



...Because every child deserves a childhood

Spring/Summer 2009 • Volume 32

www.astorservices.org

IN THIS ISSUE

Donations	2
Astor Happenings.....	4
Events Corner.....	6

BREAKING NEWS...

Astor's School Age Day Treatment Program in Poughkeepsie Opens School Year in New Location!

Our School Age Day Treatment Program serving children ages 5 - 12 recently moved to the former Mt. Carmel School in Poughkeepsie NY. The official Ribbon Cutting and open house will take place on November 12th. Be sure to check our website and Spring 2010 issue for more information about the school!

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I would first like to thank all of our supporters who give us their time, talent and treasures, for their continued support of our work on behalf of children and families! Examples of your generosity are highlighted throughout this issue of our newsletter.

While balancing the current economic challenges our nation is facing with providing the best possible services to our children and families, Astor's Board of Directors has been very busy! They led the effort of a strategic planning process that resulted in the approval of our 2009 – 2012 Strategic Plan, which is both far-reaching and pragmatic; one that balances our desire to be on the cutting edge of service provision, with our goal of delivering the best possible care, treatment and education to our clients on a daily basis. The plan builds on the successful processes of the prior plan by becoming more inclusive in both information-gathering and in identifying key issues – it is a living and working document that will guide our activities over the next four years.

The Board also approved a name change from **The Astor Home for Children to Astor Services for Children & Families**, the product of a year-long re-branding process. The new name, Astor Services for Children & Families, clearly communicates to our community the broad range of programs and services we provide to a changing and diverse client base. We have also updated our website and other marketing materials to reflect our new name and logo. Please visit our website at www.astorservices.org.



James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO

Finally, after engaging in these organizational strategic processes, we decided to review our mission and vision statements, which resulted in us updating both: to be more descriptive of the work we are engaged in and the ultimate impact we would like to make in the future. Both are reflected in this issue of our newsletter.

Our commitment to providing the best care treatment and education for our children and families is unwavering during this time of great need. Now, more than ever we need people to invest with us to ensure our work continues. Thank you on behalf of all the children and families we serve for your continued support as we navigate these difficult times.

OUR MISSION

To provide behavioral and educational services in a caring environment where children and their families find strength, healing, hope and trust.

DONATIONS: TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

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Hickey Center in the Bronx was the Recipient of Deloitte IMPACT Day Effort

The Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development in the Bronx was selected by global financial services company Deloitte as a recipient of their annual IMPACT Day that took place on June 5th. IMPACT Day is Deloitte's company-wide volunteer day. Each year they reach out to numerous non-profit agencies throughout New York City and Westchester hoping to make a positive impact on the local community.

The Deloitte volunteers worked on a landscaping project to beautify the tricycle path that was constructed last year in memory of Lawrence F. Hickey's wife, Jean. "The children love riding on the path and it is one of their favorite activities." says Joan DiBlasi, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Bronx Community-Based Behavioral Health & Prevention Programs. The tricycle path construction job had an unfinished component: a flower garden in the center of the path. Deloitte's volunteers were asked to assist in making the garden a reality by weeding, adding new soil, and planting flowers. On the day of the volunteer project, it rained nonstop. The rain, however, did not deter the com-



A volunteer isn't afraid to get dirty while planting flowers along the path!

mitted volunteers and staff who worked until the project was completed!

In addition, a local Pelham nursery donated additional plants and soil that helped to enhance the look of the garden. The children, parents and staff are enjoying the garden immensely, and it has added to the overall beautification of the path thanks to the committed Deloitte staff and volunteers! "Many thanks to Donna Randles, Kathy Karich, Kevin Sohr, Stephen Doka, Luke O'Malley, Andrew, Hank and all who helped with this project," says Joan DiBlasi, Ph.D.



Volunteers work diligently through the rain to beautify the tricycle path!

DONATIONS: TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

Astor's Early Childhood Coordinated Services Initiative received \$45,000 from Dyson

In April, Astor received a \$45,000 grant from the Dyson Foundation to go towards a Bi-lingual Parent Infant Educator for our Early Childhood Coordinated Services Initiative program (ECCSI) in Dutchess County.

