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Breaking News...

- Astor Receives the First American Mental Health Foundation's Stefan de Schill Award... read all about it on page 6
- Astor Angel Network Formation...visit our website at www.astorservices.org to learn more!

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

I would like to thank all of our supporters for their generosity. They enable us to continue with the important work we do on behalf of children and families. With the donation of their time, talent and treasures, our dedicated staff can continue to change the lives of children and families. Examples of donors' and volunteers' kindness are highlighted throughout this newsletter.

The last several months at Astor have been filled with both joy and sorrow for the Astor family. We felt very joyful because of the people who made it possible for our children to have a happy and memorable Christmas Season: Students from several schools in Dutchess County, the individuals, churches and organizations throughout Dutchess County and New York City, all who made a difference. Our Adopt-A-Family Campaign helped over 1000 children and family members have the kind of holiday they will cherish for the rest of their lives.

We are grateful, among many things, for Archbishop Timothy Dolan's visit to our Therapeutic Early Childhood Development Program at the Lawrence F. Hickey School in the Bronx. It was a positive experience for everyone involved. Additionally, the children in our Poughkeepsie Day Treatment Program opened this school year in a new location: the renovated Mt. Carmel School. We celebrate our ability to provide these children with their own school, something every child deserves.

The sorrow we felt occurred when we learned of the passing of Sr. Rose Logan, one of our former Executive Directors and beloved leaders. Sr. Rose was a great humanitarian and an inspiration to all who knew her. She always made her decisions based on what was best for the children and their families. Sr. Rose will be greatly missed but the impact she made will live forever at Astor!

The economic condition continues to project considerable uncertainties in our ability to provide for our clients. However, we remain steadfast and continue to position ourselves so that the children and families we serve receive the best quality care, treatment and education. I am thankful to all our supporters who help us insure that every child gets the childhood we know they deserve.



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

Photo by Gerald Perat, photographer

OUR MISSION

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

ASTOR'S LEADERSHIP ROLE

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Remembering a Great Leader

The Astor family lost a great leader with the passing of Sr. Rose Logan, our former Executive Director from 1992 until 2002, who passed away on Monday, December 7, 2009. Sr. Rose was the last Daughter of Charity to be in a leadership position at Astor. In her time as Executive Director, Sr. Rose represented the legacy of the Daughters' good works.

"Sr. Roses' accomplishments at Astor were many, and she will be remembered as a strong, wise leader with an Irish temper and the ability to enjoy a good laugh. Her stewardship of the agency was exemplary. Sr. Rose created a cohesive organization that coalesced around our core values and was both financially and programmatically solid. Her passion and joy

for her work was evident to any who had the privilege of knowing her. Her spirit will live forever in our work," said James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families, who worked with Sr. Rose during her ten years as Executive Director.

"What a profound loss for the Astor Community and for all of us who were privileged to work with her over the 10-year span. Sr. Rose had the foresight to nurture and support Dr. McGuirk's leadership during the transition from the Daughters of Charity. She was wonderfully supportive of the mission of Astor and all of its people, children and staff. I feel a deep personal loss, as we shared a mutual love of the late Irish poet, John O'Donohue; and she was an unfailing inspiration to me," said David Crenshaw, Ph.D., Board Member, Astor Services for Children & Families. The entire Astor family echoes Dr. McGuirk and Dr. Crenshaw's sentiments on Sr. Rose's passing. She will be greatly missed and remembered as a person who cared deeply about Astor's kids, their families and the staff.



"Sister Rose Logan, Astor Executive Director 1992-2002"

ASTOR CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS: GIFTS & DONATIONS



Archbishop Dolan with a child from Astor's Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development

Archbishop Dolan Visits the Hickey Center

On December 21, 2009, Archbishop Timothy Dolan visited Astor's Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development in the Bronx, a therapeutic Early Childhood Development Program for children 3 – 5 years old with emotional and cognitive needs.

The children enrolled in the Hickey Center, staff and Mr. Lawrence F. Hickey (for whom the Center was named) and his family were excited to meet the Archbishop. During the visit, Archbishop Dolan saw all five classrooms where he interacted and played with the children.

After visiting each classroom, Archbishop Dolan along with Mr. Hickey, staff and guests enjoyed special songs by the

children. The Archbishop presented each child with a Christmas gift.

