

Spotlight on Volunteers



2009 Annual Report
Department of Social Services
Dutchess County





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Commissioner's Advisory Council

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Mid-Hudson Valley

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Community Member

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Adelphi University

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The Children's Home
of Poughkeepsie

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Brian Riddell
Dutchess Outreach

Kathleen Mannix
Legal Services of the
Hudson Valley

Jeanne Wagner
Child Care Council
of Dutchess County

Gail Webster
Hudson River Housing, Inc.

Sharone Wellington-Deanda
Marist College

The Mission of DSS

"To meet the needs of Dutchess County's dependent population as provided by NYS Social Services Law in a courteous, fair and efficient manner with the aim of restoring each beneficiary to maximum independence."



Dutchess County Legislature

Family/Human Services Committee

Barbara Jeter-Jackson
Chairman

Alison MacAvery
Vice-Chairman

Angela Flesland

Suzanne Horn

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A Message From County Executive William R. Steinhaus

Making an impact. The ability to positively impact someone else's life is what so many of us strive for. Making a positive impact on thousands of peoples' lives is exactly what Dutchess County Department of Social Services (DSS) employees do each and every day.



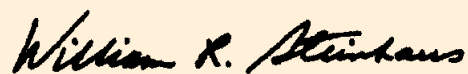
William R. Steinhaus

The ripple effect of the weak national economy continues to be felt widely throughout our community. This is clearly evident in the continuing increase in demand for services provided through DSS. Thousands of new applications continue to be received each month. Increasing caseload applications for programs such as Food Stamps or the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) have challenged DSS employees. When you look at the full range of services provided by DSS, it becomes startling to realize that nearly one in every five people who live in Dutchess County is served by DSS each month.

DSS employees strive to assist working families every day with employment services, day care assistance, training and transportation needs. They provide the supportive services that help working families survive and prosper. DSS work with Medicaid recipients to ensure pre-natal care coverage, nursing home assistance and managed health care coverage. DSS employees help to protect those who are unable to protect themselves with adult and child protective services and assist more than 10,000 children in our community with child support collections.

Their commitment to our community does not end with conclusion of the work day. DSS employees go above and beyond, supporting our community with countless hours of volunteering through fundraising, coaching, mentoring and other vital community needs.

The impact of DSS employees is positive and far reaching. Thank you to Commissioner Robert Allers, the entire team at DSS and all its partners for all that you do for our Dutchess County community.



William R. Steinhaus
County Executive



A Message From Commissioner Robert B. Allers

To say that providing needed services to the residents of Dutchess County was a daunting task in 2009 would be an understatement. By December we were registering over 2,400 new applications a month. In 2009 our Medicaid caseload had increased almost 2,000 cases. The Food Stamp caseload had increased by almost 3,000 cases and high percentage increases for HEAP and emergency assistance also followed.



Robert B. Allers

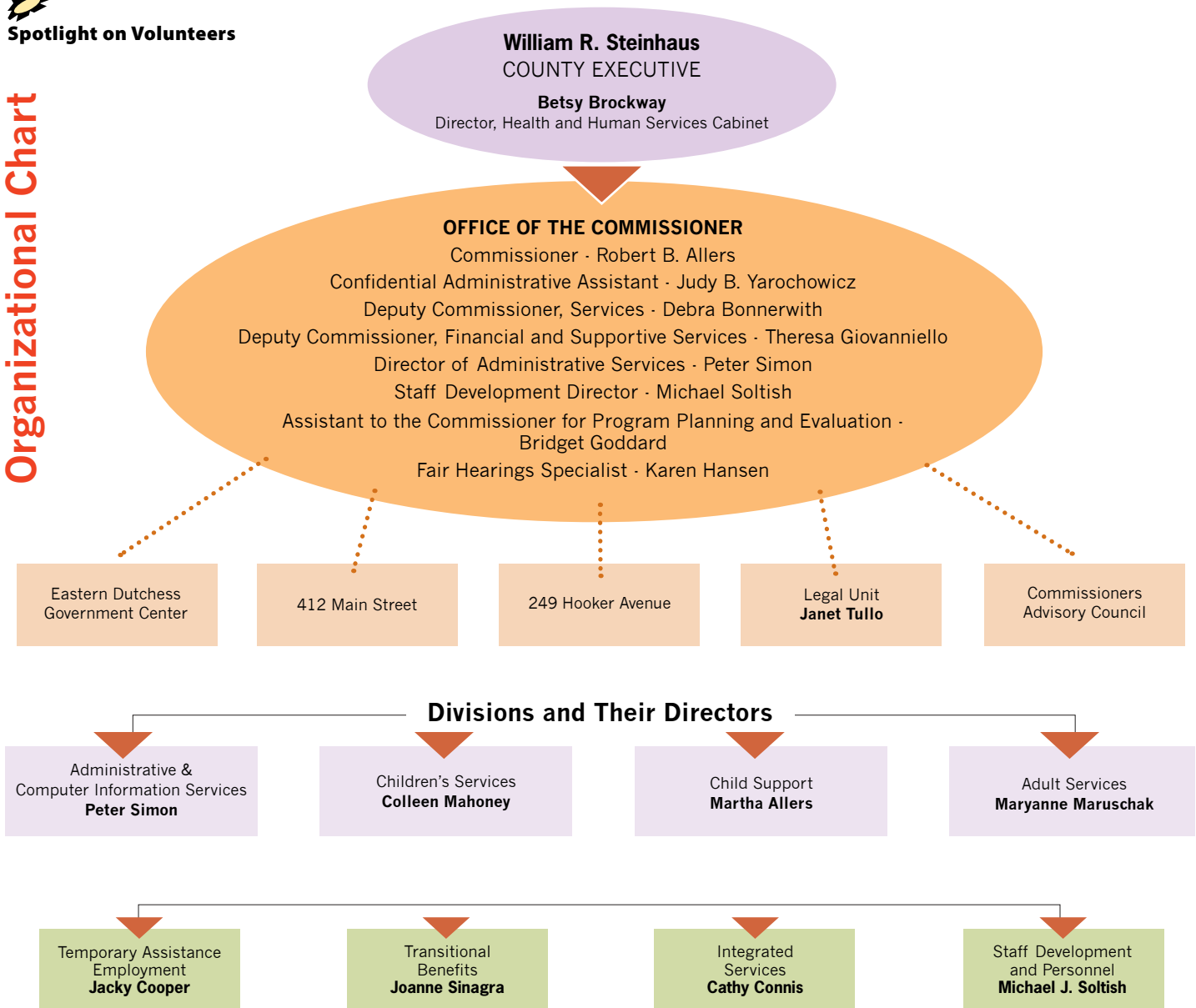
We had 6,000 families that had never applied for assistance in 2009 visit our department. We authorized \$2 million in Food Stamps each month. Almost \$3 million a month was collected in child support and Medicaid authorizations approached \$1 million a day. While the economy stole the spotlight, workers kept busy maintaining child and adult safety; working with the homeless and helping persons find jobs through a new program with Workforce Investment Board and the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce. We couldn't have accomplished all we did in 2009 without the help of our partners and our dedicated staff.

In addition we will highlight in this report our staff that does not stop giving to the community after work. Only those of us who work here know and are continually amazed and pleased by the "extra" volunteering, gift trees, raffles and events done by the staff at Dutchess County Department of Social Services.

Thank you for taking the time to read our 2009 Annual Report entitled "Spotlight on Volunteers". Feel free to enjoy, learn and comment.



Robert B. Allers
Commissioner of Dutchess County Social Services



Goals and Objectives of Dutchess County Social Services

- I. Provide assistance to eligible individuals and families while assisting clients to achieve their full potential.
 - A. Conduct thorough eligibility investigations;
 - B. Apply rules, regulations and local policies objectively, consistently and uniformly;
 - C. Provide clients with all of the benefits to which they are entitled;
- II. Develop and make available to families and individuals, services that will strengthen the family unit, encourage stability in living arrangements, and provide for specialized care.
 - D. Work cooperatively, as divisions, to meet the separate needs of clients while preserving the integrity of each individual; and
 - E. Maintain professional standards in all contacts.
- III. Provide protective services to children and adults at risk.
- IV. Provide adequate information to the general public regarding our programs and services and maintain adequate knowledge of community services to act as a referral source.

Top Medicaid Vendors in the County

Medicaid payments to local business in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier. Payments in 2009 include:

Taconic DDSO	\$19,763,653
MVP	\$17,390,637
Hudson Health Plan	\$16,675,052
Vassar Brothers Hospital...	\$13,646,296
St. Francis Hospital	\$12,075,923
NYSARC	\$9,907,338
Wingate	\$9,427,153
Rehab Programs	\$9,187,651
ELANT	\$9,116,311
Dept. of Mental Health	\$8,961,940
Greystone.....	\$7,275,779
Lutheran Center	\$7,148,927
Wellcare	\$6,858,081
New Horizons	\$6,324,243

Top Non-Medicaid Vendors in the County

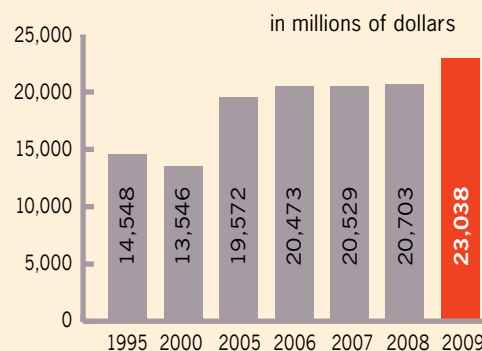
Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$4,718,653
Astor Services Children & Families	\$3,194,963
Central Hudson	\$2,406,115
Hudson River Lodging	\$2,131,252
LaSalle School.....	\$2,017,032
Abbott House	\$1,484,847
St. Anne's Institute	\$1,349,866
Family Services, Inc.....	\$1,159,919
DC Probation.....	\$849,608
Dutchess Community Action Partnership	\$815,071

Active Cases by ZIP Code

Amenia	227
Annandale	2
Bangall	0
Barrytown.....	12
Beacon	2,927
Billings	4
Castle Point	2
Chelsea	19
Clinton Corners.....	172
Dover Plains	705
Fishkill	914
Glenham	35
Holmes	142
Hopewell Junction.....	1,107
Hughsonville	23
Hyde Park.....	1,510
Lagrangeville	345
Milan	39
Millbrook	397
Millerton	354
New Hamburg.....	18
Pawling.....	411
Pine Plains.....	297
Pleasant Valley	745
Poughkeepsie City.....	11,217
Town.....	3,563
Poughquag	315
Red Hook.....	654
Rhinebeck.....	830
Rhinecliff	32
Salt Point.....	207
Staatsburg.....	523
Stanfordville	238
Stormville	171
Tivoli	175
Verbank	72
Wappingers Falls.....	2,860
Wassaic	193
Wingdale.....	420
Out of County	958

DSS Caseload Snapshot

(Does not include Services or Child Support cases)



Active Individuals

Ages	Numbers
0-4	7,255
5-12	8,534
13-16	3,634
17-18	1,825
19-22.....	3,036
23-30.....	5,676
31-40.....	5,837
41-50	6,626
51-55	2,022
56-60	1,398
61-64.....	2,659
Over 65.....	6,936

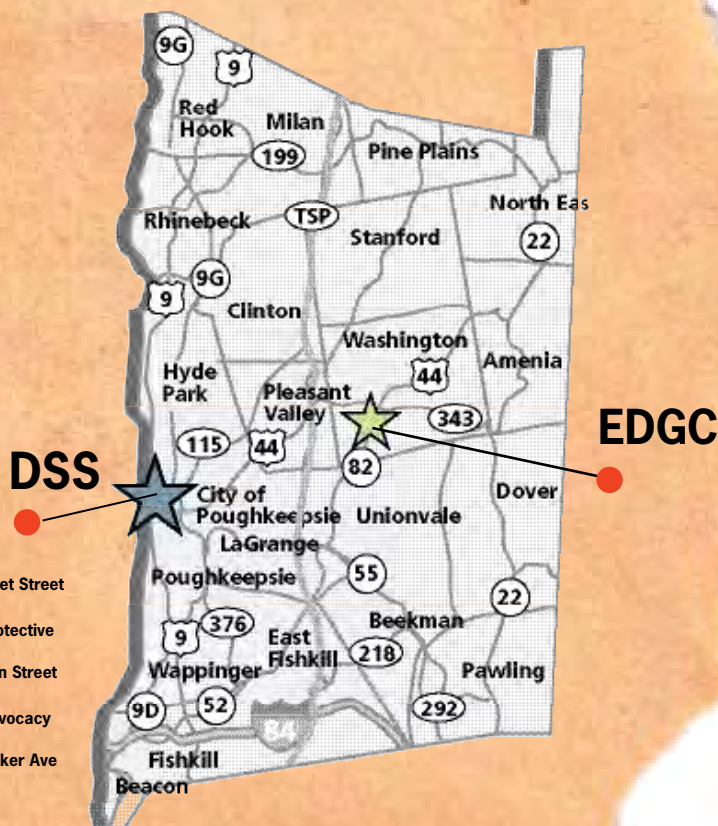
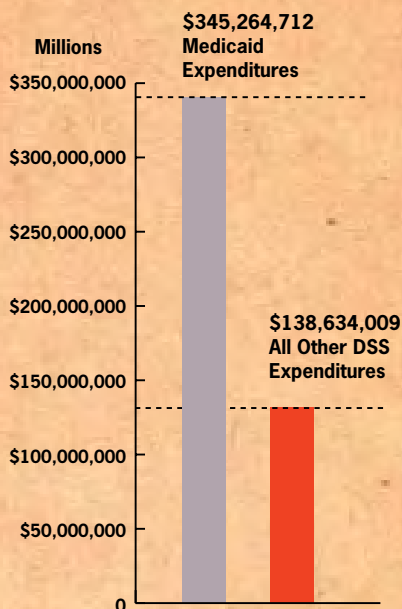
How lovely to think that no
one need wait a moment:
we can start now, start
slowly changing the world!
How lovely that everyone,
great and small,
can make a contribution
toward introducing justice
straight away.

—Anne Frank



DSS Employees

366

2009 Planned
Gross Expenditures

2009 Modified Budget

	Appropriations	Revenues
Administration (Salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$31,255,209	\$19,819,721
Non-secure Detention	\$1,523,000	\$708,050
Day Care	\$6,056,016	\$5,656,016
Services for Recipients	\$6,981,132	\$1,884,307
Medicaid – Local Payments	\$987,500	\$1,506,305
Medicaid – MMIS Payments	\$39,174,164	\$1,375,766
Family Assistance	\$9,460,684	\$9,982,457
Foster Care	\$27,484,028	\$18,016,499
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$296,800	\$396,200
State Training Schools	\$2,300,000	\$900
Safety Net	\$6,715,000	\$3,719,500
HEAP	\$848,754	\$890,754
Emergency Aid to Adults	\$125,000	\$66,000
Food Assistance	\$335,544	\$335,044
TOTAL	\$133,542,831	\$64,357,519

Active Cases as of 12.31.09

Food Stamps.....	8,463
HEAP	2,984
Medicaid.....	10,778
Medicaid SSI.....	4,835
Family Health Plus	1,518
Family Assistance.....	728
Safety Net Assistance.....	760
Services.....	1,733

*You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.*

— Winston Churchill

2009 Employee Generosity



Lisa Simpson (left) and Kimberly Flasz,
*Literacy Connections Community Spelling Bee**

In 2009 members of each DSS unit were involved in volunteering and raising funds for various community and national organizations. Below are some examples of how they engaged in community service.

