1971. In 1975, at twenty-five years of age, he became the youngest person appointed as President/CEO of any Urban League affiliate. He also serves as CEO of the Historic Camp Atwater, which is the oldest African American summer youth residential camp in the country. Mr. Thomas serves on a number of local and national boards and commissions. He is founder and current Chairman of the Board of Directors of the New Leadership Charter School, member of the American Camping Association board of trustees, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Springfield Cable Endowment, and former Chairman of the Springfield Fire Commission and Police Commission respectively. In addition, Mr. Thomas is a Visiting Professor at the University of Massachusetts and also at Curry College. He received a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and a Master's degree in human resource development from American International College, and holds a Juris Doctor from Western New England College of School Law.

Najma Nazy'at is an independent practitioner with a focus on youth development and supporting small projects in the non-profit sector. Ms. Nazy'at is currently affiliated with organizations such as: The Boston BEST Initiative, a project of The Medical Foundation, LISTEN, Inc. Prior to this she was Training Coordinator of the BEST Initiative a project in the Massachusetts Prevention Center, a program of The Medical Foundation. Ms. Nazy'at trains locally and nationally to improve both what is available for young people and how providers and society views youth. Ms. Nazy'at's lifelong commitment to youth and youth

work has taken her before national and international audiences presenting papers, delivering workshops, and participating in symposia. Before working at the Boston BEST Initiative, Najma was at the Central Branch YMCA and City on a Hill Charter High School running various teen programs ranging from leadership, field trips, community organizing to art projects.

This panel was designed as an interactive session with the audience, discussing topics raised by those in attendance. Some of the topics discussed included:

- The idea that youth have to be at the table, included in discussions and decisions, and included in forums about them (including this conference)
- Youth workers need to be professionalized. They are very poorly paid, training and advancement is ad hoc, and the field and our kids are suffering as a result. We need to advance the field, but need to be careful not to assume college-educated workers are better than those with street experience. It is a diverse field, need to respect and build on that diversity.
- A challenge to the audience to take the ideas they heard at the conference home to their communities, share them with neighbors and colleagues, and put them into practice

Workshops

The conference also included twenty workshops, ninety minutes in length, offered during three sessions over two days. Descriptions of the workshops follow.

Spiritual Activities In Work With Adolescents: Results of a National Study

Roy Hill and Melanie Wilson

Speakers presented the results of a national study, based on interviews with a random sample of 191 youth-serving agencies throughout the country, of secular spiritual and religious activities in work with adolescents. Trends toward the use of meditation, yoga, martial arts, relaxation/visualization, musical expression and other secular activities were quantified, and case studies presented of agencies that have significantly integrated these practices into their programming. The nature and extent of religious programming was also discussed.

Lead, Get Out of the Way, or Follow: Engaging Youth in Program Decision Making

Sophia Kim, Brad Lewis, Tym Rourke and Youth Speakers

Speakers examined barriers that inhibit youth involvement and shared ideas on how to craft programs that involve youth. Models that have successfully engaged youth in decision-making and program administration were highlighted. The workshops explored the diverse leadership roles available for young people within organizations, tools for assessing if and how their organization already engages young people as leaders, and practical ideas for strengthening youth leadership in their organization. Young people

also shared their experiences in decision-making roles with Boston's Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth and New Hampshire's Teen Institute.

Supporting Youth in Foster Care Transitioning to Adulthood/Ensuring Permanent Relationships

Kim Stevens and Youth Speakers

Youth and young adults who have transitioned from foster care are the best informants on effective policy and practice. A panel of youth experts spoke on relationships, services, training and personal strengths that support successful transitioning to adult, interdependent living.

Promoting Safe Work for Young Workers

Judith Andrews, Chris Miara and Beatriz Pazos

An estimated 80% of youths are employed at some point before they leave high school. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has collected and examined data on a large number of work-related injuries to teens younger than 18 years old. The workshop presenters described the nature and scope of these injuries. Presenters also described a project initiated by the Education Development Center that assists New England states in developing state teams that work at the state and local level to promote young worker safety. They discussed this innovative project that takes a community approach to preventing teen worker injuries, empowers youth by informing them of their rights and the actions they can take to protect themselves, and utilizes successful youth-adult partnerships.

Parents of Teens: The Forgotten Partner in Positive Youth Development?

Linda Grant, Jerry Mogul and Alexandra Oliver-Dávila

While adolescence is traditionally viewed as a time when teens must separate from parents in their transition to adulthood, recent research has shown the important role that parents can play in supporting their teens. However, program staff, as well as parents and teens themselves, are often uncertain and ambivalent about how and to what extent parents should be involved in the lives of their teens. This workshop will include an interactive opportunity for participants – as professionals or parents themselves - to share issues and solutions from their own experience.

Ensuring All Young People Reach Their Full Potential: Perspectives and Lessons Learned From the Developmental Disabilities Field

Debbie Gilmer, Cynthia Zafft and Youth Speakers

The inclusion not only into the community, but also within the world of economic self-sufficiency and career development for youth with disabilities remains a seldom discussed topic of concern. Unfortunately, youth and their families are not typically engaged in affecting and influencing systems change and reform efforts related to issues directly impacting their lives. Through a panel of youth panelists with disabilities and their adult mentors this workshop examined some “Best Practices” in transition from school to work, some program models with strong elements of personal choice, and the types of community collaborations necessary to support this investment in youth with disabilities.