“Christmas is a time for giving and I am happy to be here with the children in Astor's Lawrence Hickey Center. This is a wonderful place for children with special needs. Thank you for the love and care you show to God's little children,” said Archbishop Dolan.

“It was a memorable visit where we had the opportunity to discuss our premier programs, under the umbrella of Catholic Charities, with the Archbishop. The children enjoyed his company. I am sure they will remember his visit for sometime to come,” said James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families.

Annual St. Nick's Craft Fair

On Saturday, December 5th Astor held its Annual St. Nicholas Day Craft Fair. The children, staff and volunteers work year round to create unique hand-made crafts for the Fair, including kids' art, knitted items, trivets, wreaths, etc. Customers enjoyed shopping and taking their chances at winning wonderful raffle items! Both parents and children enjoyed the opportunity to have their photos taken with Santa!



Volunteer Hannah Bagshaw at the Craft Fair

ASTOR CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS: GIFTS & DONATIONS

Community Foundation of Dutchess County \$2.5k Grant

The \$2,500 grant from the Community Response Fund of the Community Foundation of Dutchess County will support a mobile library for Astor's Early Head Start families in their home-based programs.

"We are thankful to the Community Foundation of Dutchess County for this grant. Our Parent Infant Educators, who make weekly home visits to the families of infants and toddlers in Dutchess County, will have the opportunity to bring literacy materials such as books, puppets and flannel boards as well as parent information, to loan the families in our Early Head Start Programs. This will make a tremendous difference to the families," said Mary Sontheimer, Assistant Executive Director, Astor Early Childhood Programs.

Alfred E. Smith Foundation \$35k Grant

This grant will go towards supporting the Nursing Department in our Residential Treatment Facility and Residential Treatment Center in Rhinebeck, NY. "I am very thankful for this support as it will make a tremendous difference to the dedicated nurses in our programs," said John Kelly, Assistant Executive Director, Astor Services for Children & Families.

Christmas Gifts: "THANKS" to our Donors and Volunteers!

Each year, hundreds of people volunteer to play Santa for disadvantaged children and families through Astor Services for Children & Families' holiday Adopt-A-Family Program. With the support of individuals, schools, youth groups, churches and businesses in our community, we provided holiday gifts and much needed cheer to more than 1,000 children and families in the Hudson Valley and the Bronx! Our heartfelt gratitude to all!



MTA Worker's Union playing Santa!

The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Worker's Union of NYC, as they have done for the past several years, provided gifts to all four of our Day Treatment Programs in the Bronx. Each child's wish list was created and they received items they specifically requested, delivered by Santa! It was a wonderful experience for the children and staff as well as the Union members. The smiles and laughter of the children reaffirmed their genuine appreciation!

Two Rhinebeck High School students wanted to make a positive change in the community and decided to donate gifts to Astor's children in the Residential Programs in Rhinebeck. They held several fundraisers and contacted companies for toy donations, books, movies and electronics. The children were excited to receive the gifts!

John Jay High School senior class officers, in collaboration with other students, collected numerous gifts for each child at the Residence in Rhinebeck. Santa and "his elves" came to visit. They presented gifts to each of the children. The John Jay students received a lot of "thanks" and appreciation from the children and staff. This was their second year doing this – bringing happiness to all!

CWA Local 1182, the union that oversees NYC Traffic and Sanitation Enforcement Agents, collected gifts for our children in the Bronx and held a pizza luncheon. During the luncheon, they distributed gifts to each child. This is their second year playing "Santa" to our children which brought a lot of joy. We are all thankful for their commitment.



John Jay Senior Class Officers and Santa!

ASTOR HAPPENINGS

School Age Day Treatment Move to New Location

On November 12, 2009, Astor, Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce and Greater Southern Dutchess Regional Chamber of Commerce hosted a grand opening and ribbon cutting of Astor's School Age Day Treatment Program that opened the school year in a new location: the former Mt. Carmel School. Congressman Maurice Hinchey, Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik and Assemblyman Marcus Molinaro joined Astor board members, mental health and educational supporters, friends and neighbors for the celebration.