Adult Services and Reception were involved in a spelling bee for **Literacy Connections**. Others walked for the **March of Dimes**. During the Christmas season, **Angel Tags** were distributed for the **Salvation Army**.

The Accounting Unit had a bake sale/luncheon to raise funds for the Adopt-A-Family Program, which helps to provide needed essentials to our most vulnerable families. A total of \$550 was raised to adopt a family (a single mother with four children) during the holiday season.



Christmas Angel Tags
*Salvation Army**

Special Investigations Unit adopted three families at Christmas time.

Accounting staff adopted a family consisting of a single mother and her four children under the age of seven. They held a bake sale and luncheon which raised \$550.

Computer Information System staff adopted a family during the holiday season.

Ted Starzyk from the Staff Development/Personnel Unit once again was the chairperson for several of the department's charitable events. Ted reports the following DSS donations in 2009: Department staff contributed \$10,047 to the **United Way** campaign; \$790 to the **American Cancer Society** through daffodil sales; and he sold 40 bunches of anemones for the **Mental Health Association**, which provided a contribution of \$420.

Spelling Bee Team Success! Congratulations to **Kimberly Flasz** (Reception) and **Lisa Simpson** (Adult Services) for competing against a total of 64 teams of spellers and making it to the final round's second elimination in the **Literacy Connections' Community Spelling Bee!** This event took place on March 18 at Marist College. Kimberly and Lisa together raised the sponsorship



Jessie Normil, Sheri Francis, Robin West and Monique Brennan
*March of Dimes**

fee of \$275, which will go towards promoting literacy programs for adults and children in our community.

The **DSS CROP Walk** team raised \$681 of the \$53,000 total raised this year for hunger relief projects locally, nationally, and internationally. Three local agencies which receive funds from the **CROP Walk** are **Dutchess Outreach**, **Beulah Baptist Soup Kitchen** and the **Community Action Partnership**.



Jeannine Guerra (left) and Jackie Tortora,
*Cereal Counts Food Drive**

DSS collected 76 boxes of cereal for the **"Cereal Counts"** drive to help our community food pantries get breakfast to those in need. **Jeannine Guerra** (MA) and **Jackie Tortora** (CIS) organized this collection and pick-up at our agency! **Jackie Tortora** (DSS), **Peggy Ringwood** (DC Sheriff's Office), and **Jeannine Guerra** (DSS) gathered up the breakfast products so they can be distributed to local charities.

The **DSS MATTERS** newsletter staff held a bake sale. Overall, they collected 40 canned items and \$205 for donation to the **DSS Elizabeth Ann Karlson Food Pantry**.

Workers at DSS handed out 250 sets of hats and gloves, which had "DC DSS" and "**US Census**" printed on them, to individuals in the reception area. The effort was based on a grant DSS received from the US Census to help spread the word about the importance of completing the 2010 census, while giving individuals some protection from the frigid

continued on page 13...

**Something that has always puzzled me
all my life is why, when I am in special
need of help, the good deed is usually done
by somebody on whom I have no claim.**

— William Feather

** Employee volunteer*

Employee of the Month Award Winners 2009

This is the 21st year that the Employee Recognition Committee has been handing out the Employee of the Month Award to employees nominated by their peers. On the first Thursday of every month, the Committee, made up of members from various units, meets to read over nominations and vote the following month's award recipient. Each recipient receives a DSS golf shirt and free parking behind the building for that month.



January

Peter Helion

(Adult and Family Services)

"Peter is respectful to his clients and co-workers."



February

Joan Howley

(Child Protective Services)

"Joan is always willing to help her co-workers with the computer or other needed information."



March

Isabel Fuentes

(File Room - Spanish Speaking)

"Isabel does her job in a caring, honest and compassionate way. She is most pleasant and kind with our clients and staff."



April

Janice Arico

(Special Investigations Unit)

"Janice is always cooperative and responsive to the special issues she deals with for our clients."
*Salvation Army Toy Drive**



May

Irene Quinlan

(Child Support Enforcement Unit)

"Irene always wears a smile and is courteous and extremely helpful to staff and clients."



June

Elizabeth Abongo

(Child Protective Services)

"Elizabeth is always very helpful. Even when she is overwhelmed with her own caseload, she makes time to help out new workers."



July

Kathy Molina

(Child Welfare Unit)

"Kathy is reliable and consistent. She is a hard worker and has great problem solving skills."



August

Aziz Fahmy

(Accounting)

"Aziz is a hard worker and is a kind and polite gentleman. He does his job with such pride and dedication."



September

Susan Prince

(Child Support Enforcement Unit)

"Susan is always helpful and uses her experience in the job to teach others."



October

Sharon Burt

(Child Support Enforcement Unit)

"Sharon has excellent customer service skills and her professionalism with non-custodial parents is refreshing."

*John Flowers Project and Father's Day Parade**



November

Caroline VanTassell

(Administration)

"Caroline is always busy with her many jobs, but never fails to be polite and smiling"



December

Charles Shirk

(Managed Care)

"Charles is a hard worker and always gives the extra mile by assisting co-workers with their work. He is an all around team player."

*Annual Scrabble Fundraising Tournament**

Employee Appreciation Day

The 28th Annual Employee Appreciation Day was held on Monday, November 16 in the 4th floor Conference Room. This year we honored our employees who are veterans of the armed services with a patriotic theme. Employees were asked to wear something patriotic and once again, food items were donated by our employees for the Elizabeth Karlson Food Pantry.

Foster and Adoptive Family Picnic

"I love sardines in the morning, yeah, yeah ..." So sings Cheerio, a loveable precocious canine who was featured, with his master Miss JanElle, puppeteer/ventriloquist par excellence, at the 2009 Foster/Adoptive Family Picnic. Cheerio delighted the crowd of nearly 200 people who gathered together to celebrate foster and adoptive families.

Foster and adoptive families look forward to this yearly event that recognizes the good work that they do for children in care. It is also a fantastic day for children who have been through the trauma of foster care placement, and it gives them the opportunity to "just be kids." Sometimes children are separated from their siblings; on this day they are able to play together and enjoy each others' company. This also allows the children to see other children in care with whom they've connected; sometimes they see their friends whom they didn't even know were in care as well! It helps children realize that they are not alone in their experiences and feelings.

The day of food and fun included games and interactive events that were set up for the youngsters and their foster parents. Commissioner Robert Allers joined several other DSS employees who grilled sausage and peppers and typical picnic fare or guided the children into the various fun activities. Each child was able to take home a photo of themselves that they put in a frame they made themselves. And of course, there was Cheerio and Miss JanElle, who sang and joked their way into the hearts of all.

Thank you, Foster and Adoptive Parents, for all you do for the children!

Employee Education Program

In 2009 the Dutchess County Department of Social Services continued to offer its college education program through contracts with Dutchess Community College, Empire College and Adelphi University. Natasha West graduated from Dutchess Community College and Amanda Tatko Campbell and Patricia Treppepi graduated from Adelphi University with their MSW.



Spotlight on Volunteers

Staff Honored for Service

Awards for service were presented by Commissioner Allers at the November 16, 2009 Employee Appreciation Day celebration to the following employees:



Fran Sarigianis
30 years



Janet Cottingham
25 years



Constance Swain
20 years



Beverly Thomas
20 years



Stephanie Moshier
15 years

30 Years

Fran Sarigianis
Regenia Duncan

25 Years

Janet Cottingham

20 Years

Constance Swain
Melissa Robinson
Beverly Thomas
Lynn Martin
Amber Collins
Colleen Mahoney
Lance Bixby

15 Years

Monique Brennan
Jessie Normil
Ann Roberts
Patricia Knapp
Greg Charter
Stephanie Moshier
Melissa Jabkowski

10 Years

Miichelle Arrucci
David Garcia
Jacqueline Bartley
Donna Wood
Lorraine Aiello
Wanita Bocchino

5 Years

Deborah Powell
Lydia Beers
Maninder Hira
Nicole Singleton
Kara Cerilli
Courtney Martin
Andrew Pietroluongo
Mary Velazquez
Delores Devonshire
William Quintiliani
Rocelle Gardner
Anne Gummersbach
Clayton Herriman
Nydia Hernandez
Jacqueline Ingram



David Garcia
10 years



Andrew Pietroluongo
5 years

*Treat people as if they were
what they ought to be,
and help them become what
they are capable of being.*

— Goethe



Above and Beyond the Call of Duty (ABCD Group)

The ABCD Team also known as “Above and Beyond the Call of Duty” consists of approximately a dozen DSS employees who are making a difference in the work place. Led by Deputy Commissioner, Theresa Giovannello the group meets monthly and utilizes the “appreciative inquiry model” to review what is working well in the work place and suggests ways to increase or enhance the positive.

The heart of the group is made up of individuals who were nominated by their Directors due to their dedication to those we serve, their team spirit and their willingness to take on more duties whether they are offering assistance to a co-worker or volunteering for a new initiative. Their Directors and Assistant Directors support the staff in their endeavors and so, are vital members of the team as well.

The first meeting was held on February 11, 2009. In attendance were: Commissioner Robert Allers, Theresa Giovannello, Cathy Connis, Kevin McDonald, Darci Levy, George Joseph, Jacky Cooper, William Quintiliani, Diana Smith, Joanne Sinagra, Marc Piraino and Rena Lake. Later Chris Corman, Kara Cerilli, Christian Jones, Sheree Gover, and Lori Aiello joined the team. In the past year, the team has reviewed positive practices in the workplace including training methods and time management, discussing where enhancements were needed. The team identified a performance issue of concern and recommended a solution which involved in-house training. DCDSS was able to fully meet this need through an ongoing training program designed and implemented in-house with the help of DSS Computer Information Services staff, Kim Blauvelt.



From left to right (top row): Kevin McDonald, Kara Cerilli, Christian Jones; Seated: Lori Aiello, Theresa Giovannello, Darcy Levy

Seeking to expand their knowledge and understanding of clients served, the ABCD Team reached out into the community and invited a guest speaker to a meeting. The speaker shared her concerns as a Domestic Violence survivor and former client in order to help the team gain perspective on their role in the process of achieving self-sufficiency.

In the interest of building camaraderie in the agency, the team organized a DSS Fall Arts & Crafts Show where staff displayed their talents and hobbies ranging from woodworking to photography, culinary arts and jewelry design. The event was so successful it led to the re-birth of the DSS Craft Fair. A few members of the ABCD Team participated in the 2009 CROP Walk (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty). This walk-a-thon raises money to combat hunger locally and around the world.



Staff at 412 Main Street office

412 Main Street

In 2009, Child Protective Services located a unit off site at The Lexington Center for Recovery, Inc. on Main Street in Poughkeepsie, NY. Seven CPS case managers and a case supervisor are now co-located within the Center. This facilitates communication and referrals for services, when substance abuse issues have contributed to child abuse or neglect within families.



Walkway Over The Hudson

On October 3, 2009, Walkway Over The Hudson State Historic Park was opened to the public. The former Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, which spans the Hudson River from Highland to Poughkeepsie, had not been used since a fire severely damaged the track in 1974. The transformation into the world's longest pedestrian bridge, which is 212 feet above the river, has provided DSS staff with a place to take a scenic walk on their lunch hour. A short ride from the DSS offices, employees report that they can make it almost half way across the 1.25 mile walkway and still get back to their office with a few minutes to spare before the end of the lunch hour.

Wheels to Work in Dutchess

On June 24, 2009 twenty-two families received donated vehicles from the Community Solutions for Transportation (CST) and Wheels for Work (WFW) programs (a partnership between Dutchess County Department of Social Services and Dutchess BOCES), at a community presentation at the Family Partnership Center in Poughkeepsie. The families were chosen based on specific program guidelines, including their work-related need for transportation. In addition, they all displayed the perseverance and the commitment necessary to continually take steps towards financial independence as having their own vehicle will help them to obtain and retain employment or gain access to higher education to increase their wage potential.

At this year's car give-away event, Sharice Williford attended under the assumption she would speak to the audience about the importance of having dependable transportation when trying to maintain employment. Ms. Williford described her personal experiences trying to get back and forth from her home in Beacon and her place of employment in Chester, New York. Sharice described the difficult challenge of trying to use buses and/or taxis to get to her job at Webster's Trucking on second or third shift. She broke down while explaining how she had to face her fear of heights and walk across the Newburgh-Beacon bridge late one night after missing the bus.

What Sharice didn't know while she related her story to the audience was that there was a

2000 Saturn SL1 waiting out in the parking lot for her. As a result of receiving dependable transportation, Sharice Williford (like many others) was able to retain her employment and avoid having to apply for public assistance. She is now confident that she will be able to continue to support herself and her two children on her own, independent of government assistance.

Since 2001, CST and WFW programs across New York State have assisted over two thousand low-income families with acquiring reliable used cars, repairing, registering, and insuring their own vehicles. These programs have been very successful and have enabled many people to leave the welfare rolls and secure jobs that would otherwise have been unobtainable, as well as assisted people with maintaining or improving their current employment to remain independent of public assistance, or gain access to higher education to increase their earning potential.

Since inception (including cars awarded at this event), 634 families have received vehicles. As a direct result of this and other services provided by the Dutchess County Transportation Program, 313 individuals have been able to obtain new employment and 786 individuals have been able to retain their current employment.



The Commissioner's office consists of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner for Services, Deputy Commissioner for Financial and Supportive Services, Director of Administrative Services, Staff Development Director, Confidential Administrative Assistant, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation, and Fair Hearing Specialist. The Commissioner's office oversees the programs and operations of the department.



Judy Yarochowicz
Confidential Administrative Assistant



Debra Bonnerwith
Deputy Commissioner



Theresa Giovanniello
Deputy Commissioner



Bridget Goddard, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning

Contracts, Policy and Planning

The Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation is responsible for:

- Developing all Department of Social Services plans,
- Preparing funding applications for special programs,
- Overseeing the contracts, and
- Preparing and/or responding to requests for proposals.

Fair Hearings

Fair hearings can be requested on a denial, discontinuance or reduction of benefits or services, on matters of state policy, employability status, method of payment of benefits or a failure of DSS to act on an application or request. Hearings are held at DSS and are presided over by a NYS Administrative Law Judge. At the hearing, DSS must justify the action it has taken. Clients can have representatives at the hearing and they can present evidence or bring witnesses. Hearings are usually held about one month after they are requested and decisions are rendered within six weeks after the hearing.