Astor took the lead in forming ECCSI, a collaboration of Dutchess County service providers who work together to coordinate a system of health, education, mental health and social services to strengthen families of young children (ages 0-5) at risk of being placed outside the home. Prevention and intervention services are key components of the program, and the

Bi-lingual Parent Infant Educator works with children and their families to identify unmet needs and strives to fill them efficiently and effectively.

“We deeply appreciate Dyson’s continued support of the Bi-lingual Parent Infant Educator, whose work is of great value to our community. This grant will help Astor Services for Children & Families and its partners to continue providing high-quality, essential services to children and families in our community who need it most,” says James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families.

Arbor Day Tree Planting in Rhinebeck –Thanks to Central Hudson

As part of Central Hudson’s commitment to the environment, Astor was chosen to participate in their Arbor Day Tree Planting project. Paul Tesoro, Central Hudson, Nancy Amy, Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce and Jim McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor, were among the group that gathered on a bright sunny day on April 24th to plant a tree at Astor’s Rhinebeck, NY location. Adams Fairacre Farms supplied the beautiful dogwood tree that is growing nicely!



Paul Tesoro, Jim McGuirk, Ph.D., & Nancy Amy

Enterprise’s Ice Cream Truck – A Big Hit



Astor staff enjoy a treat from the ice cream truck!

On August 8th, Enterprise Rent-A-Car sponsored a visit by the ice cream truck to the Residential Programs in Rhinebeck, NY. The children and staff enjoyed the cool and delicious treat on a hot summer day. Many thanks to Enterprise Rent-a-Car for their generous and fun gift!

Astor Has a New Name and Look

Formerly the Astor Home for Children, we are now Astor Services for Children & Families. In addition to our new name, our logo was updated. Both the name and logo change will better reflect the changing and diverse client base we serve, as well as our pride in our beginning as a residential treatment program sponsored by Catholic Charities. Through our commitment to offering the highest quality care by our compassionate and dedicated staff, Astor has become so much more than just a “home for children” in the over 55 years we have been serving children and families. Please visit our updated website at www.astorservices.org!



...Because every child deserves a childhood

Astor’s New Mission and Vision

The Board approved our new Mission and Vision:

Mission: To provide behavioral and educational services in a caring environment where children and their families find strength, healing, hope and trust.

Vision: To see children meet life’s challenges, pursue their dreams, and reach their full potential.

ASTOR HAPPENINGS



Kailah Ridley, student being presented with the Joel Robert Crenshaw Award by David Crenshaw, Ph.D.

Astor Receives Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval!

Astor underwent a highly successful five-day review in January by The Joint Commission, who accredits and certifies health care organizations and programs in the U.S. This exceptional review reaffirms our commitment to provide the highest quality service and care to the children and families we serve. Astor is one of few community-based behavioral health organizations in the state to achieve this recognition. In addition, Astor voluntarily chooses to go through this rigorous assessment as a way to measure its work against the highest standards in the healthcare industry. We have obtained this recognition continuously since 1974!



“Throughout the five days, the surveyors reported their appreciation for the quality of the programs Astor provides. At every location visited (12 sites in Dutchess County, Orange County and the Bronx), they pointed out the quality of our staff they interviewed. All personnel were well informed about their clients and demonstrated professionalism, respect for their clients, and commitment to Astor’s Core Values. We can all be proud of the work we do everyday for the thousands of children we serve in our programs, and want to thank everyone including staff, Board and volunteers, for their commitment to our clients and to our agency,” says James McGuirk, Ph.D., Astor’s Executive Director/CEO.

Children’s Awards Day

The Astor Learning Center held their Annual Children’s Awards Ceremony on June 18th. The ceremony celebrated the achievements of all the children by honoring each child with an award. Awards were presented for academic achievements, improvement in social skills, and strengths in athletics, arts, and music.

“This event is a chance for us to recognize and appreciate the hard work and commitment of the children and staff here at Astor. Awards Day gives our children a chance to be proud of all they’ve accomplished during the school year and have a little fun too,” says Sue Keegan, Principal, Astor Learning Center.