Astor's School-Age Day Treatment Program serves children ages 5 – 12. Because of emotional or behavioral problems, children in this program find it difficult to attend regular schools. This program gives children the chance to thrive in a traditional school environment with the intensive support they need to overcome behavioral challenges.

"I want to thank the Parish of Mt. Carmel for allowing us to bring our children to this school and for giving us the opportunity to provide our children with the best education possible in an environment that is conducive to healing and learning," said, Konstantinos Tsoubris, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director, Astor Services for Children & Families, Hudson Valley Behavioral Health & Prevention Programs.



A child from Astor's Bronx Programs enjoys a pony ride at the Fall Festival!

Hickey Center's Fall Harvest Festival

Astor knows that when children have the opportunity to just be children and participate with their parents and siblings in family-focused activities, cherished memories are created and lives can be transformed. The Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development in the Bronx held their first Fall Harvest Festival to provide just such an opportunity for the children and families in the programs, and it was a big hit!

Children enrolled in the Lawrence F. Hickey Center and their families had the opportunity to participate in a fun-filled day that included carnival games, pony rides, a scavenger hunt, arts and crafts, pumpkin decorating, a hay maze, and face painting. They were joined by children and families who graduated from the Center last year and currently attend a therapeutic program at Astor's Tilden site, also located in the Bronx.

"This type of activity was a first for many of the children and families in the Bronx. The opportunity for the children to be with their families in a fun and stress-free situation had an overwhelmingly positive impact on both the children and their families, and we are thankful to one of our donors who made this possible," said Joan DiBlasi, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Astor's Bronx Community-Based Behavioral Health & Prevention Programs.



Students in Astor's Hudson Valley Programs help cut the ribbon at the opening of their new school! Photo courtesy Joel Weisbrod, jWArtWorks Photography

ASTOR HAPPENINGS

Astor Receives the First American Mental Health Foundation's Stefan de Schill Award

On October 21, 2009, Astor received the first Stefan de Schill Award presented by the American Mental Health Foundation (AMHF) at an Award Ceremony hosted by the Edwin Gould Foundation in New York, NY. Dr. Sapna Parikh, Medical Reporter, "Good Day New York," Fox 5 TV, was emcee at the ceremony attended by supporters of both the AMHF and Astor.

The first Stefan de Schill Award was presented as the AMHF celebrated its 85th anniversary and came with a \$5,000 donation. It was given to exceptional organizations and individuals working in the spirit of AMHF and honors the work of Dr. Stefan de Schill, AMHF Director

from 1948 until his death in 2005. It was an evening that highlighted the need for the barriers to break down in society on the stigma around mental illness and to talk openly about the realities of mental illness and the suffering families confront as they parent children with emotional and behavioral problems.

The American Mental Health Foundation, a national research organization for the advancement of mental health, is dedicated to the welfare of people suffering from emotional problems. "In honor of our 85th anniversary, we are delighted to present the first American Mental Health Foundation Stefan de Schill Award to Astor in

recognition of their work on behalf of the welfare of young people suffering with emotional problems and their loving families. For more than 55 years, Astor has worked in the spirit of the American Mental Health Foundation. We want to honor Dr. de Schill's memory by recognizing an organization that so clearly parallels his own values and life's work." said Evander Lomke, President and Executive Director, American Mental Health Foundation.

James McGuirk, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families said on accepting the Award, "I am honored that Astor has been awarded the first Stefan de Schill Award which acknowledges a man who worked tirelessly on behalf of those suffering emotional problems. On behalf of the children and families we serve as well as our staff, I want to thank the American Mental Health Foundation's Award Committee for selecting us. We feel quite humble to be recognized for the work we do so that children and their families will find strength, healing, hope and trust."

In addition, Dr. McGuirk announced that the \$5,000 donation will go towards Astor's David and Robert Crenshaw Training Fund that was created in January 2009 in honor of Dr. Crenshaw and his brother Robert, who suffered from some of the same challenges as Astor's children. Robert was an inspiration to Dr. Crenshaw and his career. Dr. Crenshaw is associated with Astor since 1978 and is currently a Board member.