FAIR HEARING ACTIVITY

Fair Hearings Scheduled.....	873
Administrative Disqualification Hearings	9
Appellant Defaults.....	261
Appellant Withdrawals.....	134
Agency Decisions Upheld	163
Agency Decisions Reversed.....	36
Inter-jurisdictional Hearings	0
Adjournments	187
Other Agencies.....	48
Correct When Made.....	17
Other	14
Agency Withdrawals	59
No Decisions Received.....	2

CONTRACT ACTIVITY 2009

Assisted Living/Adult Foster Care Services.....	6
Day Care.....	18
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	45
Domestic Violence Services	4
Employment Services.....	11
Nutrition Education/HEAP.....	5
Genetic Testing	2
Homeless Prevention.....	3
Interpreter Services.....	1
Legal Services.....	2
Medical Exams/Services	5
Memoranda of Agreement.....	80
Personal Care Related Services/Respite	17
Other Inter-Agency Service Agreements.....	9
Preventive Services/TASA.....	21
Resource Parents	92
Service Agreements	10
Totals.....	331
Value of contracts equals over	\$47,000,000



Karen Hansen
Fair Hearing Specialist

The Fair Hearing Specialist:

- Represents DSS in administrative reviews requested by applicants or recipients.
- Serves as liaison for Medicaid and Food Stamp audits for NYS.
- Does day care audits for NYS.
- Serves as liaison to Hudson River Lodge for after-hours emergency placement.

One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something.

— Henry David Thoreau,

Commissioner's Office Accomplishments for 2009



Spotlight on Volunteers

- Chaired the New York Public Welfare Association's (NYPWA) Commissioners' Policy Committee on Adult Services, which surveyed all local districts and led to a series of eight regional focus group meetings and the issuance of a paper, "Building a Shared Commitment to Protect and Support Vulnerable Adults."

Committee recommendations included the following:

- Improve access to mental health, developmental disability services and other assistance.
 - Coordinate State policies across systems.
 - Provide housing that is safe, affordable and appropriate.
 - Modify policies on financial management, medical decisions and guardianship.
 - Increase the availability of home care services and assisted living options.
 - Fortify the role of the adult services worker.
- Participated in an advisory group formed by New York State Temporary and Disability Assistance to assess current local options and develop new strategies for managing individuals under the strict supervision and treatment procedures of the Sex Offender Management and Treatment Act. The group was asked to meet with senior officials in the Governor's office to provide local perspectives on the issues around the development of housing options as they relate to sex offenders as well as to ex-offenders.
 - Participated in Dutchess County BOCES' Parent Information Night on Long Term Supports, providing information on guardianship with parents.
 - Continued to serve on the Dutchess County Office for Aging's NY Connects Long Term Care Council, which reviews our long-term care system's planning and development in order to ensure achievement of the goals of and objectives of the Dutchess County Single Point of Entry for long-term care.
 - Developed plan for the use of \$8,518,797 in Flexible Funding for Families awarded by New York State.
 - Served on the Criminal Justice Council and its Prevention and Sanctions Victims and Women in the Criminal Justice System sub-committees.
 - Prepared contracts totaling over \$47,000,000 for services, excluding the value of resource parent contracts and Medicaid-funded contracts.
- Served as chairperson of the Children's Services Council Integrated County Planning Workgroup. Together with the Office of Community Corrections and Probation and the Youth Bureau and with the help of community partners, updated the 2007-2009 Child and Family Services Plan, which sets forth each of those department's service outcomes and strategies with respect to the populations they serve.
 - As part of the comprehensive needs assessment for the Integrated County Planning effort, worked with the County Executive's office, the Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Community Corrections and Probation and the Youth Bureau and with the assistance of the Office of Community Research to develop a set of data indicators across systems. The resulting document is available at <http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/YouthBureau/2007Selectedindicators.pdf>, strengthens the understanding of governmental planners, community members, providers and decision makers.
 - Served on the Dutchess County's Health and Human Services Cabinet Performance Evaluation Workgroup, which focuses on incorporating performance data indicators into all county human services contracts and county operated programs. As an outgrowth of this effort, managed within the Department centralized outcome performance tracking and compiled an annual report of the Department's contract performance outcomes.
 - Served on the Executive Committee for the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Dutchess County.
 - Member and participant in Hudson Valley Cash Coalition.
 - Served as Chairman at Dutchess County Community Development Advisory Committee of Dutchess County Planning Department.
 - Received transitional employment grant.
 - Moderator at the NYPWA summer and winter conferences.
 - Served on NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) federal TANF reauthorization workshop.
 - Appeared as a guest on John Flowers radio show to promote Wheels to Work.
 - Chaired the NYPWA deputy commissioners meetings.
 - Created Above and Beyond the Call of Duty (ABCD) meetings.

- Attended conference in Boston, MA with representatives from Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS) and other states regarding improving supervision in Child Welfare and Child Protective Services to improve case outcomes.
- Participate in creation of a Family Court improvement project regarding permanency for children.



Kara Cerilli
2009 CROP Walk*



Christine Meluch
Receptionist/Operator

*Too often we underestimate
the power of a touch, a smile,
a kind word, a listening ear,
an honest compliment, or the
smallest act of caring, all of
which have the potential to
turn a life around.*

— Leo Buscaglia

* Employee volunteer



Spotlight on Volunteers



*CYO Basketball Director;
St. Joachim – St. John the
Evangelist, Building and
Ground Committee**

Michael Soltish
Staff Development Director

Personnel & Staff Development

The Staff Development Director has primary responsibility for ensuring the Social Services' workforce receives the information and tools necessary to provide services to our customers in a competent, objective, and professional manner. This includes assessing, planning, delivery and scheduling training programs that meet State, Federal, and local mandates.

In 2009, the budget restrictions mandated the increased use of technology in the provision of training deliverables. The use of Training Space and ILinc as a means to provide on-site training was greatly increased in all divisions of Department of Social Services. Staff Development coordinated the dissemination of information on these methods of training, and purchased necessary headsets for each unit.

The Staff Development and Personnel Unit is also charged with providing Personal and Career Development for DSS staff members. Educational programs with Dutchess Community College, Adelphi University and Empire College are a key component in our program, which are aimed at workforce professionalism, and promotional advancement within the Civil Service System.

The Staff Development Unit:

- Completes state and local surveys, plans all needs assessments related to staffing, training, salaries and turnover.
- Coordinates the completion of the Department of Social Services Annual Report.
- Conducts orientation for all new staff and schedules unit overviews.
- Maintains agency audio visual equipment.

- Conducts training evaluations.
- Maintains the STARS (Statewide Training and Registration System), and data base which registers staff for state training and maintains the employee training history.
- Monitors CPS worker compliance with State training mandates.
- Coordinates the Dutchess Community College Project through which 35 employees took courses and worked toward a degree.
- Coordinates the Empire College Program through which ten DSS employees worked towards a Bachelor's Degree.
- Coordinates the Adelphi University Program for Children Services staff through which six staff members took courses toward completion of their MSW degree.

In Dutchess County, the Staff Development Unit also encompasses the Personnel and Payroll function for the Department of Social Services. The unit:

- Maintains the Department's active and inactive personnel files and handles all personnel-related matters. This includes assisting the County Personnel Department with recruitment of qualified applicants through newspaper advertisements and attendance at job fairs.
- Handles all job interviews for non-management positions and makes the hiring decision.
- Monitors all probationary periods and coordinates the distribution of perfor-



*United Way Chairperson, DSS;
American Cancer Society
Daffodil Drive;
MHA Anemone Sale**

Ted Starzyk



Betty Moloney

mance appraisals. This also includes the updating of Civil Service Job Specifications as well as title specific task and standards for each job in the Department.

- Maintains all department payroll records, using the LOGOS system and provides employees with information on benefits, leaves of absence, FMLA requests, payroll issues, and applications for retirement.
- Provides management and Department Unit Heads with reports on benefit time usage, overtime, compensatory time, seniority, salary, and other requested information.
- Acts as liaison with the Dutchess County



** Employee volunteer*

Personnel Department, Dutchess County Finance Department, Office of Risk Management and the County Attorney's office.

- Conducts agency exit interviews.
- Acts as management representative at employee grievances, disciplinary proceedings and other related actions.

Staff Development/Personnel Accomplishments for 2009

- Coordinated the 2009 Annual Employee Appreciation Day celebration and served as Chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.
- Participated in the panel at the state-sponsored Advanced Staff Development Training, covering the topic of On-going Performance Management.
- Served on NYS Staff Development Advisory Council and on the Temporary Assistance, and Membership sub-committee of the council.
- Served on the NYS STARS User Group, which determines and tests updates to the system.
- Coordinated the necessary local set up for the provision of state sponsored teleconferences to be viewed by Dutchess County DSS staff.
- Conducted 81 new employment interviews.
- Hired 45 new employees.
- Coordinated three disciplinary actions (Section 75 and stipulations).
- Coordinated and processed 63 promotions and reassignments, 22 leaves of absence, and 26 separations from County service.
- Chaired the 2009 Dutchess County Department of Social Services' United Way campaign.
- Coordinated the 2009 Daffodil Days for the American Cancer Society and the Christmas wreath and the anemone sales for the Mental Health Association.
- Participated in Job Fairs to increase potential candidates for DSS Civil Service positions.
- Participated on the Foster Care Review Board.

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean, but the ocean would be less because of that missing drop. We can do no great things, only small things with great love.

—Mother Teresa

2009 Employee Generosity

...continued from page 5

winter weather. This program received great feedback.

Janice Arico and **Jackie Tortora** were able to collect numerous boxes of new, unused toys for children in our area through the



Janice Arico (left) and Jackie Tortora, Salvation Army Toy Drive*

Salvation Army Toy Drive.

The Wish List Fundraising Drive For **Hillcrest House for the Homeless** in Poughkeepsie exceeded expectations. DSS staff donated twin sheet sets, pillowcases, fleece blankets, bath towels, hand towels, soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, and other toiletries.

Four DSS employees teamed up for a fun filled night on October 15, 2009 to participate in the first Annual Scrabble Fundraising Tournament at Casperkill Country Club in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Together team **TEAM DSS** a.k.a. the **Scrabble Scramblers** donated over \$100 to Love INC, an



Standing: Charles Shirk, Katy Seaholm and Rich Ott and Lisa Simpson (seated)

agency that assists families seeking financial assistance.

The Medicaid Unit organized a bake sale fundraiser which raised \$280 for The Living Room/Mel's Place Program which serves families and individuals, without a place to call home, and/or who are dealing with mental health issues and or addiction issues. With the money raised the Unit was able to purchase blankets, jogging pants, and thermal shirts which were given directly to 20 men at the Program

Thanks to all DSS volunteers. You make the world a better place!



Lisette Mason
*Brownie Troop Leader**

* Employee volunteer



Peter Simon
Director,
Administrative Services

The Director of Administrative Services helps develop and present the annual budget, and is responsible for the supervision and coordination of the fiscal and operating functions. The following units are overseen by the Director: Accounting, Central File, Reception, Purchasing, Welfare Management System, and Computer Information Services.

Accounting (see photo page 44)

- Audits, processes and accounts for all payments made to or for recipients of assistance or for services.
- Prepares and tracks reimbursement claims made to New York State.
- Receives and disburses income for individuals for whom DSS is the representative payee or guardian.
- Discovers, records and pursues third party health insurance to reduce Medicaid expenditures.
- Serves as liaison with medical providers for billing and implements the Medicaid restriction program for clients who over utilize Medicaid services.
- Issues temporary benefit cards.
- Maintains the Cash Management System of the Welfare Management System (WMS), which accounts for all repayments and recoupments of benefits for clients who were overpaid.

Central File

- Maintains all closed case records and retrieves files as needed.
- Handles record retention and annual purges of records in accordance with NYS regulations. Issues case numbers for new applicants.
- Does all the case filing for the Temporary Assistance and Child Support Divisions.
- Processes all voter registration forms and manages the mailroom.
- Is in the process of imaging files as part of the NYS Imaging Project.

Computer Information Services

- Installs, maintains and administers personal computers, servers and systems including the Local Area Network (LAN).
- Develops and maintains local applications.
- Provides local personal computer support via the Help Desk.
- Serves as liaison with New York State and trains workers for state PC-based systems such as Connections in Children's Services and the Electronic Eligibility Decision Support System (EEDSS) in Medicaid.
- Does website development and administration and network integration with New York State services.

Purchasing, Fleet Control

- Purchases supplies and equipment, orders state and local forms, and maintains the stock room.
- Maintains the petty cash account and pays all administrative bills.
- Coordinates the purchase and maintenance of a fleet of 45 cars and vans with the Dutchess County Auto Center.
- Serves as the liaison with Dutchess County Public Works Department for repairs, maintenance and cleaning of the building.

Reception

- Screens all visitors and directs them to the appropriate unit or location.
- Distributes applications for assistance, reviews for completeness, and routes to the appropriate division.
- Accepts and routes to other staff, documentation submitted by applicants or recipients.



Administrative Services Accomplishments for 2009

- Served on the following committees:
 - Family Partnership Center Executive Committee;
 - Families First NY Finance Committee;
 - New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) Finance Committee.

Accounting

- Served on the following Boards and Committees:
 - Harriet Tubman Apartments Board of Directors;
 - Dutchess Community Action Partnership Board of Directors;
 - Youth Services Committee for Big Brothers/Big Sisters;
 - Harriet Tubman Academic Skills Program Board of Directors
 - Harriet Tubman Apartment Complex Board of Directors
- Maintain accounts for 234 clients and made payments totaling \$1.7 million on their behalf.
- We are maintaining approximately 95 percent of our reports as PDF files instead of printing and filing paper reports.
- Repayment agreements were put into a database, which allowed the workers easy access to the information.
- Vendors were allowed to e-mail invoices to the Accounting Unit. This helped to expedite the payment process.
- Immediate check and immediate FS/TA benefits were assigned to one accounting worker. Previously this had been assigned to two workers. This change has helped the Social Welfare Workers, as all inquiries can now be made with one phone call to one worker.
- We added a third worker to the claims unit. This allows one person to specialize in preparing the numerous special claims on a monthly basis.
- SOLQ access was granted to supervisors and select workers. Accounting staff provided training for SOLQ and continues to provide additional training for EMEDNY. The additional use of these programs should assist with expedited case processing and additional TPHI information added to the system for Medicaid cost savings.

CIS Unit

- Provided technical assistance for the Computer Training;
- Implemented the portable information technology program for CPS and Children's Services;
- Created a new system to log HEAP activity;
- Created a new system to log Unemployment Insurance Benefit activity;
- Installed new Ricoh copiers to replace Canons and Savins (driver installations on more than 100 work computers and scanning configurations);
- Continuous memory upgrades to various divisions;
- Set up network at 412 Main Street;
- Established video conferencing connection for face-to-face Medicaid interviews with Wingate facility;
- Performed a department memory upgrade and installed 15 new flat screens in the Food Stamp Unit;
- Set up profiles for 43 new workers.

File Room

- Prepared and shipped information for imaging in the following units:
 - Medicaid (soon to be completed)
 - Food Stamps (completed and up to date)
 - HEAP (completed and up to date)
 - Temporary Assistance (completed and up to date)
 - SSI/MA (completed and up to date)



Spotlight on Volunteers

- Special Investigations Unit (almost completed).
- All old child welfare records have been placed in retention. They consist of 11,444 foster care records, 15,626 unfounded reports, 13,127 indicated reports, 1,790 boarding homes, and 1,742 sealed adoption records. There are also some small list and combined they make 5,372 records. This brings the total of records sent to retention to 48,101.
- Updated other lists:
 - SIU – 2,792
 - Medicaid reviews – 3,383
 - Personnel records – 1,406
 - Old volume – TA, MA, FS – 32,896
 - CSEU – 31,526
- Processed 167,448 pounds of in-coming mail.
- Assigned numbers to 5,902 new applicants.
- Filed one million papers for child support.
- Spent over 900 hours in translating for Spanish-speaking applicants/clients.