Professionalizing The Field of Youth Work

Mo Barbosa, Kendall Clawson, Michael Grant, Lori Lobenstine, Treena Peltier, Kyle St. Germain, Deborah Stewart and Laurie Jo Wallace

Participants learned about professionalization efforts in the field of youth work. BEST site staff shared information about the development and building of youth worker certification and field forming in three locations in New England: Boston, New Haven, and Springfield. The youth development approach, which is integral to field forming, was discussed and participants were involved in activity and reflection about their work with youth and their own professional development.

Positive Youth Development and Early Care and Education: Partnerships for Success

Karin Elliott, Cindy Hurley, Patty Jalbert and Youth Speakers

Speakers shared ways to encourage collaboration around staff recruitment and retention, early care and education and positive youth development. They also discussed specifics around a successful early care and education recruitment and retention model in its third year, and engaged the audience in sharing ideas for partnering around positive youth development and early care and education.

Transitioning to Adult Roles: Supporting Youth Involved in Multi-Systems

Scott Hunter, Liz Pomeroy and Youth Speakers

Transitioning toward independence and interdependence are challenging times for all youth. This transition period is further complicated for young adults involved in multi-systems, such as community mental health, education, juvenile justice and child welfare. Oftentimes, lack of coordination for these services compounds frustrations and perceived barriers, hindering the transition process. Speakers described a process that addresses not only the need for better coordination, but also the comprehensive needs of these youth. Project RENEW and CARE-NH are community organizations working in rural and urban communities in New Hampshire to address youths' needs. Though separate entities, they share common goals, principles, values, models and strategies, such as wraparound, personal future planning and flexible services. The principles and strategies that were presented are designed to support this youth population to find success in their own lives.

Police and Youth Relationships

Edward Harris and Tracy Litthcut

This interactive workshop presented a pragmatic means of improving the ongoing relationship between police and youth, utilizing the involvement of local youth and police and others.

Equal Partnerships: Supporting the Development of Healthy Relationships for Youth

Alison George, Carmen Nieves, Jennifer Pierce-Weeks and Stephanie Brown

Participants learned how to support the development of healthy relationships for youth. Presenters also addressed issues youth face growing up in violent homes and its impact

on learning and development. In addition, the workshop included a discussion on how to support and encourage tolerance and diversity among young people.

Youth Speak Out: Incorporating Youth Development Practices into the Workforce Investment Act

Lee Reynolds, Jena Vincent-Sorbie and Youth Speakers

This workshop provided a brief overview of youth services under the Workforce Investment Act. In addition, presentations were made by two New England programs: Progressive Training Associates, Inc. from Bridgeport, CT and Jobs for New Hampshire Graduates Out-of-School Youth program at Laconia, NH. Each program discussed how youth development ideology has been incorporated into their system of serving youth. A youth from each program also spoke about how the programs have enriched their lives.

Best Practices in Public Health and Youth Development: Perspectives from the States

Sophie Godley

This workshop examined best practices in public health and youth development from several states. Youth development initiatives promoted and created through state public health agencies partnering with community members and programs were highlighted. Topics included how public health and youth development can be integrated, and how best practices from both fields can complement one another. Challenges in integration were also discussed, including the debates on assets-based data and risk-based data. Specific examples from states were shared, including a youth development approach to reporting on adolescent health and well-being.

Youth Civic Engagement, Youth Can Do It! Involving Young People in Organizing, Advocacy and Politics

Julie Kumble, Kreig Pinkham, David Scannell and Youth Speakers

Programs, organizations, communities, and cities across New England are recognizing the benefits of youth participation at all levels. Participants learned about the work taking place at Vermont's "Youth Advocacy Day," and "Community Dialogue Day"; Manchester, New Hampshire's Mayor's Youth Council; and Massachusetts' Holyoke Youth Commission. These projects involve youth in everything from creating and supporting policy initiatives, legislative lobbying, grant making, and more.

For Profit Lessons for the Youth Development World: Tools for Effective Communications with Young Adults

Nell Hurley

Drawing upon relevant case studies, workshop participants examined key strategies for reaching the young adult audience. This workshop discussed fundamental tactics used in the for-profit world that can be translated to non-profit organizations to allow participants to affect positive change among young people.

Preparing Youth for Responsible Fatherhood and Helping Young Fathers Meet the Needs of Their Children

Damen Harris and Mark Jimerson

Participants learned about the unique role dads play in a child's life and about how to support young fathers. Speakers provided tips on how to form and maintain peer support groups for young fathers and how to connect to fatherhood resources in your community.

Positive Youth Development and Preventing Teen Pregnancy

Milagros Gonzalez, Mabel Rodriguez and Youth Speakers

We've come a long way from using the health model alone to teach young girls about preventing pregnancy. The teen pregnancy prevention program in Waterbury, CT works with girls in middle school by using the Carrera model, a nationally recognized approach that emphasizes positive youth development as a prevention strategy. Waterbury's wide ranging curriculum emphasizes the value of career goals, self-esteem, friendship, abstinence, and drug/alcohol prevention. Participants heard from group leaders and girls who have successfully completed the program. Speakers presented lessons learned and tips on involving older girls in delivering a positive youth development curriculum.

Indicators of Positive Youth Development: Do We Know Where We Are Going...And How Will We Know We're on the Right Path?

Kate Flaherty, Jerry Mogul, David Murphey and Ken Town

Youth development is a life process, but there should be clear markers along the way to tell us how well teens are doing, and how well they are being supported by families and communities. Presenters examined asset-based and other models of desired outcomes for youth, types of indicators, how to use indicators in a community change process, and examples of how indicators are being measured and utilized at a state, city and neighborhood level. They also discussed how to utilize indicators at the program level.