From left to right: Astor's Board members, Dr. David Crenshaw & Dr. Virginia Sibbison; Dr. Sapna Parikh, Medical Reporter, "Good Day New York," Fox 5 TV and Event Emcee; Evander Lomke, Executive Director, American Mental Health Foundation; Dr. James McGuirk, Executive Director/CEO, Astor Services for Children & Families; Cynthia Rivera Weissblum, President & CEO, Edwin Gould Foundation, Event Host; Astor Board members, Susan Ragusa and Astor's Board Chair, Lawrence Weisberg.

Photo by Gerald Perat, photographer

EMPLOYEE NEWS

John Bray Retires

On January 8th, John Bray, Assistant Executive Director, Administration, retired after 25 years of service to Astor! In this position, among other responsibilities, John was responsible for Human Resources for all Astor's programs throughout Dutchess County and the Bronx. John came to Astor after serving 20 years in the NYC Police Department in several positions, and retired as Lieutenant in 1983.

John will be remembered as a leader who always had the children and employees' best interest at heart; whose office door was always opened (with classical music beaming); who is trustworthy; and fair in all his decisions. These sentiments were

echoed by staff and colleagues throughout the events to celebrate his years of dedicated service to Astor.

Dr. McGuirk, Executive Director/CEO, spoke about John's ability to relate to staff and the level of respect they have for him. He was described as being the "soul" of Astor, and embodying the definition of a "servant leader." A leader who achieves results for their organizations by giving priority attention to the needs of their colleagues and those they serve. Often seen as humble stewards of their organization's resources (human, financial and physical), this is indeed John Bray.

John will be missed and his Astor family wishes him the best as he spends more time with his wife, three children and three grandchildren.



John Bray addresses Astor staff at his retirement party in January.

Astor Staff and Parents Present at Development Training Forum

Astor's staff and NYS Coalition member, Kate Castell, co-chaired the 2009 Staff Development Training Forum, sponsored by the New York State Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services in collaboration with the New York State Office of Mental Health.

During the forum, over thirty participants attended Astor's sponsored workshop: Partnership Solutions for Families and Providers: Collaborations That Work.

Astor staff, Trish Luchnick, moderated and parents from Astor's Parent Advisory Board, Marylynn and George Valis, presented. The panel provided discussion on the development of partnerships. During his presentation, George Valis, said, "It was quite an experience being able to share what we've been through and how as Board members and parents we've been apart of change. As an Advisory Board we have encouraged and inspired each other. We always believe there is hope. If we have inspired even one parent and shown them they can make a difference, we will have accomplished what we were trying to do at the conference."

Kate has been with Astor for over 18 years and brings a wealth of Human Resources (HR) experience as well as a unique perspective to the position throughout her career at Astor: Kate served in the positions of Home Visitor and Child Care Worker at the Residential programs, Early Head Start Supervisor, and most recently as Human Resources Associate.

"We are very fortunate to have Kate! Kate's commitment to the core values of Astor over the last 18 years as well as her sound knowledge of HR regulations and procedures makes her uniquely qualified for the role," says Melinda Weisberg, Assistant Executive Director of Public Policy and Organizational Development who oversees the Human Resources Department.

Kate is a member of the Society for Human Resource Management, the Hudson Valley Job Services Employer Committee and Astor's Environment of Care Quality Insurance Team.

New Director of Human Resources

Astor is pleased to announce that Kate Bagshaw has been appointed Director of Human Resources for all Astor Services for Children & Families. In this role, Kate will have direct responsibility for personnel and the day-to-day operations of the Human Resources Department.



Kate Bagshaw, Director of Human Resources



...Because every child deserves a childhood

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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.

SAVE THE DATE!

"Swing into Spring" Cocktail Reception
Friday, April 16, 2010 @ 6:00p

At Astor Services for Children & Families,
historical Rhinebeck Location,
6339 Mill Street, Rhinebeck, NY;

Featuring: Art Show by one of Astor's children;
Music by: The Top Hatters Swing Band

NYC Cocktail Reception,
"Building a Better Future for our
Children and Families"

Tuesday, May 11, 2010 @ 6:00p – Terrace in the Sky, NY, NY.
Astor is proud to feature Ralph Acampora, a Bronx native,
and a pioneer in the development of market analytics and
one of Wall Street's most respected technical analysts.

Music by: Jazz Musician, Tony Smith

12th Annual Stenberg Cup
Golf Tournament

Thursday, June 17, 2010, Dutchess Golf & County Club,
Poughkeepsie, NY