Reception

- Created designated program lines to lessen wait times.
- Worked with other units to implement our Status Tracking program.
- Monitors and delivers the AED as needed.



The Adult Services Division deals with individuals over the age of 18 with mental or physical impairments that prevent them from meeting essential needs and who are in need of protection and who have no one to assist them responsibly.

In 2009, our division had 361 active cases. There were 589 referrals for Adult Protective Services. We had 32 Guardianship cases and 153 Representative Payee cases. Staff continues to participate in case consultation meetings and attend regional meetings.



Maryanne Maruschak
Director Adult Services

During 2009, a liaison from our division continued to have meetings with the Mediation Center to discuss senior concerns and to develop a process to address referrals from their agency. Another staff member at-

tends the Coalition on Elder Abuse.

The Adult Services Division also provides housing assistance to the homeless Temporary Assistance population. Lack of affordable housing continues to be a problem. In 2009, we spent approximately \$3,472,146 on motel stays. We continue to be a member of the Dutchess County Consortium in an effort to address the housing crisis in Dutchess County. The division also monitors the family-type homes and the foster family program.

The Adult Services Division also provides services to victims of domestic violence. We have a Domestic Violence Liaison (DVL) who screens those who have domestic violence issues. The DVL provides information about resources and assesses whether the victims are able to safely comply with department rules. The DVL networks with domestic violence service providers regularly. Funding is provided for both non-residential and residential domestic violence services under Title XX. Information and referral for these services is available through the Adult Services Division. In 2009 the DVL conducted 174 assessments and 130 re-assessments.

Protective Services For Adults

- Identifies and assists individuals over the age of 18 who, because of physical or mental impairments, can no longer provide for their own needs or protect themselves from neglect or abuse, and have no one willing and able to help in a responsible manner.
- Provides services designed to prevent or remedy neglect, exploitation or abuse and to strengthen clients' capacity to function and their ability to be self-directing. Services may include counseling, locating adequate shelter and clothing, arranging transportation, shopping for the homebound and assisting the client in obtaining other benefits such as Medicaid, Social Security Disability/Retirement, SSI and Food Stamps. The primary objective of staff is to help clients to remain in the community.
- Provides services to individuals without regard to income or resources.

- Pursues legal interventions when necessary including assisting clients in obtaining orders of protection, securing admission to a psychiatric facility or developmental center or having the DSS become protective payee of the clients' funds.
- Pursues guardianship under Article 81 of the Mental Hygiene Law for protective clients who do not have decision-making capacity.

Adult Title XX Services/Housing

- Assists protective service clients in addressing issues that will help them function at an improved level and thus eliminate the need for future protective services. Issues may include health, finances, education, and family planning. These services are provided if the client requests the service and cooperates with staff.
- Attempts to locate housing for Temporary Assistance clients who are faced with an eviction or who are temporarily residing in motels or shelters.
- Arranges for transportation of homeless children to and from school while in temporary shelter and arranges for moving and storage of clients' belongings.
- Works with Dutchess County Housing Consortium to address the housing crisis in Dutchess County.
- Contracts with Family Services, Inc. to run the Teen Parent Program, which provides mandated comprehensive case management for pregnant and parenting teenagers under the age of 18.

Domestic Violence

- DSS employs a domestic violence liaison who:
 - Screens all Temporary Assistance applicants/recipients who self-disclose issues of domestic violence in order to assure that all victims have a safety plan in place.
 - Provides information about resources to assist victims and completes an assessment of their ability to safely comply with Social Services Rules and Regulations.
 - Networks with the domestic violence service providers on a regular basis.
 - Provides information and referral for domestic violence residential and non-residential services.
 - Funds both non-residential and residential domestic violence services under Title XX.
 - Contracts with Family Services, Inc. and Grace Smith House to provide shelter and non-residential services including

TEMPORARY SHELTER EXPENDITURES

Year	Amount	Average Stay in Weeks
1997	\$517,379	3.4
1998	\$624,272	4.3
1999	\$559,950	4.5
2000	\$672,796	4.7
2001	\$752,159	6.2
2002	\$1,697,789	8.2
2003	\$2,381,235	10.4
2004	\$2,914,832	11.0
2005	\$2,881,353	10.0
2006	\$2,960,735	12.0
2007	\$3,095,641	21.0
2008	\$3,106,524	15.0
2009	\$3,401,705	15.6

ADULT SERVICES

	2008	2009
Adult Services Cases		
Open At End of Year	363	361
Domestic Violence Screenings.....	170	304
Temporary Shelter Stays in Weeks.....	15	15
Temporary Shelter Expenditures....	\$3,106,524	\$3,401,705
Adult Protective Services Referrals.....	604	589



- advocacy, community education, hotline services, legal services and counseling.
- Conducted 174 assessments and 130 re-assessments.
- Follow-Through Case Management program and the shelter maintenance program including \$10,000 for cash security deposits and short-term (less than four months) rental.
- Continued to provide Hudson River Housing, Inc. with funding to defray the cost of placing individuals who were turned away from the overnight shelter in motels during inclement weather. The amount was \$180,000.
- Continued to enhance our contract with Grace Smith House, for non-residential domestic violence services to include a Latina caseworker to provide outreach and community education services to the Latina community.

- Continued to fund an Intensive Case Manager employed by Grace Smith House.
- Paid \$1,346,028 to the Grace Smith House, Family Services, Inc. and the Office of Community Corrections and Probation for additional services to victims of domestic violence (payments for residential shelter costs are included in temporary assistance payments).
- Legal programs sub-contracted to Legal Services of Dutchess County include a pro-bono legal program, whose purpose is to develop a network of pro-bono attorneys to represent poor and low-income battered women in the Supreme Court of Dutchess County and Family Court, and a Divorce Representation project.
- We also provide funds for a staff member at the Probation Department's Victims Services Unit to ensure that victims in the criminal justice process have representation.

➤ Continued a case review team in order to allow staff to discuss difficult cases.

➤ Dedicated a worker to educating the public about protective services for adults.

➤ Served as guardian for 32 individuals.

➤ Served as protective payee for 153 individuals.

Adult Services Accomplishments for 2009

- Our staff continued to educate other agencies about the scope of Protective Services for Adults (PSA) and how to obtain services.
- Attended the coalition on elder abuse.
- Participated in case consultation meetings.
- Continued to meet with the Mediation Center to discuss senior concerns and established a liaison from our division to address concerns and to develop a process to address referrals from their agency.
- Provided housing assistance to the Temporary Assistance homeless population.
- Was a member of the Dutchess County Housing Consortium.
- Monitored the family-type home operators.

*The world is hugged by the
faithful arms of volunteers.*

—Terri Guillemets

LETTER OF RECOGNITION

To Ms. Gummersbach:

This letter isn't just a letter. This isn't just a show of my appreciation. This is my heart that I'm recording through this ink onto this paper. You are not a person, you are an angel that was sent to me through these hard times that I was having. You are what people would call a saint. I give my undying appreciation. I will never forget you. Never!

Thank so you much. M.W.



Anne Gummersbach
Adult Services



Children's Services is an umbrella for many departments; Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care, Adoption/Home Finding and Secure and Non-Secure Detention.



Colleen Mahoney
Director, Children's Services

"Remember: the light at the end of the tunnel may be you."

—Steven Tyler

Child Protective Services (CPS)

This unit investigates allegations of abuse and/or neglect of children under 18 years of age. Case managers are available seven days a week, 24-hours per day to investigate reports received through the State Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment (1-800-342-3720).

- Assesses safety of and risk to children due to abuse or neglect and provides intervention when needed.
- Arranges on-going case management for families through the Preventive Services Unit and other community services providers when service is necessary.
- Files neglect and abuse petitions to seek from Family Court orders of protection, court-ordered services for the families and/or authority to place children in foster care.
- Participates in the Dutchess County Child Sexual Abuse Team, conducting joint sexual abuse investigations with police departments and the District Attorney. The Sex Abuse Team operates out of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse offices in Poughkeepsie.
- Contracts with the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse to partially fund the operation of the Center and for a Parent Empowerment Program, community education and information and referral services.

- Contracts with Family Services, Inc. to treat sexual abuse perpetrators.
- Contracts with Astor Services for Children and Families for therapists to provide treatment to sexually abused children and juveniles who have caused sexual harm.
- Contracts with Grace Smith House to fund a Domestic Violence Liaison who works with CPS case managers when domestic violence has contributed to child maltreatment.

Preventive Services

- Provides counseling and in-home services and connects families with community agencies which can provide long-term services, preventing the need for foster care. Referrals are received from the CPS Unit or from other community agencies.
- Arranges for intervention to address issues which contribute to child neglect and abuse and/or create a risk of foster care placement. Services are provided to address substance abuse, mental illness, developmental disabilities, medical care, counseling, day care and other needs.
- Provides transportation assistance, day care and homemaking services.
- Provides services which have been ordered through Dutchess County Family Court.
- Monitors clients' compliance, reports to court and files petitions when needed.
- Contracts with Astor Services for Children and Families and Abbott House, for home-based case management services for families at risk of placing their children in foster care.
- Contracts with Astor for a Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) and Early Childhood Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI). CCSI is a tiered inter-agency project designed to create a comprehensive system of care in Dutchess County. It provides coordination of services to children with emotional or behavioral concerns that put them at risk of out-of-home placement. ECCSI provides services for infants and toddlers at risk.
- Contracts with Dutchess County Office of Probation and Community Corrections for PINS and JD Diversion and Supervision Programs.
- Contracts with the Youth Bureau for mandated preventive case management services for youth leaving facilities, who are at risk of returning to placement,



and for youth who have school related problems, drug or alcohol use, which creates or increases the risk for out-of-home placements.

- Contracts with the Dutchess Community Action Partnership for case management services to families who live in the Harlem Valley or southern Dutchess and qualify for mandated preventive services.

Foster Care

- Directly supervises children in foster family homes and provides case management to children placed in child care facilities such as residential treatment or group homes.
- Ensures that foster children receive the medical, developmental, educational and mental health services they require.
- Supervises Article 10 placements of children with relatives.
- Counsels birth parents of children about their need for treatment for drug or alcohol addiction, sexual abuse, emotional disturbance, physical, mental, housing and employment problems and lack of knowledge of child development and parenting techniques.
- Develops child and family service plans, permanency reports, files court petitions and regularly appears in Family Court. The goal for each child is safe, nurturing temporary care with return to family if possible, or adoption if the family cannot be reunited, or if neither is possible, then preparation for independent living or discharge to another appropriate resource.
- Supervises placements made by other states and counties.
- Contracts with the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie to provide an 18 bed emergency foster care placement cottage which includes diagnostic evaluations when children need them.

Adoption/Home Finding

Children available for adoption may be surrendered by their parents for adoption or may be freed for adoption through a Family Court decision to terminate parental rights due to failure of the parents to provide a safe return home for their child in foster care. A child may be surrendered for adoption at any age prior to 14 if it is in the child's best interests to be adopted. Many children available for

adoption have been in foster care and are eligible for an adoption subsidy. This is a monthly check similar in amount to foster care board checks.

Foster parents are encouraged to adopt children in their homes and many foster parents become adoptive parents. Others provide temporary care until children are discharged to more permanent living situations.

Children are placed in foster care either by Child Protective Services, Family Court or by caretakers unwilling or unable to care for them. Some children are placed with relatives as foster parents.

There are currently 88 Certified Foster Homes and 18 Relative Foster Homes available for Dutchess County children. There is a great need for more foster and adoptive homes and we continually recruit and train applicants. We also utilize group homes and foster care institutions when children require higher levels of care. Therapeutic Foster Home Programs with Abbott House and Astor Services for Children and Families enable us to keep emotionally disturbed and conduct disordered children from placement in institutions.

This unit:

- Recruits, conducts home studies, provides training and certifies both foster and adoptive home applicants.
- Certifies and trains relative foster home applicants.
- Maintains foster home records and completes annual recertification process for all active foster parents.
- Supervises adoptive placements until the adoption is final and counsels children and adoptive parents.
- Completes private adoption home studies.

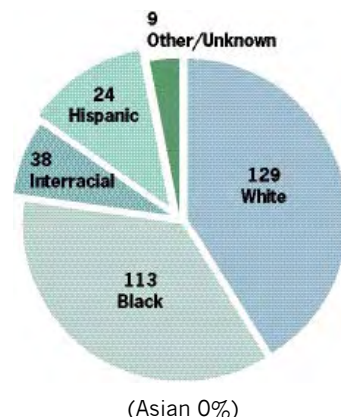
Secure and Non-Secure Detention

The Family Court remands boys and girls ages 7 to 18 to detention settings to await hearings in Family Court or foster care placement on petitions of Juvenile Delinquency (JD) or Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS). Often the children are placed on emergency basis directly from court.

- Supervises non-secure detention placements, transports children to court hearings and monitors non-secure detention centers and ensures that children's medical and mental health needs are met.

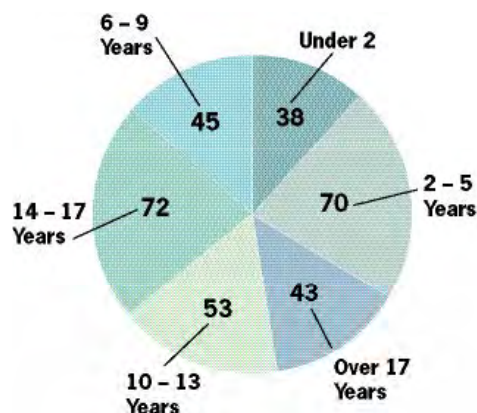
- Contracts with the City of Poughkeepsie for secure detention and with Astor Services for Children and Families and Berkshire Farm for non-secure detention beds.
- Contracts with Astor Services for Children and Families for secure detention coordination services.

Children in Foster Care by Ethnicity*



* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/09

Children in Foster Care by Age*



* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/09

ADOPTION SUMMARY

	2008	2009
Children Discharged to Adoption	34	19
Children in Care with Goal of Adoption at Year End	58	69

* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/09

JUVENILE PLACEMENTS WITH SOCIAL SERVICES*

	2008	2009
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)	27	11
Juvenile Delinquents (JD)	11	16

* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/09

CPS CASE SUMMARY

	2008	2009
Reports of Abuse and Neglect made to State Central Register	2,654	2,655
Abuse Petitions	62	73
Neglect Petitions	703	815
Termination of Parental Rights	81	101
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court	37	55
Foster Care Review – Permanency Hearings	411	539
Sex Abuse Investigations	295	*309
Substantiated	76	*88
Unfounded	176	*171
Pending	43	*50

* Statistics from the CAC database.