The ceremony was not dampened by the rain! It was held outdoors under a tent, where family members, former students, Astor’s staff and Board members were in attendance. They all enjoyed a barbecue lunch after the conclusion of the ceremony.

“The Joint Commission standards represent the highest standards for quality in behavioral health. By working to meet those standards, we continue to raise the bar of excellence throughout our treatment programs,” says Suzanne Button, Ph.D., Astor’s Director of Program Improvement, Outcomes Management.



ASTOR HAPPENINGS

The David and Robert Crenshaw Training Fund Launched

The David and Robert Crenshaw Training Fund was created in January 2009 in honor of David Crenshaw, Ph.D. and his brother Robert Crenshaw. Robert Crenshaw, who suffered from some of the same challenges as our children, was an inspiration to Dr. Crenshaw and his career. Dr. Crenshaw began working at Astor as a Clinician in 1978. He was also the Director of Clinical Training and American Psychological Association (APA) Internship. He retired from Astor in 2001 but continues his affiliation as a volunteer Board member. He is the founder and director of the Rhinebeck Child and Family Center in Rhinebeck, NY and a published author many times over. In an article Dr. Crenshaw wrote for the March/April 2006 Psychotherapy Networker, entitled, "In His Footsteps...Lesson of acceptance from an older brother," Dr. Crenshaw wrote, "I am not able to help every kid and family who seeks my assistance. All I can do is to remember what Bob taught me – not to blame those who seek my help when I can't help them."

The purpose of the Fund is to promote continued training for Astor's employees and the wider community of service providers, all aimed to improve the lives of children and families. Astor is committed to ensuring that our highly qualified staff members continue to have access to cutting-edge training.

"It gives me great pleasure to have the Training Fund named in honor of David and Robert Crenshaw, both have been an inspiration to the Astor family, says James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families.

Astor has operated a clinical training program for decades. We have also been called on by other community-based agen-

cies struggling with quality of care issues for technical assistance. An aspect of our mission is to provide the best quality services in the community as well as to share what we have learned with others. Throughout our history, we have brought in nationally and internationally recognized experts to speak on important topics and train its staff and other service providers on issues that are directly impacting children and families, and how services are provided. These lectures and service



provider trainings were always filled to capacity, and the common theme running through all the feedback was the need for on-going, sustainable, lectures and trainings.

We are delighted that several former psychology interns and supporters have already contributed to this Training Fund. To ensure that training opportunities (a need for Astor's staff and the community at-large) is ongoing way into the future, support from individuals is critical. If you would like to learn more about the David and Robert Crenshaw Training Fund and how you might be able to assist, please contact the Foundation at (845) 871-1117.

Astor Implements 2009-12 Strategic Plan

The 2009-2012 Plan, approved by the Board, was developed through a comprehensive year-long process. Our Quality Improvement Teams convened as well as focus groups of key staff members from each program area (Early Childhood, Residential, Hudson Valley Community-Based Programs, and Bronx Community-Based Programs), for the purpose of providing feedback and identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to Astor. The result is a comprehensive strategic plan that guides our future work and can be viewed on our website, www.astorservices.org.

Astor's 2009-2012 Strategic Plan Goals:

- Improve services and program access for the children and families we serve
- Institute a culture of caring for staff
- Retain our commitment to excellence
- Increase Astor's public profile
- Improve facilities and systems through which Astor provides quality care, education, and training to meet the highest standards of safety, accessibility, and work environment
- Broaden resource development outreach and capacity

EVENTS CORNER

Proceeds from the 2009 Sponsorship Campaign, Annual Dinner and Annual Stenberg Cup Golf Tournament went towards replacing the over 80 year old heating system at our Rhinebeck, NY location. We thank all our donors who attended our events to support the children and families we serve.

Astor's 8th Annual Benefit Dinner

Our 8th Annual Benefit Dinner was held on May 1st at Locust Grove, The Samuel Morse Historic Site, in Poughkeepsie, NY. This celebration included a cocktail reception, wine pairing, music and dancing.

During the celebration, Astor unveiled its new name and logo, and honored William Carroll and Dr. Theodora Budnik with the Serena Branson Award, for their dedication to Astor and the community. As a token of our appreciation, the honorees were presented with framed tiles, handmade by the children in our Residential Programs.