Girl Power! Creating Empowerment Initiatives for Girls

Laura Ananian, Stephanie Brown, Cathy Duffy and Kari Whitney

Topics included risk factors and challenges girls confront today, and how risks can be averted through girls' empowerment initiatives. Workshop leaders discussed their model programs and shared tools to help participants create their own empowerment groups. Relevant research findings on the importance and impact of girls' empowerment initiatives were also discussed.

Positive Prevention: Integrating Youth Development and Prevention

Dr. Paula Duncan and Laurie Jo Wallace

Much of the funding for youth programs still comes from prevention dollars and many people who work with youth are focussed on prevention. Speakers discussed how traditional prevention programs are evolving to incorporate the youth development approach. They also shared information on integrating youth development outcomes into prevention programs, and engaged participants in skill-building activities and role-playing.

Leave No Child Behind

Michael Sentence

The *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 contains the most sweeping changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965. It changes the federal government's role in kindergarten-through-grade-12 education by asking America's schools to describe their success in terms of what each student accomplishes. The act contains the President's four basic education reform principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work. Participants discussed this important effort to improve the nation's schools, and shared ideas on how we can all work to ensure that all students are prepared for the future.

Appendix A
Conference Agenda

*The Administration for Children and Families
New England Regional Conference*

“Promoting Positive Youth Development”

September 4-5, 2002

Agenda

Wednesday, September 4th

Registration opens at 7:00 a.m.

- 8:00 - 9:00 *Continental Breakfast*
- 9:00 - 9:30 *Welcome and Opening Remarks*
Hugh Galligan, Administration for Children and Families
- 9:30 - 10:00 *“Positive Youth Development: Perspectives from the Federal Level”*
Stan Chappell, ACF Family and Youth Services Bureau
- 10:00 - 11:00 *Youth Panel: “Reflections on the National Summit and Moving Forward”*
Moderator: Frank Robinson, Partners for a Healthier Community
- 11:00 - 11:30 *Keynote Address*
Bradford Lewis, Corporation for National and Community Service
- 11:30 - 12:45 *Lunch (on your own)*
- 12:45 - 1:30 *“The State Role in Promoting Youth Development”*
Glenn Daly, Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Valerie LaMotte, Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
Cheryl Mitchell, Vermont Agency for Human Services
Moderator: Thomas MacLellan, National Governors Association
- 1:30 - 1:45 *Break*
- 1:45 - 3:15 *Workshop A (see workshop descriptions attached)*
- 3:15 – 3:30 *Break*
- 3:30 – 5:00 *Workshop B (see workshop descriptions attached)*
- 6:00 – 7:30 *Evening Reception*

Thursday, September 5th

Registration opens at 7:00 a.m.

- 7:45 – 8:45 *Continental Breakfast*
- 8:45 - 9:00 *Welcome and Opening Remarks*
Brian Cresta, Secretary's Regional Representative, HHS
- 9:00 – 9:45 *“Building Bridges: Head Start and Positive Youth Development”*
Savoui Graham, ABCD Bridgeport
Rob Waldron, Jumpstart for Young Children
Debra Gass, Franklin Community Action Corporation
Moderator: Dee Bertozzi, MA Executive Office of Health & Human Services
- 9:45 – 10:30 *“Findings From the National Academy of Sciences: What Makes a Good Development Program?”*
Chris Ashford, Academy of Educational Development
- 10:30 – 10:45 *Break*
- 10:45 – 12:15 *Workshop C (see workshop descriptions attached)*
- 12:15 - 1:30 *Luncheon*
Sponsored by the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council

“Working Together for Youth - Federal, State, and Community Partnerships”
Introduction: Daniel M. Shannon, MA Developmental Disabilities Council
Keynote: Robert P. Gittens, MA Executive Office of Health & Human Services
- 1:30 – 2:30 *“Pushing the Youth Development Envelope”*
Henry M. Thomas, III, Urban League of Springfield
Brad Lewis, Corporation for National and Community Service
Najma Nazy'at, Youth Services Consultant
Moderator: Thomas MacLellan, National Governors Association
- 2:30 – 3:30 *Closing Remarks and Celebration of Youth*

Appendix B

Workshop Speaker Biographies

Workshop Speakers

Laura Ananian

Laura Ananian is the Coordinator of the Youth Outreach Program at Help for Abused Women and their Children (HAWC). Prior to joining HAWC in 1999, Laura received her Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Assumption College in Worcester while working as an intern and employee for the Women's Crisis Center of Greater Newburyport.

Judith Andrews

Judith Andrews is an Associate Education Consultant with the Connecticut State Department of Education where her major responsibilities include promoting and developing structured work based learning opportunities for all students, strengthening the role of school counselors in age-appropriate career development activities K-12, and facilitating a greater understanding of the importance of both work-based learning and career development for all learners, regardless of school or program, through the vehicle of state-level collaborative professional development activities. With a career background in school to work and workforce development for disadvantaged adults and youth, Ms. Andrews also serves as Regional Liaison to the Greater New Haven Jobs Corps Center and the Youth Council of the Greater New Haven Workforce Investment Board, established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Judith is a founding member of the State Youth Safety Training Team comprised of volunteers from the Connecticut State Departments of Labor, Education and Health.

Moacir Barbosa

Moacir Barbosa is the Project Coordinator of the Boston BEST Initiative of The Medical Foundation, an endeavor to design and implement a professional development program for youth workers in the city of Boston. He is an expert in the youth development approach. Previously, Mo worked for the Department of Human Services in Cambridge as a youth worker, a supervisor, and lastly as director of the Area 4 Youth Center. Most recently he was the programming coordinator of the Fellowship Center in St. Louis. Mo is also a staff consultant with Creating Meaningful Change, a consulting group that focuses on diversity, leadership and organization development. Mo is a native of Cape Verde Islands who grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts and graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo.