CHILDREN IN CARE: TYPES OF PLACEMENT*

	2008	2009
Foster Homes	116	139
Institutions	117	115
Group Homes	21	11
Group Residence	2	1
Agency Operated Boarding Homes	4	10
Adoptive Homes	13	22
Approved Relative Foster Homes	7	19
Other	3	4
Total	283	321

* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/09

Children Services Accomplishments for 2009

In collaboration with the Department of Mental Hygiene and Astor High Risk Services program, five home based crisis intervention waiver slots continue to be available to Dutchess County children. This program offers intensive home based services to children with psychiatric problems to prevent the need for psychiatric hospitalization and residential care.

Dutchess County adoption staff members completed 19 adoptions in 2009. This unit also completed 23 private adoption home studies.

Dutchess County received a monetary allocation from Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to implement programs to prevent the need for non-secure detention. This money is used to fund collaborative efforts between Children's Services and the Department of Probation for services to meet the needs of PINS and pre PINS youth in Dutchess County. In 2009, 109 youth were placed in non-secure detention.

Children's Services staff members are participating in a higher education program leading to a Master's Degree in Social Work at Adelphi University. Six staff members are currently enrolled in this program and eight staff members have already graduated from the program.

The statewide Connections Computer System, a computerized case recording system for all Children's Services cases, continues to be utilized and expanded.

Child Protective Services has investigated 2,655 reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment during 2009. There were 321 children in foster care and 33 were receiving after-care services.

The annual foster parent recognition day awards went to foster families "who have gone the extra mile." Our annual foster parent picnic was held in August and was a success, with a variety of activities and foods offered.

During the year, Children's Services continued work on collaborative projects with a number of public and private agencies in the community including the Dutchess County Family Court, District

Attorney's office, Department of Probation, Youth Bureau, The Center for Child Abuse Prevention, Astor, Abbott House, Dutchess Community Action Partnership, Inc., Grace Smith House Domestic Violence Shelter, and the Hudson River Housing Riverhaven Shelter. Children's Services staff members continue to participate in a number of work groups in the community which address the needs of Dutchess County children and families including the Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI), Children's Provider's Committee, the Child Advocacy Center's Multi-Disciplinary Team, Family Court Advisory Committee, Children's Services Council, Child Care Council and the Early Childhood Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI).

Two Children's Services case managers continue to be part of the Dutchess County Family Treatment Court team, presided over by Judge Forman, which provides intensive support and supervision to families in which substance abuse has led to neglect of children. The Family Treatment Court graduated three individuals and their families in 2009.

A Children's Services Case Manager is part of the Youth Treatment Court, presided over by Judge Forman, which provides intensive oversight to Dutchess County youth who have become involved with Family Court due to substance abuse issues. The Youth Treatment Court graduated six individuals and their families in 2009.

A domestic violence liaison jointly supervised by Child Protective Services and Grace Smith House continues to be located in Children's Services. The liaison receives referrals from child protective, foster care and preventive caseworkers, attends case conferences and provides direct services, training and consultation regarding domestic violence issues.

Funding continues for both mandated preventive and community optional preventive services provided by the Probation Department and Youth Bureau. A respite services contract with the Riverhaven shelter continues to be utilized for youth involved with the Departments of Probation or Social Services.

There continues to be an emphasis on staff and foster parent development and training in 2009, with numerous training opportunities being offered by the De-

partment of Social Services. A sampling of the sessions provided includes in-house training for case managers, training regarding community services available, and computer training.

The provision of preventive services for families, designed to prevent the need for children coming into foster care due to neglect and abuse, continues to be a crucial service offered. These services are provided by Children's Services caseworkers, and are also contracted for with community agencies including Astor, Abbott House, and Dutchess Community Action Partnership, Inc.

As always, recruitment efforts continue to locate, train and certify qualified foster parents for Dutchess County children. Foster home-finding case managers have attended many community functions to advocate for foster parenting. Foster parent and relative foster parent certification training sessions have been completed to train 17 new foster parents and 14 new relative foster parents in 2009.

CASACs have been co-located in Children's Services to assist in CPS investigations of and provision of services to families that are impacted by substance abuse issues. This program is a joint effort between Dutchess County's Departments of Social Services and Mental Hygiene and Lexington Center for Recovery and is being funded by New York State OASAS and OCFS.

In 2009, one foster care caseworker continued to volunteer to be a Field Supervisor for a BSW intern from Marist College. This is a year long internship where the student receives education about foster care and the Child Welfare Division. The student works two days a week at DSS in the Foster

Care Unit and the Foster Care worker meets with the professor once a month and completes two evaluations a year on the student.

In 2009, Dutchess County DSS began participation in the Bridges to Health Program (B2H) which is an initiative from Office of Children and Families that provides medical assistance and services to children in foster care. This program continues with the child, even after discharge from foster care, up until the child turns 21 years of age. Dutchess County DSS is working in collaboration with Astor Services for Children and Families and Children's Village to provide supportive services for children in the B2H program. Presently, we are providing services to 13 children in the B2H program.

In 2009, Dutchess County DSS began participation in the Office of Court Administration Permanency Project. The goal of this project is to reduce time to permanency for children in foster care.

LETTER OF RECOGNITION

Dear Dave,

I was involved in a recent CPS case involving a grandson; J.J. Stacey Heder was the assigned caseworker. Stacy is an impressive professional! She remained objective, knew her responsibilities and checked any 'grey' areas with you or another supervisor.



Stacy Heder
Child Protective Services

Stacy remained polite, respectful, and knowledgeable; her demeanor did not vary. Stacy's tone of voice remained steady, even under very difficult circumstances involving other family members. She was prompt in returning telephone calls. She has a remarkable degree of patience.

Stacy showed excellent judgment and concern. I was quite impressed with her insight after interviewing my son, C.J., J's father; who has schizo-affective disorder. I do not know what she said to him; but since that interview, he has been compliant with his medications. A major breakthrough!

I believe Stacy is a warm, caring woman who has a terrific sense of humor. However, she remained the 'consummate professional.' It's a pleasure to know you have a woman of her caliber in your department. I have interacted with different caseworkers and am consistently satisfied with our collegial efforts to help children and their families. Professionally and personally, I believe those CPS caseworkers, who like Stacy, are truly caring men and women, have a most difficult challenge to work within the law.

Any rewards you can give Stacy are well earned! Thank you.

Respectfully, H.N.Y.

*I've seen and met angels wearing
the disguise of ordinary people
living ordinary lives.*

—Tracy Chapman



Spotlight

on DSS Employee Volunteers

The Dutchess County Department of Social Services staff has always set the example for helping others, which goes far beyond their 9 to 5 workday tasks. Fundraising efforts, like bake sales and Adopt-a-Family drives, in addition to food, clothing, blanket and toy collections are common occurrences here at DSS. This 2009 Annual Report is dedicated to our employees who go the extra mile, after work, to help make a difference in the lives of others.

The inspiration for this focus on volunteerism comes from those employees who also share their time and talent for causes close to their heart without monetary compensation. You may find them lending a hand at a church, on a sports field, at an animal shelter, at a scout camp, at civic organizations, on a school or town board, or with a medical foundation.

Although these individuals may support causes, which vary, what they have in common is a determination to make a difference and often unpretentiousness when it comes to publicizing their volunteer efforts. The thought that sharing their story might influence others to get involved, was the impetus to the highlights which follow. We have interviewed only a handful; however, we genuinely appreciate the selfless acts put forth by all of our DSS volunteers everyday.



Janet Tullo

A bumpy truck ride takes the ministry volunteers deep into the Guatemalan

countryside along a steep mountain where they meet a group of residents who ardently wait for vital medical procedures and crucial dental work. **The Global Health Ministry** comprised of volunteer doctors, dentists, nurses and translators from all over the country has arrived to help. Carrying a knapsack of her own personal belongings in one hand, and a suitcase packed with donated supplies, such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, aspirin, vitamins, creams and ointment in the other, **Janet Tullo Esq.** (Legal Department), looks forward to these two week expeditions. As a volunteer on this trip to Guatemala in April of 2009, Janet used her skills as a Spanish translator to assist the physicians and the patients in achieving wellness. A relatively



Janet Tullo (right) and ministry volunteer (left) pose with Guatemalan residents

experienced traveler, Janet usually makes an annual trip to various parts of the world with similar organizations that have missions related to providing care to alleviate human suffering. She has been a support in places such as the Dominican Republic and Mexico.

Back in the Hudson Valley, Janet volunteers for many faith-based organizations and causes. On her busy evening schedule one night per month

is the **Pax Christi**, which is a national peace organization. Other after-hour activities to which she donates her time include the **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults**, which is a team that prepares individuals for adulthood in the Christian faith; the **Secular Franciscan Order** (Mount Alvernia, Wappingers Falls), which is a community of Catholics that gather to share their faith and to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis; and the **Social Concerns Ministry**

(*St. Mary's Church, Fishkill*), which is the sole support of a medical/dental clinic to a sister parish in Vietnam, and organizes many local and international social welfare activities including fundraisers, clothing drives, visits to nursing homes, and poster and essay contests for school children regarding social concern topics. Additionally, twice per month Janet volunteers for the **Prison Ministry** (*St. Mary's Church, Fishkill*), which holds bible studies with inmates at the Fishkill Correctional Facility. Janet attributes her desire to be involved with all of these worthwhile services to a natural progression of being serious about her faith. Altruistic at home as well, Janet is the mother of two biological children and six multi-ethnic adopted children. Janet is also the proud grandmother to 11 grandchildren and she always finds time for babysitting. Staying organized and keeping things in perspective help to make Janet a successful volunteer for numerous projects.



Pat Deal

Pat Deal (Supply Room) volunteers at the privately funded Beacon Animal Rescue Foundation, where she works with cats and kittens. Pat became

aware of this organization when a friend adopted a stray dog, who had been rehabilitated there. In 1996, after adopting a cat from the foundation, Pat decided that this would be a nice place to volunteer. What Pat likes most about this organization is that they are very flexible and always appreciate the help. Add the joy of observing a new litter of kittens peaking open their eyes for the first time, or a timid cat beginning to show trust with a loud purr and a nudge, and you have the combination for a long-term volunteer commitment.

It is hard work, Pat explains. However, at times doing this type of work can provide an almost meditative comfort. Pat says it helps her focus on the "here and now" and can serve as a distraction from the larger problems of life for a while. In addition, through her volunteer work at the foundation, Pat has made friends with other local community residents who share her love of assisting animals. "There is strong camaraderie between the people and the animals," she says. "It is like a family." Once or twice a

year, owner Barbara Shea, treats the volunteers to dinner.

Pat enjoys her volunteer work, especially checking on the status of animals and giving the cats her "weekly greeting." She states, "I find it amazing that over time many cats that seem aloof, can become comfortable and affectionate with people."



Joe Olah

Joe Olah (Accounting) keeps busy volunteering for three local organizations. At the Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church, Joe is on the

Finance Committee, which works on the budget, oversees paying bills, and assists with Stewardship campaigns. Additionally, Joe is a lay member to the NY Annual Conference, which is a collaboration of Methodist Church representatives from Long Island, New York City, the Hudson Valley, Kingston, and a portion of Connecticut. The Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church runs an after-school program at the Tubman Terrace Apartments, where Joe is a tutor for Grades K-5 and is also the President of the After-School Board of Directors. The Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church is the co-owner of the Harriet Tubman Terrace Apartment Complex where Joe serves as the Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

The Third organization Joe volunteers for is Dutchess Community Action Partnership, Inc. where he is the Treasurer of the Board of Directors. He is also a Youth Advisory Board member, which oversees Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Dutchess County. He works with the staff of Dutchess Community Action Partnership, Inc. in policy development, fundraising, and program expansion.

Aside from these three commitments, Joe recently became involved with an ad hoc committee to develop the former YWCA property to a center for Early Childhood Development Programs, Pre-K programs, after-school programs and a teen center.

Using the Nike slogan as a model, Joe's "Just Do It!" attitude has made him an asset to numerous programs in the community. Joe likes the feeling of being involved, giving back to the community, and being a role model for youth. Most gratifying about volunteering to him is developing new programs and watching them turn into great assets to the area. He says that "patience and public speaking" are two areas which one can improve through volunteer work and his advice for someone thinking about getting involved, well of course, "Just Do It!"



Frank Traver

It began as a childhood aspiration, which came about after I saw my first Bruce Lee movie explains **Frank Traver** (Adult Services). "I will be able to do that some day,"

Frank pronounced as a youth, referring to the lightening fast and acrobatic like punches and kicks. With hard work and determination, Frank's dream came true as he earned his 4th degree black belt, became a *Tae Kwon Do* Master Teacher (*Sa Bim Nim*) and then the director of a non-profit academy. The school in Hopewell Junction, World Tae Kwon Do Academy, where Frank trained and volunteers, is sponsored by the U.S. Tae Kwon Do Olympic Committee, and the *Kukkiwon*, which is the official Tae Kwon Do governing organization. Frank has been a volunteer teacher for 16 years and when his Master, Andrew Dedrick, passed away, Frank took over the school with one stipulation, which was to have it run

continued on page 24...



...continued from page 23

as a not-for-profit school. With help from students, Frank was able to keep the school operating and to get the school classified as a tax exempt not-for-profit institution/public charity.

More than just teaching students about how to use their hands and feet to defend themselves, Tae Kwon Do provides lessons in self-control, discipline, critical thinking and focus. Frank has taught individuals of all ages (4 – adulthood) and enjoys seeing the look of satisfaction and accomplishment on the faces of his students when they finally learn a tough move. Tae Kwon Do also provides Frank with a good workout and an increased sense of self-worth. He says, “I feel better about myself and I sleep better at night knowing I am helping others.” Frank’s advice to someone who is looking to volunteer is to find something you enjoy and have fun!



Theresa Giovannello

Theresa Giovannello
(Deputy Commissioner)
first learned about the Dutchess County Interfaith Council (DCIC) after giving a speech on behalf of the Putnam County Execu-

tive to an eager assembly of community members on World Peace Day at the Buddhist Monastery in Carmel, NY. She learned more about the organization and became enthusiastic about the chance to participate in humanitarian efforts.

DCIC runs numerous programs and events throughout the year, such as the annual local Poverty Forum; annual CROP Walk to raise funds to address hunger locally and internationally; monthly Story Circles held at different houses of worship throughout Dutchess County to develop understanding of diverse faith traditions; an Interfaith Music Festival; an annual Peace Concert; a Fair Trade Bazaar to help individuals earn a fair wage for their craft or product; and an annual Thanksgiving Interfaith Service.

Providing leadership and ideas for successful projects of the DCIC as a volunteer board member for five years, Theresa was eventually voted in as President of the Board effective January 1, 2010.

Theresa has also served as a volunteer Religious Education Instructor for confirmation classes (students age 14 and up) for the past ten years at St. Martin de Porres Church in Poughkeepsie. She is also on the Education Awards Committee of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of the Hudson Valley, which awards teachers who have made a significant difference in the life of an area student and have inspired that student to study at Harvard University. Award recipients are given a scholarship to attend a summer program at Harvard in one of two educational programs with the expectation that the information learned will be shared with other educators in the Hudson Valley. Since Theresa had been fortunate enough to attend two programs at Harvard on a scholarship from a previous employer, she felt that being on this committee would be a great way to give back.