Assemblyman Marcus J. Molinaro expressing his support for Astor!



A foursome enjoys the beautiful day at Dutchess Golf and Country Club!

11th Annual Stenberg Cup Golf Tournament

Our 11th Annual Stenberg Cup Golf Tournament took place on June 25th at Dutchess Golf and Country Club in Poughkeepsie, NY. The event was a big success, and the rain held off, making it a beautiful day on the course! The fun-filled day included 18 holes of golf, barbeque lunch, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

Mark your calendar

for our
12th annual
Stenberg Cup
Golf Tournament,
June 17, 2010
at Dutchess Golf
and Country Club
and
9th Annual Dinner
May 2010
location TBD

Astor's NYC Event

We hosted a benefit cocktail reception in support of their Bronx Programs on June 16th at the River Room of Harlem Riverbank State Park. Celebrity chef Andrew Selz of the Food Network's Navy Chef Challenge was on hand to conduct cooking demonstrations and prepare appetizers for the guests. The evening also included music by jazz saxophonist Tony Smith, drawings of guests by caricature artist, Sherry Lane, and a live auction of children's artwork created by children in Astor's programs. The evening was a hit with guests, who enjoyed the good food, lively music, and beautiful sunset view of the Hudson River and George Washington Bridge!



Chef Andrew Selz prepares a plate for a hungry guest!

EVENTS CORNER

2009 Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program

You Can Help This Holiday Season!

Our Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program matches children and families in need with volunteers that are able to buy gifts. Many of the children that we help need basic goods and toys, such as: Winter Clothing; Hats and Mittens; Books; Board Games; Arts & Craft Supplies; Sports Supplies; Stuffed Animals; Gift Certificates

Every child deserves to have happy memories of the Christmas season. Please lend your support to make this wish come true.

Call Stephanie Habich at (845) 871-1171 to learn more about how you can help this Christmas season with gifts to families in need, or visit us online at www.astorservices.org. Thanks for your support!

Hudson Valley Renegades Game to Benefit Astor

We teamed up for the first time with the Hudson Valley Renegades during their July 27th game in an event called "Dollar Days." During this event, the Renegades offered \$1 general admission to attendees who donated new sports equipment for children in Astor's Hudson Valley Community-Based Behavioral Health and Prevention Services programs.



Renegades Mascots Rascal and Rookie show their support for Astor!

Bikers Against Child Abuse Benefit Run

On August 9th, the children in Astor's Residential Programs in Rhinebeck, NY, benefited from the Hudson Valley Chapter of Bikers Against Child Abuse (B.A.C.A) 3rd Annual "Astor Kids Run." The children enjoyed face painting, testing out the motorcycles, and spinning the prize wheel from local radio station The Wolf. As part of the "run," B.A.C.A. members collected and donated art supplies for the children in Astor's Residential Programs.



An Astor child enjoys "test riding" a motorcycle!

The event was a success, with attendees donating baseball & soccer equipment, jump ropes, and more! Several Astor employees from the Hudson Valley Community-Based programs also came out to support the cause. Konstantinos (Gus) Tsoubris, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Hudson Valley Community-Based Behavioral Health & Preventative Services program said, "We are so pleased and thankful to those who donated this much-needed equipment, and also to the Hudson Valley Renegades for reaching out and supporting our mission and the children and families we serve."



SAVE THE DATE!

**St. Nick's Craft Fair
December 5, 2009**

Proceeds of our 2009 St. Nick's Craft Fair
will benefit Astor's Recreation Programs.



**Annual Dinner
May 2010**



**Stenberg Cup Golf Tournament
June 17, 2010**

DID YOU KNOW...

- ❑ **Astor** serves over 6,000 children, adolescents and their families each year in 25 locations in the Hudson Valley and in the Bronx, NY.
- ❑ **Astor** is a trusted provider of quality children's services for over 55 years.
- ❑ **Astor** is accredited by the Joint Commission since 1974.
- ❑ **Astor** is recognized as a National School of Excellence by the US Department of Education.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.ASTORSERVICES.ORG OR CONTACT US BY EMAIL: ASTOR@ASTORSERVICES.ORG



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