Jesse Bell

Jesse Bell, 21 years old, lives in Edmunds, Maine. Since graduating from Washington Academy in 1999 he works alongside his extended family on his family farm. He likes to visit auto salvage yards and owns a 1953 Studebaker pickup that he is restoring. One of Jesse's favorite places is Owl's Head Transportation Museum. Jesse is a member of the Youth Educators and Advocators of Maine (YEA ME!) advisory council to the Children With Special Health Needs Program, has presented at Maine Family Weekend and the Maine Youth Talking to Youth Teen conference, and has attended a national conference on autism in Washington D.C.

Kendall Clawson

Kendall Clawson, the Director of BEST, has been in the field of Human Services since 1987. Her initial work began as a student at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she studied Politics and worked at an organization that served people living with HIV and AIDS. After graduating and leaving Santa Cruz, she and three colleagues began the Rafiki (Swahili for "friend") Services Project in San Francisco. Rafiki provided practical and emotional support to African American people living with HIV/AIDS. After establishing Rafiki and building its Volunteer Training and Support Program for 3 1/2 years, she began working as a counselor for the Centers for Disease Control on an HIV risk behavior modification study that eventually developed into the commonly-known "client-centered counseling" model in HIV Counseling and Testing. After 3 years with the study and continued work with the African-American HIV/AIDS community, the overwhelming impact of AIDS on San Francisco began to erode her network of friends and colleagues. She decided, on a whim while on holiday in Hawaii, to return to San Francisco long enough to pack her life up and move to the Big Island of Hawaii. On the Big Island, she worked as an Epidemiology Specialist for the State of Hawaii, Department of Public Health doing all of the HIV Counseling and Testing for the island. Four years and a big case of "rock fever" later, she moved to Western Massachusetts and began parlaying her health background into the field of youth work. She worked in HIV Counseling and Testing and adolescent health education while enjoying her work with several youth groups before taking the position as Director of BEST.

Cathy Duffy

Cathy Duffy has over 20 years experience working with youth through her previous position as Program Director at the YWCA and as Executive Director at the Plains Community Center. Currently, Duffy is the CEO of Girls Inc. of New Hampshire, which is part of a national nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold. Girls Inc. of New Hampshire provides outreach, summer camp and after school programming to girls aged 6-18. Programming builds girls' capacity for confident and responsible adulthood, economic independence and personal fulfillment. During her six year tenure as CEO of Girls Inc. of New Hampshire, Duffy has lead the organization's growth from a small agency consisting of one after- school program serving 60 girls on a busy day to an agency that now serves youth ages birth to 18, in seven counties and 47 communities across the state. Duffy was instrumental in increasing the annual budget from \$380,000 to \$2.1 million and increasing the number of full time staff from 4 to 39. Cathy currently serves on Girls Incorporated National Board and the Mayor's Task Force on Youth in Nashua. She has served on the Board of Neighborhood Housing Services for Greater Nashua and as the Board President for Plus Time New Hampshire, the umbrella organization for childcare in New Hampshire.

Jill Dvareckas

Jill Dvareckas is a student at Nashua High School in Nashua, New Hampshire. She has been a volunteer for the New Hampshire Teen Institute for the last two years, and is a newly appointed youth member of the Board of Directors. Jill is also President of BOLD (Building Our Lives Drug-free), a community-based substance abuse prevention program.

Karin Elliot

Karin Elliott is the Associate Project Director for the Head Start-State Collaboration Project at the MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services, where she has worked for five years. Karin has experience in program management and administration, as well as in direct services working with youth, and with young children as a preschool teacher and play therapist. Karin holds a Masters in Education and a Masters in Social Work. She was involved in the initial pilot projects for the early care and education recruitment and retention projects.

Kate Flaherty

Kate Flaherty is an alcoholism and substance abuse counselor, trainer and educator, with a particular focus on family dynamics. Her previous experience includes fifteen years as educator and principal in elementary schools and 12 years as an adjunct lecturer at Boston College University.

Alison George

Alison George develops and delivers training for educational, medical and community audiences on the impact of domestic violence and strategies for intervention with the Women's Center of Rhode Island. Additionally, Alison is the former Director of the Safe Schools Institute at Youth Pride, Inc. and currently serves on the Board of the Rhode Island Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights and the Education Committee of the Rhode Island Commission on Women.

Debbie Gilmer

Debbie Gilmer is the Associate Director of the University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion, UCEDD. She is the co-project director of Maine's MCHB funded Healthy and Ready to Work initiative, Maine Works for Youth! She is the project director of a number of state and federally funded projects designed to influence systems change in the area of education reform, transition, employment and health care issues affecting individuals with disabilities. She is the surrogate parent of a 17 year old young man.

Sophie Godley

Sophie Godley has worked in public health and social services for nine years. Sophie attended the University of Washington School of Public Health and received a Master of Public Health with a focus on social and behavioral health. While in Washington State Sophie worked on a statewide teen pregnancy prevention evaluation and taught Health and Human Sexuality classes at Seattle Central Community College. Since 1999 Sophie has been working at the Department of Public Health, first with the Teen Challenge Fund, a teen pregnancy prevention program that works with a community coalition model. Currently at the Department Sophie directs the Office of Adolescent Health, managing the Teen Challenge Fund Programs, the Abstinence Education Media Campaign, the American College of Nurse Midwives-DPH Youth Project, and coordinating youth development and adolescent health initiatives throughout the Department. Sophie is

committed to working with young people on issues of health, and on the coordination of services to adolescents.