Theresa’s advice to someone looking to volunteer, “if you really want to do it, you will find the time.” Furthermore, volunteering can help individuals gain important skills such as project management, consensus building, negotiation, listening, public speaking and tolerance, she says. “Volunteer work has made a huge difference in my life and it has helped to remind me of what I value most. Not only will volunteer work improve the lives of others, but quite possibly it will enhance your own.”



Greg Charter

A youthful quarterback signals for the play to begin along the line of scrimmage, and his teammates disperse. A deliberate throw to a receiver and a hustle towards the end zone equals a score and win for the City of Poughkeepsie Pop Warner football team. As a Pop Warner Coach for eight years and an elected member of the City of Poughkeepsie



From left to right: Ken Moody, Gail Burger, Diane Sommer, Uma Satyendra, Ed Koziol, Theresa Giovannello, Fr. Brian McWeeney, John Watson

School Board for five years, many see the talents of **Greg Charter** (Children Services) as a win for the community as well. The father of seven children, Greg knows the strategies for being successful on and off the football field. “I love football and my son played on the team when I first became a volunteer coach. I got involved to try to make a difference. Sports are great for children and youth, but education is also extremely important,” Greg explains. “I try to get the message out to students that it is not all about sports, and that doing well in school will help you make a better living in the future.” Greg has been able to amplify his philosophy to sizable crowds at bi-weekly public school board meetings.

Volunteering with the City of Poughkeepsie School District is a perfect fit as all of Greg’s own children attended school in the district. Greg’s advice to someone looking to volunteer is to choose a cause you believe in and go into it wholeheartedly, with your time and patience. Always be polite, caring and understanding as people (especially children) will never forget how you treat them. For Greg, it is a nice feeling when he meets former students and players who are all grown up, but who still remember and respect him because he was a positive influence in their lives. It is important to give back to your community, and it can be more rewarding to give of your time rather than your money. Children and youth have an innocence about them and by being a good role model and keeping their trust we can assist them in becoming well-rounded adults.



Janet Tullo
Bureau Chief, Legal Unit

The legal unit consists of one Bureau Chief and five Senior Assistant County Attorneys. Three secretarial staff give clerical support to the attorneys.

This unit:

- Provides legal advice to the various divisions and represents DSS in Family Court cases and in related matters in other court and legal forums.
- Handles cases involving adult protection, child abuse and/or neglect, foster care and severance of parental rights.
- Prosecutes support collection cases.



Legal Unit Accomplishments for 2009

- Participated in the Dutchess County Child Abuse Center
- Continued team membership in the Family Treatment Court
- Continued participation in the NYS Office of Children and Family Services Termination of Parental Rights Workgroup
- Participated in Family Court Advisory meetings
Trained caseworkers Article 10 issues and petition writing
- Participated in weekly CPS case reviews
- Participated in bi-weekly sex abuse case reviews and foster care permanency reviews
- Assisted in formulation of joint protocol for Domestic Violence and CPS service providers
- Participated in Adoption case reviews with New York State Office of Children and Family Services Adoption Specialist regarding adoption progress and obstacles to speedy adoption

LEGAL DISPOSITIONS

	2008	2009
Child Abuse Petitions	52	73
Child Neglect Petitions.....	639	815
Termination of Parental Rights	79	101
IVD Paternity	382	362
IVD Support.....	5,281	5,735
IVD Interstate Support (UIFSA)	126	178
Permanency Hearings	411	539

LEGAL STATISTICS

Child Protective Reports.....	2,655
Support Filings	7,818
Private Support Referrals	275
Fair Hearings.....	58
Collection and Resource cases.....	86
Adult Protective cases	23



Richard Ott (second from left) 2009 CROP Walk*

* Employee volunteer

The New York State Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance is the agency responsible for administering the child support program through all the local social services districts.



Martha Allers
Director, Child Support Enforcement Unit
*Fathers Day Parade**

Legislation provides automatic cost of living increases in child support orders to keep pace with inflation and allow families to stay off welfare. The legislation also allows administrative liens on property of debtors; increased access to records of financial institutions, government agencies and private entities such as utilities; and suspension of driver's, recreational and professional licenses for failure to pay child support.

This unit provides the following services free of charge to custodial parents and minors under 21 who request our services:

- Location of absent parents through a variety of computer matches available within state and federal systems.
- Establishment of paternity by filing petitions on behalf of children receiving Family or Safety Net Assistance, foster care, residential care and in division for youth facilities. Medicaid recipients/applicants are also required to cooperate with child support to establish paternity and obtain medical support.
- Support establishment for child and or child support combined with espousal support.
- Upward modification for change in circumstances, and cost of living adjustment of court orders, which are payable through the Support Collection Unit.

We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men.

—Herman Melville



*Bill Robinson, Secretary NY District Council of Nazarene Missions International (standing second from the left in the last row).**

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

Year	Amount Collected	Year	Amount Collected
1998	\$16,687,297	2004	\$26,537,960
1999	\$18,687,207	2005	\$27,636,371
2000	\$21,442,928	2006	\$28,816,452
2001	\$22,789,005	2007	\$29,764,573
2002	\$24,237,743	2008	\$31,420,299
2003	\$25,187,954	2009	\$31,162,212

- Support collection and monitoring of payments. Once support orders are established, the collection and disbursement of monies associated with that order, becomes the responsibility of the New York State Central Collection Agency.
- Enforcement of a court order.
- Income execution when there is an employer, aided by New York State's Expedited New Hire Reporting program, which locates current employers of child support debtors, keeping income executions in place and enabling new executions to begin.



Child Support Enforcement Accomplishments for 2009

- Collection of arrears from federal and state tax refunds, OTB and lottery winnings and bank accounts.
- Referral to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's program for collection and seizure of assets, which targets individuals over four months in arrears in their child support payments.
- Medical benefits execution to require enrollment of dependents in third party health insurance.
- Suspension or denial of a New York State driver's or professional license.

- Initiating violation proceedings in Family Court which may result in a jail term of up to six months for willful non-payment of child support.
- Taking liens against property and motor vehicles.
- Conducting financial investigations.

CSEU arranges professional legal services through contracted private attorneys who charge \$90 per hour. Family, medical and safety net minor recipients are not charged fees for legal representation.

- Dutchess County Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU) collected \$31,162,212 in child support in 2009. Of this amount collected, \$30,376,429 was for the benefit of families who were not in receipt of Temporary Assistance.
- CSEU processed 7,817 Family Court Petitions in 2009.
- Dutchess County is number one in "cases with health insurance ordered" compared to counties of the same size.
- We continued a contract with a second genetic testing company that collects the DNA samples on site at Family Court. In 2009, 77 customers were tested.
- CSEU continues to have collaboration with the Fathers' Rights Association of New York State. We conduct an informational session quarterly with the local group. We continue to refer non-custodial parents to the group for help. The Fathers' Rights Association educates and redirects the non-custodial parents' frustrations for the betterment of their relationships with their children.
- CSEU has provided several presentations to outside agencies to further educate the public on child support rules and procedures. A Dutchess County CSEU representative was on the Fathers' Day Parade Committee. This was the seventh official Fathers' Day Parade. It is the only documented Fathers' Day Parade in New York State.
- A Dutchess County CSEU representative is serving on the Astor Head Start Health Advisory Council and another worker is on the Policy Council. Two CSEU workers are participating on the ASSETS Key User Group Committee in Albany at the state level. A worker was invited to serve on the Hudson Valley Fatherhood Alliance Committee.

CHILD SUPPORT ACTIVITY

As of the End of the Year	2008	2009	As of the End of the Year	2008	2009
Child Support Cases Open	10,632	10,535	Cases with Collections During Year	6,093	6,033
Children Open in Support Cases	11,549	11,459	Interstate Cases with Collections During Year	326	308
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock	6,309	6,291	Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	7,717	7,605
Children Open with Paternity Established	5,806	5,804	Cases with Arrears Due During Year	7,835	7,506
Percentage of Children Open with Paternity Resolved	95.6%	95.7%	Cases with Arrears Due		
Children Needing Paternity Determination	403	410			

*From NYS OCSE DSS-157 Report

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Under the Division of
Financial and Supportive
Services are the offices
of Transitional Benefits,
Integrated Services and
Temporary Assistance/
Employment Services.



Joanne Sinagra
Director, Transitional Benefits

Volunteer,
St. Augustine - Highland*

Transitional Benefits is the home to Community Medicaid (under care, recertifications, changes, etc.), Nursing Home Intake and Under Care, Managed Care, Pre-natal Care Assistance Program (PCAP), Food Stamps, HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) and clerical support units.

The overall purpose of the programs under Transitional Benefits is to assist low income households as they meet their goals in becoming self-sufficient. This is evolving to a critical area with the current rising cost of fuel, food and employment related expenses.

FOOD STAMP CASES

1995.....	3,044
2000.....	2,651
2005.....	4,607
2006.....	4,749
2007.....	5,111
2008.....	5,229
2009.....	6,606
(As of Jan. 1, 2009)	

Food Stamps

The program's purpose is to help low-income households purchase food needed for good nutrition and health. Clients who are eligible for Food Stamps, access benefits electronically by using a benefit card and a PIN at authorized grocery stores. Benefits may be used for food products or seeds to grow food that a household can eat.

Determines eligibility for and provides Food Stamp benefits to individuals and families, households containing a mix of Temporary Assistance (TA) and non-Temporary Assistance recipients, the elderly, the disabled, Certified Group Home and Alcohol/Drug Facility residents. Pure TA households receive food stamps through the TA case.

Oversees the contract for and works in conjunction with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County to run the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program known as Eat Smart New York (ESNY). Project activities are conducted for the benefit of the Food Stamp eligible population and address food security, food safety, and dietary quality.

LETTER OF RECOGNITION

Dear Ms. Lembesis:

I am writing you to praise your supervisee, Darcy Levy. On 2/19/09 I had the pleasure of speaking with Ms. Levy concerning a patient who was having difficulty securing health coverage that would cover prescriptions for her rheumatoid arthritis.

Ms. Levy was not only helpful during that phone call, but in many phone calls placed after that, as she worked on this issue. Ms. Levy was extremely responsive and respectful of the patient at all times. On one occasion the patient contacted Ms. Levy at 4:30 on a Friday and was met with the same positive and receptive manner Ms. Levy displayed throughout multiple contacts with her.

Ms. Levy was also knowledgeable and efficient and resolved the issue in a speedy manner. This patient's health care issue was resolved and in conversations that followed, the patient attributed this to Ms. Levy's understanding professionalism. The Department of Social Services is fortunate to have Ms. Levy on staff.

Sincerely, N.K.



Darcy Levy
Medicaid



* Employee volunteer



FOOD STAMP ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY*

	2008	2009
Applications Registered	5,313	7,498
Cases Opened/Reactivated		
Open-Closed	6,097	8,177
Withdrawn	403	349
Denied	1,065	1,626
Cases Closed	4,991	6,306
Recertifications	4,901	6,413
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	11,327	12,428
Totals – All Case Activity	28,784	35,299

* From WMS WST002

- In 2009 Dutchess County Department of Social Services continued the My Benefits Electronic Food Stamp application process. This process, along with community partners Catholic Charities, Dutchess Community Action Partnership, Inc. and the Hunger Action Network, allows persons to electronically apply for Food Stamp benefits. The MyBenefits website allows a person to apply for Food Stamps 24 hours a day seven days a week from home.
- Attended the Veterans' Day ceremony at the Wallace Center as presenters.
- The Eat Smart New York program continued in 2009 to have nutrition improvement education staff available during Food Stamp recertification interviews at Dutchess County Department of Social Services. Project activities addressed food security, food safety and dietary quality. The program is provided through a contract with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County.
- Continued the New York State SSI Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP), which provides simplified program access for the SSI population of elderly and disabled individuals living alone in the community. The standardized benefits better ensure adequate nutrition for this vulnerable population.
- Continued the Food Stamp Benefits for Group Home Program (FSGHP), which simplified the budgeting for group home residents.

➤ Provided Food Stamp Benefits valued at \$27,732,893 to over 9,738 households. This represents a 69 percent increase over 2009.

➤ Obtained another waiver from the Federal time limit of three months of receipt of Food Stamps for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD's) who resided in the City of Poughkeepsie.

➤ Continued the Transitional Food Stamp Benefit Alternative. As the focus moves from welfare to work, the Food

Stamp Program has become increasingly important to clients as they leave Temporary Assistance (TA). Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA) allows qualified TA recipients to continue to receive Food Stamp benefits, remain unchanged for an established period when the TA case closes. The cases are opened by the TA under-care/Family Assistance Unit through the Separate Determination process and maintained by the Food Stamp Unit.

HEAP ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY*

	2008	2009
Applications Registered	1,820	2,051
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	1,113	1,425
Withdrawn	88	99
Denied	610	588
Cases Closed	661	733
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	1,909	2,729
Totals – All Case Activity	4,381	5,574

* From WMS WST002

HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program)

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) assists individuals with the cost of heat and energy-related expenses. Eligibility is based on income received by the household during the month in which they apply. Regular benefits assist eligible households with the cost of heat. The emergency component of HEAP meets emergency heating needs for eligible applicants as well as providing for furnace repair or replacement for client-owned homes.

HEAP Accomplishments for 2009

- Through a contract with the Dutchess Community Action Partnership continued to fund a full-time HEAP Packager. The Packager helps identify and work with low-income, energy vulnerable families who would benefit from weatherization, other energy related services, a heating equipment crisis program and a system of emergency fuel depots throughout Dutchess County.
- Approved HEAP benefits valued at \$4,522,735 to Dutchess County resident households during the 2009-2010 season.
- Repaired or replaced furnaces at a cost of \$229,842.
- Participated in Early Outreach.

The moral test of a society is how that society treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.

—Hubert Humphrey

Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

The Medicaid program provides services to the medically indigent, making payments directly to providers of medical care, such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, etc. It is funded through federal, state, and county appropriations with a local cost of approximately 18-cents for each dollar spent. To qualify for the Medicaid program, applicants must meet prescribed income and resource requirements. Medicaid also has several specialized programs, including:

- The Family Planning Benefit Program – an expansion of the family planning benefits for both men and women of child-bearing age with income at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.
- The Breast and Cervical Cancer Program provides full Medicaid coverage to individuals who have been screened by Healthy Women's Partnership and who are in need of treatment for breast or cervical cancer and whose income is under 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Family Health Plus (FHP) offers Medicaid for those individuals aged 19 to 64. It offers HMO benefits more in line with commercial plans, but with no co-pays. It only offers prospective coverage and therefore cannot go back and pay prior

bills. The income eligibility level is higher than the Medicaid income eligibility level for individuals with children. The current level is 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. For adults with no children, it remains at 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. In order to be eligible, individuals cannot be covered by other health insurance, including Medicare.

- Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities provides Medicaid for working individuals who have a disability that meets the medical criteria for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) established by the Social Security Administration (SSA) but have too much income to qualify for SSI, be between the ages of 16 and 64, have less than \$10,000 in assets and have a net income below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Medicaid Managed Care/ Family Health Plus

- Medicaid Managed Care offers Dutchess County residents an opportunity to choose a Medicaid health plan.
- Coordinates the enrollment and disenrollment of clients in receipt of Medicaid into the Managed Care Programs.
- Acts as a liaison with the Medicaid provider community, as well as a managed care advocate for clients.
- Currently maintaining the Pre-natal Care

Assistance Program (PCAP) cases for Dutchess County.