Milagros Gonzalez

Milagros Gonzalez earned an associate degree in Social Work from Naugatuck Valley Community College and graduated from Springfield College with a bachelor's degree in Human Services. She has been working at Waterbury Youth Services System, Inc. for two years as a Truancy Caseworker/Positive Youth Development Facilitator.

Linda M. Grant

Linda M. Grant, MD, MPH is a pediatrician, board-certified in Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine. She practices at Boston Medical Center and teaches pediatric residents and medical students. In addition, as the Medical Director for the Boston Public Schools, she supervises the school nurses and health programs in the Boston school system. Boston born, Dr. Grant received her MD from New York Medical College and completed a three-year residency at University of Connecticut Pediatric Program. She returned to Boston to obtain a Masters of Public Health degree from Harvard School Of Public Health and a fellowship in psychosomatic medicine at Boston Children's Hospital. This was followed by a Robert Wood Johnson fellowship in High Risk Youth at Boston City Hospital. In 1983 she joined the faculty of Boston University School Of Medicine where she is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics. Dr. Grant has a special interest in developing community medical linkages, which would address health issues both in the home and at school in a seamless, integrated model.

Michael Grant

Michael Grant is a thirty-year old self-made entrepreneur who was born and raised in Springfield, Massachusetts. Born to a nurse and a special equipment operator, Michael's musical career began as a choice between what a ten year old might perceive as the lesser of two evils. When his mother told him that he was either going to camp for the summer or learning to play an instrument, the torrid tales of a cousin's spider bite made the choice easy. He would study music. Not long after Michael was introduced to computers, and his resulting fascination with these machines would mark his transition from accordions to synthesizers, and bridge his love for music with his love for computers. Co-founded with his partner Arianna Wilson, Generating Tomorrow's Future Today, Inc. was Michael's brainchild and runs today with the participation of 40 youth associates. GTFT has also gained much regional exposure and recognition for its groundbreaking concepts of youth development. Today, Michael's days juggle studio time, youth training, with the responsibilities of being a father to a 10 year old daughter. And though he has long since put down the accordion, Michael Grant is still reaching for his musical goals.

D. Roland Harmon

D. Roland Harmon, Regional Program Director at Progressive Training Associates (PTA), Inc. is a Bridgeport native Human Service and Human Resource Development Professional with over 14 years of experience in the field, particularly in working with youth and young adults. Roland draws upon a diverse work history from commercial banking, teaching, academic internships, and leadership experience in faith-based

organizations. He has fostered the path of comprehensive integrated training, education, and development services at PTA, Inc. for at-risk youth and their families. As a visionary of the organization, Roland's expertise lies in training design, advocacy, administration and empowerment of disenfranchised individuals.

Damon Harris

Damon Harris is the program coordinator for the Young Fathers Program at the Urban League of Rhode Island. From 1998-2001 he was a parent consultant for the Rhode Island Department of Health, Adolescent and Young Adult Unit. In 2000, he began working as a case manager for the Young Fathers Program before taking his current position. Damon was a single father at the age of 20, has had custody of his oldest son Damon since the child was four months old, and credits his son as "my motivation for serving fathers in my community". Damon received his Associates Degree in Marketing from Johnson and Wales University, and will receive his bachelors in public relations from Johnson and Wales this December.

Edward B. Harris

Edward has been employed in the United States Department of Justice since 2000. He serves as a Conciliation Specialist with The Community Relations Services. His duties include responding to cases, to help contribute expertise and guidance on methods of mediation, conflict resolutions and conciliation practices, that are based on racial tensions and conflicts. Before joining DOJ, Edward was the Director and co-founder of The Streetworkers Program, a youth advocacy and streetworker program ranked as one of the top three violence prevention programs in the nation. His expertise is in the area of counseling and intervention, mediation, community organizing and conflict resolution. Edward has helped to establish collaborative programs on crisis intervention and management, and problem solving.

Roy V. Hill, II

Roy V. Hill, II is a principal architect of the Faith & Youth Development for the Future (FYDF) program at Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington, VT. His professional career includes: In-take Manager, Spectrum; Case Manager, Spectrum; over 25 years of administrative and program management in education (Dartmouth, Brown, Washington University, & the University of Vermont); and paper presentations (C.A.S.E., M.I.T., & The Black Philanthropy Association). He is a Member of the Board of Directors for the Vermont Ecumenical Council (Statewide); and he is the Founder/Host of a weekly religious television program, "THE WORD." His formal training includes: Bachelors from Talladega College; Masters from Washington University; and a Three-year Degree from the Vermont Academy for Spiritual Training (V.A.S.T.). He is reachable at (802) 660-8560 Ext. 108.

Scott Hunter

Scott has been employed by the Alliance for Community Supports for the past four years working with the Project RENEW program. He has a history working with youth in diverse settings and has experience with most of the support systems serving youth in New Hampshire. Scott is committed to working with youth in communities utilizing the

natural supports found in youths' environments.

Cindy Hurley

Cynthia Hurley is the Early Head Start Specialist with Holyoke•Chicopee•Springfield Head Start, Inc. Cindy has been with HCS Head Start for 4 years, beginning with HCS as a teacher in a preschool classroom, and has been in her current position for two years. Cindy holds a masters degree in counseling psychology but received her Bachelors degree in Early Childhood and Psychology. Cindy began working with the Tomorrows Teachers program in the fall of 2001 during its start up.

Nell Hurley

Nell Hurley is an account executive for the Events & Marketing Services division of 360 Youth, an Alloy Inc. company. 360 Youth is a media network focused on the young adult demographic and the Events & Marketing Services division creates and executes marketing programs for consumer brands targeting that market. Nell has developed and executed effective campaigns for clients such as AT&T, Davidoff Cool Water, JanSport, Maybelline and Monster.com. Nell graduated from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor with a concentration in Sociology. Prior to that, she was a corps member for City Year Boston, an Americorps program.

Patty Jalbert

Patricia Jalbert is the Training Specialist with Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc. Patti's history working with youth includes Counselor in Training Director at several summer resident camps, leading youth groups in Scouting and in association with the YMCA of Greater Springfield. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education and has taught in area preschools and Daycare facilities. Patti has been working as a Trainer and Professional Development specialist for the past seven years.

Mark Jimerson

Mark Jimerson, LICSW, is the Director of the Holyoke Healthy Families program at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC). He has run groups for fathers and currently oversees group and home visiting services for young fathers in the Holyoke, Massachusetts area. Mark is a father and is the recipient of a Supporting Fathering Award from the 2002 New England Fathering Conference.

Sophia Kim

Sophia Kim is very involved in the Asian American community through her work as the Coordinator of the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY), a youth-run organization which works toward the leadership development and empowerment of Asian American high school students. She is also on several volunteer boards of other non-profit Asian American organizations. Her goals involve bringing out the voice of the Asian American community, working with young people, and being an activist around social justice issues and causes. She believes strongly in the agency of people and the community in effecting social change in our society.

Julie Kumble

Julie Kumble, M.Ed, is the director of the Holyoke Youth Task Force, a coalition of over 40 youth organizations, schools and city officials that is based in the Planning Department of City Hall. She also is an adult advisor of the Holyoke Youth Commission. Ms. Kumble has been a community organizer for 18 years, both internationally and in the U.S. She holds a Masters degree in Organizational Development, specializing in inter-organizational partnerships.

Lori Lobenstine

Lori Lobenstine has been doing community organizing and youth work since she was about four, with the ironic exception of her teen years when all she thought about was basketball. She has worked in settings ranging from youth centers to classrooms and museums, and is now the Director of Teen Programs at Girl's Incorporated in Holyoke, Massachusetts. She stays in the field because no one makes her learn or laugh as much as the teens she works with (with the possible exception of her dog, Herschel).

Mike Ma

Mike Ma has just graduated from Newton North High School and will be entering as a first-year at UCLA in the fall.

Janet May

Janet May is the Project Coordinator of Maine Works for Youth! at the University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion, UCEDD. She has directed a regional transition coordination effort in Maine, supported youth leadership efforts and has collaborated to create and support systems change in the area of adolescent transition for many years.

Ruan McManus

Ruan McManus is a graduate of South High Community School in Worcester. Her career objective is to become a country western singer. To that end, she has used flexible funding, personal resources, and has even written a TASH mini-grant to pay for voice and keyboarding lessons and to audited Fundamentals of Music at Quinsigamond Community College. She has seen her favorite group, Diamond Rio, on stage and has visited Nashville where she homes to live in the future.

Chris Miara

Chris Miara works at the Education Development Center (EDC), a non-profit institution located in Newton, Massachusetts. At EDC, she directs the OSHA-funded National Young Worker Safety Resource Center, providing occupational health and safety training and resources to help state agencies, schools, and employers prepare youth for the workplace.

Jerry Mogul

Jerry Mogul has worked in municipal government, the non-profit sector and as a consultant for nearly 25 years in Boston (1989-present) and in Springfield, Massachusetts (1978-88) as a health and human services planner/manager. He is currently the director for research and policy in the Boston Centers for Youth and Families and is overseeing

its Citywide Strategy for Youth Development (CSYD). The CSYD is an interdepartmental effort to improve youth outcomes in Boston through improved planning, coordination and learning opportunities. CSYD activities have included original research through annual youth surveys, a status report on youth and youth services, academic-community-youth symposia, a monthly newsletter, program development, and a community-wide public education campaign, called *Finding the Time*, to support communication between parents/guardians and their teens.

David Murphey

David Murphey is Senior Policy Analyst in the Planning Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services. He holds a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, and a Master's degree in Education, both from the University of Michigan. His professional interests led to work in early childhood education, child development and social policy, and lifespan development. Moving to Vermont in 1992, Dr. Murphey worked for the Department of Health before coming to his present position with the Agency. At the Agency Dr. Murphey is responsible for managing the collection and reporting on social indicators statewide, and for preparing Vermont's *Community Profiles*—local reports on social indicators for the state's 60 school districts. He has also coordinated production of the Agency's *What Works* publications, summaries of effective prevention practices. In addition, Dr. Murphey provides data support, analysis, and technical assistance to the Office of the Secretary of the Agency, and to a variety of community partners.

Carmen Nieves

Carmen Nieves is Community Educator of Womanshelter/Compañeras and in this capacity heads the Outreach Department. A graduate of Western New England College, Ms. Nieves has more than ten years experience educating the community about domestic violence and teen dating violence. As community educator, Ms. Nieves is responsible for comprehensive community education and outreach programs, including trainings to police departments, hospitals, mental health agencies, and community organizations. Her work in the area of teen dating violence has won her the title of Master Trainer for the MA Department of Education, and she is regularly called upon by schools representing thirteen districts as a consultant for teen dating violence policy design and program implementation. As a bilingual educator, Ms. Nieves has been instrumental in designing linguistically and culturally appropriate services for the Spanish-speaking population.

Maria Noyes

Maria Noyes is a 17 year old high school senior who lives in Levant, Maine. She works part-time at McDonald's during the school year and is a camp counselor at Pine Tree Camp during the summer. Maria is an active member of the Youth Educators and Advocators of Maine (YEA ME!) advisory council to the Children With Special Health Needs Program in Maine and has presented YouthSpeak at various conferences around the state.