- Educate the community and local health care providers about managed care criteria.
- Approve and monitor all marketing events that take place in the county.
- Focus on preventive health care.
- There are four plans to choose from in Dutchess County. They are MVP, Fidelis, Hudson Health Plan, and WellCare.
- In response to a state mandate, Dutchess County began enrolling all Medicaid eligible participants into a managed care program. Family Health Plus (FHP) eligible cases are also required to join a managed care plan.
- Some segments of the population are excluded from enrollment. Examples: institutionalized individuals; individuals covered by a commercial plan, and individuals covered by Medicare.

FAMILY HEALTH PLUS CASES AS OF JAN. 2009

2004	1,244
2005	1,488
2006	1,561
2007	1,547
2008	1,559
2009	1,463



Medical Assistance Accomplishments for 2009

- Paid Medical Assistance Benefits for Dutchess County residents equal to \$11.35 per second, \$681 a minute, \$40,877 an hour and \$981,051 a day, amounting to a gross cost of \$345,330,115 and a net cost of \$34,930,068 to Dutchess County.
- Net Medicaid costs to the County increased three percent in 2009, which is the percent increase New York State has limited local county cost increases to. Without this Medicaid cap, our costs would have been higher. In individual areas of expenditures, there were significant percentage increases in payments for long-term home health care waived services, child care institutional medical per diems, OMH Restorative Rehabilitation, and managed care plan premiums.
- Processed 118 disability reviews. This was a decrease from the prior year as we had no audit request.
- Using Wellcare, Hudson Health Plan, OMH Restorative Rehabilitation, MVP and Fidelis as providers, 80 percent of individuals were enrolled in managed care.
- Processed 1,076 Pre-Natal Care and Assistance Program (PCAP) applications.
- Processed 161 family planning applications.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY*

	2008	2009
Applications Registered.....	8,151	9,049
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	8,379	8,901
Withdrawn	467	384
Denied	2,668	2,585
Cases Closed	7,126	6,664
Recertifications.....	6,379	7,046
Changes to Active/ Closed Cases	35,968	37,411
TOTALS – All Case Activity	60,987	62,991

* From WMS WST002

FAMILY HEALTH PLUS CASES AS OF JAN. 2009

2004	1,244
2005	1,488
2006	1,561
2007	1,547
2008	1,559
2009	1,463

MA / SSI CASES AS OF AS OF JAN. 2009

1995	3,998
2000	4,341
2005	4,853
2006	5,041
2007	5,113
2008	5,170
2009	4,707

MEDICAL EXPENDITURES BY PROVIDER *

Provider Type	2008	2009	Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	\$33,286,048	\$34,037,220	2.3%
Hospital Outpatient Services	\$4,849,019	\$6,753,328	39.3%
Skilled Nursing Facilities	\$85,441,376	\$81,687,675	-4.4%
Intermediate Care Facility Services	\$8,309,168	\$8,760,638	5.4%
Clinics	\$19,048,972	\$20,502,828	7.6%
Hospice	\$1,637,955	\$1,124,579	-31.3%
Physicians Services	\$2,283,697	\$2,741,685	20.1%
Dental Services	\$1,459,793	\$1,626,629	11.4%
Other Practitioners Services	\$3,643,455	\$3,348,838	-8.1%
Child Care Institutional Medical Per Diem	\$1,808,339	\$1,696,491	-6.2%
Personal Care Services	\$10,555,963	\$11,981,639	13.5%
Home Health Services	\$2,021,961	\$1,967,391	-2.7%
Assisted Living Services	\$2,247,487	\$2,404,346	7.0%
Long Term Home Health Care Waived Services	\$499,851	\$455,257	-8.9%
Home & Community Based Waived Services	\$49,930,488	\$58,878,134	17.9%
Rehabilitation & Therapy	\$678,759	\$593,616	-12.5%
Office of Mental Hygiene Restorative Rehabilitation	\$7,118,052	\$7,254,156	1.9%
Drugs & Supplies	\$22,850,089	\$26,842,819	17.5%
Eye Appliances & Durable Medical Equipment	\$849,180	\$829,850	-2.3%
Prepaid Care	\$37,596,519	\$48,002,499	27.7%
Case Management	\$6,317,443	\$6,865,487	8.7%
Prepaid Mental Health	\$4,941	0	-100%
Medical Transportation	\$867,092	\$5,789,563	567.7%
Lab & X-Ray Services	\$1,012,263	\$962,070	-5.0%
Other	\$748,951	\$555,660	-25.8%
Total	\$305,066,861	\$335,662,398	10%

* From WMS WST002

Employee Appreciation Day – 2009

“An All American Breakfast”

Perhaps no “volunteer” serves his or her community more than those who serve in the Armed Forces. On November 16, 2009, we celebrated our 27th Annual Employee Appreciation Day by sponsoring “An All American Breakfast” in honor of our DSS staff members who served in the military.

Employees were encouraged to wear something patriotic and were treated to a breakfast of Belgian Waffles with whipped cream and fresh fruit, bagels, coffee cakes, yogurt, bacon, sausage, tea and coffee. Staff members were also asked to donate a non-perishable food item to our own Elizabeth Ann Karlson Food Bank.

Military Veterans were honored for their service with the presentation of corsages and posters outlining their military careers. The event was extremely well received with applause and cheers greeting our “greatest volunteers” as they entered the Main Conference Room.



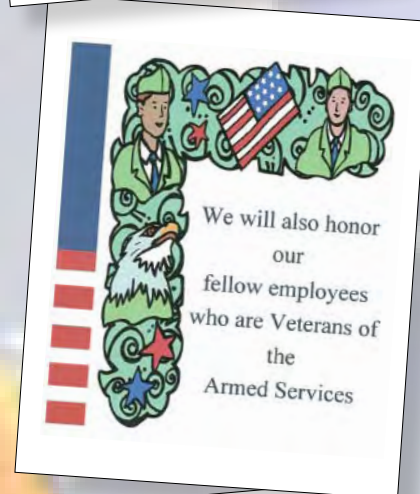
James O'Connor

▲ James O'Connor served in the United States Marine Corps as Corporal from 1971 to 1973.



Alethea Owens

▲ Alethea Owens served in the United States Marine Corps as a Lance Corporal stationed at Cherry Point, NC from March 1995 to March 1997.

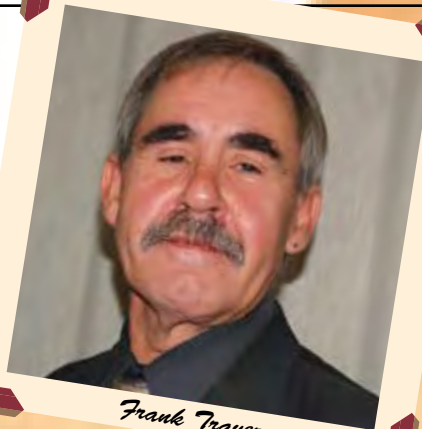


Employee Appreciation Day was held on November 16, 2009. Dutchess Social Services employees who are Veterans of the United States Armed Services were honored at the All American Breakfast.



Mark VanDetta

▲ Mark VanDetta served in the United States Navy for six years earning the rank of E-5. He was the Data Systems Technician. He was assigned to the Aircraft Carrier USS John F. Kennedy from 1980 to 1984. He was deployed to the Mediterranean from 1980 to 1981 and 1983 to 1984, and to the Persian Gulf from 1981 to 1982. Mark also earned Expeditionary Medal for War Service in Lebanon and Grenada from 1982 to 1984.



Frank Traver

◀ Frank Traver served in the United States Army from February 14, 1969 to December 18, 1971. He was assigned to the Signal Battalion 82nd Airborne Division. He served with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam as the COMSEC Logistical Support Section Chief for the commanding general. His highest ranking achieved was Buck Sergeant E-5.



Jessie Normil

◀ Jessie Normil served in the United States Army as a Specialist from 1981 to 1987.



Clayton Harriman

◀ Clayton Harriman served in the United States Army from 1968 to 1970 stationed in Germany.

John Floers Project and Fathers Day Parade *



Douglas Katt

◀ Douglas Katt served with the United States Coast Guard for four years and with the United States Army Reserve for six years.



Gregory Charter

▲ Gregory Charter served in the United States Marine Corps as a Lance Corporal from 1984 to 1986.

* Employee volunteer

See more photos page 45



Cathy Connis
Director, Integrated Services

The Integrated Services Division includes two units, Medicaid and Temporary Assistance. Together they work to promote self-sufficiency, personal responsibility and “work first” (the expectation that adult applicants and recipients will consider work their first priority and will view work as their primary goal, regardless of how many barriers the individual or family may have to overcome). The division handles three major programs: Family Assistance/Safety Net Assistance, and Medicaid.

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.

—Edward Everett Hale

This division handles three major programs: Family Assistance/Safety Net Assistance, and Medicaid.

Temporary Assistance Intake

This unit:

- Determines eligibility for the various programs. Screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, and any other physical or psychological barriers to employment and refers individuals to the Domestic Violence Liaison, Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor, or Family Development worker from Dutchess Community Action Partnership. All except the Family Development worker are located on site.
- Refers potentially employable individuals to the Employment Unit for an assessment.
- Refers individuals to the Child Support Unit to assist in establishing paternity and/or obtaining support.
- Authorizes payments including recurring assistance, one-time payments, either emergency payment to prevent eviction or utility shut-off or supportive services such as car insurance, car repairs, clothing allowance, or fees for licenses, etc.

- Opens Food Stamp cases and does separate determinations for Medicaid, for those not eligible for cash assistance. Makes referrals for child care and for other programs available in the community as appropriate.

Medical Assistance (Medicaid) Intake

This unit:

- Determines eligibility for various programs. These programs include the Medicare Savings Program, Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, Family Planning Benefits Program, Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus, COBRA, AIDS Health Insurance, Short Term Home Health Care Programs and Short Term Nursing Home Care.
- Screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse and disabilities.
- Refers individuals to the Domestic Violence Liaison, Certified Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counselor, Managed Care Enrollers, Community Resources Programs and the Social Security Administration.
- Refers individuals to the Child Support Unit to assist in establishing paternity, support or health insurance coverage.





LETTER OF RECOGNITION

Dear Mr. Allers:

I just wanted to inform you that Nicole Cusimano, in the Temporary Assistance department, worked with a tenant of mine to help secure back rent and keep her in my apartment. G. has been a Section 8 tenant of mine since 2004 and owing back rent was in violation of her Section 8 agreement. G., after going to at least three people in the social services department, landed with Nicole, who quickly grasped the situation and was able to help G. to keep her in her apartment.

As a landlord, I have dealt with multiple social services workers in the past, and have found Nicole attentive to the situation. You should be pleased to have her in your organization. With more individuals like Nicole, things would move faster and there would be fewer problems.

Although I have not spoken or dealt with Ms. Cusimano since February 2009, her positive impression has remained and I thought a letter recognizing her efforts would be in order.

Very truly yours, K.L.



Nicole Cusimano
Intake Unit





Christopher Corman
Supervisor SIU

2009
CROP Walk;
2009 March
of Dimes Walk*

Front End Detection is a federally mandated process that relies on “indicators” (such as working off the books) to target applicants for Temporary Assistance, Medicaid and day care for an intensive review during the eligibility determination process before a case is opened and benefits are provided.

* Employee volunteer



The unit:

- Researches, secures and recovers appropriate assets from assistance recipients, including taking mortgages on real estate, placing liens on lawsuits, and filing claims against estates.
- Processes retroactive Supplemental Security Income benefits received, determining what can be retained as repayment of assistance.
- Arranges and pays for indigent burials.
- Determines and recovers overpayments from assistance recipients.
- Makes collateral contacts, performs computer reporting systems checks and makes field visits to assist workers in determining eligibility.
- Conducts fraud investigations on all cases referred by staff, and reports from the public and state, of recipients not entitled to receive benefits. The investigation may include field visits, obtaining collateral verification, reviewing computerized records, and interviews to determine if fraud was committed.
- Investigates any instance of fraud identified through the Automated Finger Imaging System (AFIS), which utilizes the latest technology to establish positive identification on adults seeking assistance. The system captures

CASES CLOSED DUE TO FRAUD

2001.....	06
2003.....	65
2005.....	100
2006.....	141
2007.....	93
2008.....	104
2009.....	74

(As of Jan. 1, 2009)

FRONT-END DETECTION (FEDS)

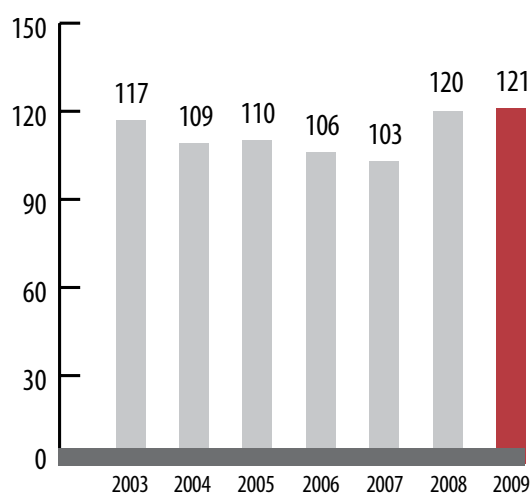
Completed FEDS Interviews....	1,993
Cases Denied/Withdrawn	1,340
Cases Opened	726

demographic data, client photo, and electronic finger images of the left and right index fingers. It is the largest and most sophisticated of any social services finger imaging system in the nation and serves as a model for other states.

- Refers appropriate cases to the District Attorney for prosecution or disqualification.
- Reviews the results of computer file matches done by New York State including:
 - Interstate matches. This report indicates clients who access their benefits out of state for three consecutive months.
 - PARIS matches which indicate case may be active in two different states/districts.
 - SSI matches to identify cases that may no longer reside in New York State as well as the United States.
 - Monthly matches with the Department of Correctional Services and the Division of Criminal Justice to identify incarcerated individuals who are in receipt of assistance.
 - Matches with Criminal Justice Services to disclose Temporary Assistance clients who are fugitive felons, parole violators or probation violators. Such individuals may not be eligible for assistance, if arresting agency will verify they are fleeing prosecution.