Alexandra Oliver-Dávila

Alexandra Oliver-Dávila is the Executive Director of Sociedad Latina, a Latino Youth agency located in the heart of Mission Hill. Alexandra has been working in the field of

youth development in Boston for over ten years. Her previous experience as a community organizer has provided her with various strategies for bringing parents to the table and maintaining their participation. She has used this experience in her work at Sociedad Latina creating and sustaining a successful parent support group and leadership development initiative, LILAAC, “Latinos In Leadership Action And Change”. LILAAC works with Latino parents to increase their involvement in the academic lives of their children.

Beatriz Pazos

Beatriz Pazos has a Master of Public Health from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. She has been the project coordinator for the *Teens at Work Injury Prevention Project* at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Surveillance Program since August 2001.

Treena Peltier

Treena came to BEST about two years ago. She attended the 28-hour core training simply by accident and everything is completely different because of it. Shortly after being trained as a facilitator in the fall of 2000, she began working as the training coordinator with BEST on a part time basis. It didn't take long for her to realize that the work that needed to be done was exactly what she loved to do. She made the leap and decided to leave her previous position to work with BEST full time. That was over a year and a half ago! Since then, many things have changed for BEST as well as for Treena and she is enjoying every minute of it.

Jennifer Pierce-Weeks

Jennifer Pierce-Weeks is a Registered Nurse and Health Care Specialist at the NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. She has fifteen years clinical nursing experience, primarily in the Emergency Department, and is an educator and expert in the areas of child and adult sexual assault, as well as domestic violence, is a contributing author for several Attorney General protocols in New Hampshire, and is published in the *Journal of Emergency Nursing*.

Kreig Pinkham

Kreig Pinkham is the Coordinator of the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs (VCRHYP), an 11 member coalition of community-based youth service organizations. VCRHYP members act as the primary assistance for runaway and homeless youths in Vermont offering shelter, counseling, advocacy and other supports. Kreig's work often involves consulting on youth issues and helping youths learn how to advocate for themselves in public policy.

Liz Pomeroy

Liz Pomeroy has partnered with youth and family members, in multiple disciplines, in person centered, systems change initiatives since 1992. She is a Coordinator for CARE NH and a Wraparound Facilitator in the rural North Country of New Hampshire and has been in this position for two years. Through Community Collaboration, Liz is currently partnering to build and enhance systems of care for at risk youth and their families.

Previously she worked in New York as the Assistant Director of an adolescent transition home and as a Coordinator of a vocational rehabilitation program for individuals who experience dual diagnosis. In these two areas, she developed, in partnership with youth residents, an Independent Living Skills Program and assisted in the implementation of person centered planning, systems wide. Liz graduated from Ithaca College with a BA in Psychology and Social Work, with a concentration in Delinquent studies and Nutrition. She enjoys sharing any outdoor activities with her dog Maddi and currently spends most of her free time on home renovations.

T. Lee Reynolds

Ms. Reynolds graduated from SUNY Potsdam with a degree in English and Political Science. She became an Americorps Volunteer with the Rochester Center for Independent Living working as a case manager for youth with disabilities. She volunteered a second year with Americorps in Savannah, GA building houses for Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Reynolds joined the Peace Corps in 1997 for one tour as a volunteer teaching English to doctors and medical personnel in Turkmenistan. After returning from the Peace Corps in 2000, she started to work for the Department of Labor/ Employment and Training Administration as a Workforce Development Specialist in the Office of Youth Services where she is currently employed.

Mabel Rodriguez

Mabel Rodriguez earned a degree in liberal arts and sciences from Mattatuck Community College. She will be attending Springfield College in 2003 to work on her bachelor's degree in Human Services. Ms. Rodriguez has worked at Waterbury Youth Services System, Inc. for four years as a Caseworker/Positive Youth Development Facilitator.

Shara Ross

Shara Ross is seventeen years old and she lives in rural Sanbornton, NH with her family. Shara was home schooled her entire life prior to entering into the Out-of-School Youth Program. She received her GED in December of 2001 and recently enrolled full time at New Hampshire Community Technical College, Laconia campus, in the Liberal Arts Program. Shara plans on obtaining a Paralegal Degree and transferring to University of New Hampshire for Equine Studies. She currently has two part-time jobs, one at a horse farm where she is gaining valuable experience.

Tym Rourke

Tym Rourke has a Master's in Expressive Therapy from Lesley University, and has been working in the field of prevention and youth development for 15 years in a number of capacities. He is presently the Director of Programs for the New Hampshire Teen Institute, a statewide Substance Abuse Prevention and Education Agency.

David Scannell

David Scannell serves as assistant to the mayor of Manchester, New Hampshire and is the facilitator of the Mayor's Youth Council. A graduate of Colby College and the University of Maine School of Law, Scannell is a former middle and high school teacher and administrator.

Michael Sentance

Michael Sentance has worked on education policy issues for more than twenty years. Over the past decade, he served as the chief education advisor to both Governors Weld and Cellucci in various capacities. In 1991, he was appointed as the Undersecretary of Education for Policy & Planning that was followed by his appointment to serve as the Secretary of Education in 1995. When the office was abolished by the legislature in 1996, Sentance joined the Governor's staff with the formal designation as the Senior Education Advisor to the Governor. In these roles, Sentance developed many of the Weld-Cellucci Administration's education policies from early-childhood to workforce development. He wrote the first draft of the Education Reform Act in 1992, and authored several revisions to law involving school finance, the recruitment of teachers, school safety and school accountability. Sentance chaired commissions on school finance and regulatory relief, and served on other boards and commissions including the Board of Education, the Board of Higher Education, the Executive Committee for the Massachusetts School-to-Work initiative, the Governor's Commission on School Finance, the Governor's Commission on School Safety as well as the Education Commission of the States. He was appointed by President George W. Bush to his present post as the Secretary's Regional Representative in October 2001. Sentance holds degrees from Georgetown University, Duquesne University and Boston University.