NUMBER OF BURIALS



COST AVOIDANCE

Temporary Assistance	\$4,265,136
Medicaid.....	\$7,069,842
Food Stamps.....	\$1,507,788

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT ACTIVITY

	2008	2009
Completed Investigations.....	518.....	377
Confessions of Judgment.....	132.....	76
Number of Repayment Agreements Signed.....	2.....	76
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed.....	\$9,632.....	\$188,423
Food Stamp Disqualifications.....	9.....	3
Value of Food Stamp Disqualifications.....	\$1,269.....	\$488
Temporary Assistance Disqualifications	12.....	7
Value of Temporary Assistance Disqualifications	\$7,686.....	\$401
Fraud Cases Referred for Prosecution	2.....	1
Convictions Obtained	1.....	3

FUNDS RECOVERED BY TYPE

	2008	2009
Affidavits & Article 13	\$6,197	\$4,223
Proceeds & Mortgages.....	\$68,045	\$0
Claims Against Estates	\$87,084	\$562,404
Lawsuit Settlements	\$677,909	\$801,785
Mortgages	\$20,337	\$26,398
SSI Repay & Volunteer	\$571,015	\$475,181
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$17,408	\$15,890
Personal Accounts & Others..	\$73,578	\$89,436
Income Executions.....	\$60,919	\$55,585
TOTALS	\$1,582,492 ...	\$2,030,902

COLLECTION ACTIVITY

	2008	2009
Lottery Intercepts	\$23,069	\$15,544
Tax Intercepts	\$38,059	\$22,084
Fees (parking, guardian, adoption home study, phone, postage, Confessions of Judgment, copies, subpoenas).....	\$39,195	\$33,638
Cash collections (TANF, SN, MA, Services, FS, SN-SSI Repayments).....	\$3,610,294 ...	\$5,650,525
TOTAL	\$3,710,617 ...	\$5,721,791

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again. —Mahatma Gandhi



Jacky Cooper
Director, Temporary Assistance
and Employment

The Temporary Assistance and Employment Units consist of Employables, Individuals with Barriers, and Child Only cases. Together the Units work to promote self-sufficiency, personal responsibility and “work first.” We expect adult applicants and recipients to make “employment” their first priority and will make their primary goal, finding a job regardless of any barriers that must be overcome.

This division handles four major programs. They are: Family Assistance, Safety Net Assistance, Employment and Training, and Day Care.

Family Assistance

This is provided to a family that includes a minor child living with a caretaker relative, or to a pregnant woman. Adults and minor heads of households receiving assistance are subject to a life-time limit of 60 months after which the individual becomes ineligible for cash assistance unless he or she meets very strict exemption criteria.

The Family Assistance program fosters recipient self-sufficiency. Recipients undergo an assessment of their employability skills, training needs, and unless exempted, must participate in assigned work activities. Employed recipients are now able to have 47 percent of their gross earnings disregarded when determining their need for assistance and level of benefit.

- Our Family Assistance caseload has increased from 629 to 720.

Safety Net Assistance

Safety Net Assistance (SNA) is a temporary assistance program that is funded jointly by New York State and counties. Individuals and families, who are ineligible for Family Assistance or other federally reimbursed Temporary Assistance programs, receive Safety Net Assistance (SNA). Most SNA recipients are single individuals or childless couples. They must engage in assigned work activities to receive assistance, unless exempted by a physical or mental disability.

Safety Net Assistance consists of two components: cash and non-cash. In the non-cash component, food, shelter, fuel and utility allowances are issued directly to the vendor leaving the recipient with only a small, if any, personal needs allowance. SNA is provided as cash unless the household falls into one of the four categories, which must receive non-cash. These categories are:

- Households with an adult who has reached the 24-month lifetime limit on cash assistance.
- Households with an adult head of household who is unable to work because of substance abuse.
- Households with an adult or head of household who has refused to participate in drug/alcohol screening, assessment, or treatment.
- Families that have reached the five-year (60 months) limit on Family Assistance.

Cash SNA recipients are limited to a 24 month lifetime limit of cash assistance, with months counted since the August 1997 start of the SNA program. After the 24th month, assistance must be provided as non-cash SNA, unless the adult head of the household is exempt due to disability or an HIV positive status.

- Our Safety Net Assistance (SN) caseload increased from 585 in 2008 to 722 in 2009.
- The number of SN individuals in receipt of assistance that are deemed





not employable who are mandated into treatment has increased from 123 to 148. Some of these SN individuals are SSI recipients who are in receipt of SN supplement to cover the cost of temporary housing. Homelessness is an ever increasing reason for individuals to be receiving Family Assistance or Safety Net Assistance. There is not enough affordable housing available and most individuals do not have enough income and/or resources to cover the daily cost of a hotel.

- The number of individuals who have reached their 60 month time limit and have transitioned to Safety Net cash or non-cash has increased. The number of families that are in receipt of Safety Net non-cash has increased by 14 cases to 62. This increase shows that it has gotten harder to transition individuals to self-sufficiency.
- Diversion payments continued to be used to meet those individual's needs with rent, security, transportation, car insurance, tools, clothing, and licensing fees in order for the individual to obtain or retain employment. Diversion payments decrease the need for on-going Family Assistance or Safety Net Assistance. Those individuals/families who are no longer eligible for Temporary Assistance due to employment or increased child support payments receive transitional MA/FS and/or day care benefits.

Employment

This unit:

- Assists able-bodied clients to attain self-sufficiency and helps those who are temporarily or permanently incapacitated to obtain necessary treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Conducts, in conjunction with BOCES, employment assessments, helping clients to identify skills, interests and talents.
- Develops employment plans and makes recommendations for and referrals to various DSS or community operated employment and training programs. Programs include:

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another.

—Erma Bombeck

- Supervised Job Search – A State mandated program for employable Safety Net and TANF applicants and recipients. Clients must engage in up to 40 hours of job search activities weekly. Staff supervises this activity.
- Work Experience – A program for clients that evaluates their skills and interests and assigns them to appropriate employers. We have developed over 107 work experience positions in 37 different public or not-for-profit agencies.
- Authorizes payment for supportive services such as transportation, licenses, and work clothing each client needs in order to obtain a job or participate in programs.
- Together with Temporary Assistance Eligibility staff, conducts an orientation regarding Temporary Assistance, Medicaid and Food Stamp benefits, employment requirements and transitional benefits two times daily to applicants for Temporary Assistance. Orientation consists of a video, questions and answers and each applicant has access to written materials on all programs mentioned.
- Contracts with several local agencies:
- Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce and Dutchess County Regional

Chamber of Commerce – Mentoring Programs together employ mentors to work with individuals to assist them in transitioning to work by helping them to find solutions for employment issues and teach them how to manage personal and family issues related to working.

This program continues to thrive. There were 111 active participants. The goal is to assist individuals in retaining jobs. However, the mentors have been instrumental in assisting individuals in obtaining employment and advancing in their careers.

- Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce – Responsible Parent Program mentor who works with individuals who are sanctioned or about to be sanctioned for failing to comply with employment activities. This program had 37 participants, an increase of 54 percent over last year.
- Youth Employment Services (YES) serves the youth of Dutchess County between the ages of 14 – 20. The YES Program works together with local businesses and manufacturers, the youth, parents, school districts, Dutchess County Department of Social Services, Dutchess Community College, and the mentoring program. The

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CASES

1990	1995	2000	2005	2007	2008	2009
1,519	2,387	1,001	683	581	629	629

SAFETY NET (As of 01/01/09)

1990	1995	2000	2005	2007	2008	2009
649	968	361	519	553	585	579

varieties of educational and vocational programs are designed to meet the needs of this diverse population and include:

- **Educational Programs:**

Tutoring
GED
Soft Skills
Life Skills
Educational field trips and workshops

- **Vocational Programs:**

Community Service
Community and Business Internships
Job Placement
Forty nine youths enrolled in this program.

- Dutchess BOCES – provides vocational educational training for those who have no marketable skills. One hundred three individuals completed the various training programs offered by BOCES.

- **Services provided include:**

- Diagnostic vocational evaluation.
- Assessments/TABE testing.
- Academic training for individuals requiring English as a Second Language and/or remediation and further development of reading, writing, computational and related communication skills.
- Job readiness training to enhance actual job-related skills or increase clients' employability by building good work habits (showing up when scheduled, being on time, displaying business-like attitude, dressing appropriately, grooming).
- Supervised work experience placements.
- Workshops – a pre-employment curriculum for hard-to-serve clients, designed to help them become aware, understand, accept and ultimately change unproductive behaviors.
- Intensive Case Management Services – provide individualized plans to individuals who are sanctioned and/or have significant barriers to employment. The Case Manager acts as an advocate for the

client. Our Intensive Case Manager was out on leave for several months and then she resigned. A new case manager was hired at the beginning of November. We plan to work closely with the new case manager to get this program up and running to the level it was. This service provides an important one-on-one service to hard-to-serve individuals with multiple barriers that prevent them from becoming self-sufficient.

- Continued provision of Information Dissemination projects that include the design and publication of our annual report and other brochures and tools for use in the community and with welfare to work clients.
- Work Skills Training is a 50 hour pre-employment program to help:
 - Set and achieve employment goals.
 - Overcome barriers to successful employment.
 - Improve written and verbal communication skills.
 - Improve presentation and interview skills.

Create and/or update resume`.

Keep and/or advance on the job.

Twenty five completed this training program.

Day Care

Day Care program is designed to help low-income families meet their child care needs. Low Income Day Care is granted to anyone who applies and provides all requested documentation and has gross income below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty level. No interview is currently required and there is no waiting list. There is, however, a parent fee that must be paid based on the parent's income. The minimum fee is \$1 per week.

For calendar year 2009, 853 families and 1,470 children were subsidized by the Low-Income Day Care Program. We are still operating without a waiting list, which means that anyone who applies and is found eligible can receive services.



(Back row, left) Sandy Favata, Supervisor Eastern Dutchess Government Center, is on the Friends of the Library board for the Staatsburg Library, and is a participant in the knitting group, "Purl Jam" that raises money for the library from the raffle of handmade organic undyed wool afghans.*

* Employee volunteer

**TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY**

	2008	2009
Applications Registered	7,859	8,609
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	3,128	3,277
Withdrawn	209	151
Denied	5,067	5,649
Cases Closed	2,121	2,027
Recertifications	1,267	1,527
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	9,182	11,016
Totals – Case Activity	20,974	23,647

*From WMS WST002

This unit:

- Processes applications for day care subsidies for teen parents, low-income working parents and transitional day care services for those individuals whose Temporary Assistance cases are closing. Monitors legally exempt providers, reviewing all enrollment forms to ensure that the provider and the home meet all health and safety requirements and that there are no reported criminal convictions.
- Monitors the number of children that each provider cares for as this is limited for exempt providers.
- Contracts with the Child Care Council of Dutchess, Inc. to provide recruitment, registration and inspection of child care providers and assist clients in locating child care providers for their children.
- Meets with the Child Care Council to review the DSS process and to answer any questions that providers may have in order to assist all providers in the billing process.
- Works with the Child Care Council to provide information and supplies to providers.

Paul Revere earned his living as a silversmith. But what do we remember him for? His volunteer work. All activism is volunteering in that it's done above and beyond earning a living and deals with what people really care passionately about.

—Susan J. Ellis

Temporary Assistance Accomplishments for 2009

- Provided \$12,854,598 in temporary assistance payments to or on behalf of clients
- Provided \$5,958,869 in day care assistance on behalf of Dutchess County residents.
- Provided \$840 in Grants of Assistance for guide dogs.
- Purchased \$1,147,029 in case management and employment-related services from Dutchess County BOCES and Dutchess Community Action Partnership.
- Purchased \$420,985 in employment-related and mentoring services for clients from the Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber and the Dutchess County Regional Chamber.
- Intensive Case Manager has assisted five hard-to-serve individuals in obtaining employment and one extremely hard-to-serve individual enroll in VESID. This case manager makes home visits and site visits to employers and/or WEP sites as needed. This one-on-one intensive case management is exactly what is needed to move our remaining clients to self-sufficiency.
- YES Program continued in 2009. This program includes mentoring and tutoring for individuals between 14 and 20 attending school as well as educational workshops and field trips. Internships and jobs are still an important part of this program along with the on-going mentoring. Forty nine youths enrolled in this program.
- In 2009 we again had four TANF clients hired for temporary file room positions. Two are currently in the positions, one has gotten another temporary position within the agency, and one has remained off assistance.
- This year the Temporary Assistance computer training was done differently. Twenty-two participants between the ages of 16 and 18 attended intense one-day training, held at Dutchess County Department of Social Services, instead of whole week-end training. The training was again provided by Instructional Access. At the end of previous computer training, the students were given a desktop computer. This year they were presented with a laptop, printer and a backpack.

Important Internet Website Addresses

Child Care Council of Dutchess

<http://www.childcaredutchess.org>

Dutchess County

<http://www.dutchessny.gov>

Dutchess County Department of Social Services

<http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/countygov/departments/socialservices/ssindex.htm>

Dutchess Community Action Partnership

<http://www.dutchesscap.org/>

Dutchess Outreach, Inc.

<http://dutchessoutreach.org>

Grace Smith House

<http://gracesmithhouse.org>

New York State

<http://www.state.ny.us>

New York State Adoption Service

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt>

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

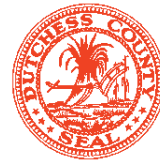
<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us>

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

<http://www.otda.state.ny.us>

New York State Kids' Well-Being Indicator Clearinghouse

<http://www.nyskwic.org>



2008 DSS Annual Report Receives Award of Merit from NSPRA





2009 Computer Training Workshop

On Tuesday August 18th, twenty TANF teens between the ages of 16-18 were invited to participate in the Computer Training Workshop at DSS. As in the previous two years, Instructional Access provided top notch instructors for the training and each student worked on a computer that became his or her own at the end of the session.

This year, three major changes were instituted: instead of a three day weekend event which included younger teens, we had a compressed, acceler-

ated one day program with teens who were near achieving a High School diploma and/or were going to college; the program was held at DSS instead of at a hotel; the students went home with a laptop instead of a desk top computer. Once again, the students received valuable computer programs which they downloaded onto their computers and proceeded to master MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. They also received a Job Hunting Handbook and learned resume writing and interviewing skills. We achieved a 100% success rate as all attendees completed the necessary work and left the training with new skills, a computer, a printer and much appreciation!

The students were very fortunate to have Fran DiGrandi of the Computer Information Systems department assist throughout the day as a back-up trainer. Her excitement for the group



was on par with their own and was evidenced through her commitment and undivided attention starting at 7:30 a.m. Fran did not wait for students to ask for her help. She jumped right in to make sure they were able to keep up with the instruction, giving a little assistance and a lot of encouragement. In addition, there were others who played major roles in making this day a huge success. Cathy Connis worked diligently behind the scenes to identify the students and ensure all the necessary paperwork was completed before and after the event as well as explain expectations of the program. Pat Donovan, Jennifer Bixby and Kara Cerilli helped ensure the students safely arrived and departed.





Accounting Unit

*You give but little when you give of
your possessions. It is when you give
of yourself that you truly give.*

—Kahlil Gibran



Child Advocacy Center Program staff



ABCD Group Meeting

*One of the things I keep learning is that the secret
of being happy is doing things for other people.*

—Dick Gregory



Fran DiGrandi

*Walk to Cure Diabetes, Tech support to Hyde Park
United Methodist Church, 2009 CRÖP Walk**



Donna Robinson

*Board Director, Care Net Pregnancy Center of Hudson
Valley, Surrogate Decision-Making Committee,
NYS Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy
for Persons with Disabilities**



Patricia Malinski

*Volunteer at St. Francis Hospital**

* Employee volunteer

Employee Appreciation Day

***"An All American Breakfast" November 16, 2009
(Honoring our Veterans)***





Spotlight on Volunteers



Dutchess County Department of Social Services
60 Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
845.486.3000