Kim Stevens

Kim Stevens M.Ed., LSW is Program Director of Education and Training for the Massachusetts Families for Kids (MFFK) program of Children's Services of Roxbury, Inc. She has been with MFFK since 1996, working closely with legislators, professionals, youth and families affected by adoption, kinship and foster care issues on educational, advocacy and public awareness events. As Program Director, Kim is responsible for the Speak Out Team as well as developing and facilitating training seminars including Parent leadership and Advocacy, Parent Liaison Training, Issues Race and Culture in Adoption and Speak Out Team Development. Kim is president of the North American Council on Adoptable Children Board of Directors and also serves on the board of AFC Mentoring. Additional experience includes 10 years as a MAPP trainer and two years as a school-based counselor/adjustment. She has hands-on experience as the mother of six children, four of whom were adopted out of the foster care system.

Deborah Stewart

Deborah Stewart is Project Director of the Youth Development Training and Resource Center (YDTRC) located at The Consultation Center in New Haven, and Project Manager for Connecticut for Community Youth Development (CCYD). A trainer, consultant, and advocate for many years in education and youth work, Deborah is a leader in youth development efforts on the local and state levels. YDTRC's role as one of 15 national B.E.S.T. sites (Building Exemplary Systems of Training, funded by the Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund) has brought Deborah national level contact with other leaders in youth development. Deborah's work in YDTRC and CCYD has led to implementation of training for hundreds of youth workers, technical assistance to youth-serving agencies, and the development of a growing network of youth workers, agencies, policy makers, and funders concerned with youth development.

Kyle St. Germain

Kyle St. Germain discovered her passion for youth work in high school through her involvement in an active and formative church fellowship experience. She started volunteering as a church youth advisor fifteen years ago when her first child was born, hoping to gain some insight on raising teens. She soon learned that her heart connected with adolescents and this was the work to which she was called. Kyle is now the youth director at Wilbraham United Church working with middle and senior high youth. She serves on the Middle School Council, facilitates an advisory board of middle school students, and often volunteers too much. She loves spending time with her teenage son and daughter (yes, loves!), and appreciates that many young people find her fun and interesting, even when her own children do not! She enjoys camping, singing, laughing, and meeting new people. Kyle hopes always to interact with youth in ways that provide opportunities for spiritual, developmental, relational and communal growth (both theirs and hers!)

Ken Town

Ken Town is an Evaluation Coordinator at the Institute for Public Sector Innovation of the University of Southern Maine. His main responsibilities have been to help Maine's Bureau of Child and Family Services to develop improved information on the outcomes of its work, and to coordinate annual production of Maine Marks, the State's set of social indicators for tracking the well-being of Maine's children, families and communities. He has done needs analyses, surveys, focus groups, evaluations and outcomes measurement training for many United Ways, nonprofits and government agencies, as well as identifying programs and practices that have been demonstrably effective in human services programming.

Jena Vincent-Sorbie

Jena Vincent-Sorbie is currently a Youth Specialist/Program Developer with Jobs for New Hampshire Graduates Out-of-School Youth Program at New Hampshire Community Technical College in Laconia, NH. She has been with JNHG for five years, previously at West High School in Manchester, NH, for two years, as an In-School Youth Program Specialist. Prior to JNHG, she worked for a social services agency developing career based programs with University of New Hampshire and teaching the program in area Lakes Region high schools as well as providing case management services to at-risk youth. Jena has a Masters Degree in Education in the field of Counseling Psychology. She lives with her husband and son in Northfield, NH.

Laurie Jo Wallace

In her position as the Director of the Medical Foundations' new division, Health Training Innovations, Ms. Wallace has spent the last 13 years promoting healthy communities in Boston. She has special expertise in the areas of youth development, as a provider of training and support to numerous programs, coalitions, and youth serving agencies in the Boston region, Massachusetts and nationally. She is also the Director of the national BEST Initiative in Boston, a professional development program of support and training for youth workers focussing on the youth development approach. She has contributed to and written youth development and peer leadership curricula and facilitated strategic planning and organizational development initiatives for a variety of youth and other

community groups. She particularly has expertise in peer leadership program development, youth/adult collaboration, conflict resolution and alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention. Her career in youth development and public health promotion follows a 10-year career teaching high school English, French and organizing student activities.

Kari Whitney

Kari Whitney is a youth outreach worker at Help for Abused Women and their Children (HAWC). Prior to her work with HAWC, Kari was an active board member for the Boston Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and a part time pre-school teacher at a parent cooperative in Brookline, MA.

Melanie Wilson

Melanie Wilson, MSW, is director of research and public policy at the New England Network for Child, Youth & Family Services. Her previous studies include "A Different Kind of Smart: A Study of Educational Obstacle Confronting Homeless Youth in New England, " and " ' The Stress of the World': A Report on Young Fathers in Massachusetts."

Cynthia Zafft

Cynthia Zafft is a postsecondary education specialist at the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts. Cynthia just completed a demonstration project funded by the U.S Department of Education which connected high school students, age 18-22, with their local college campus. Employment outcomes for students participating in the project show that postsecondary education leads to competitive employment for students with cognitive disabilities.