



The newsletter of the  
Buffalo Federation of  
Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Unlocking Potential ...  
Enriching Lives.

# BFNC News

SPRING 2001

VOLUME V, ISSUE 1



Enjoy live music  
from the Pappy  
Martin Trio,  
featuring pianist Al  
Tinney (shown) on  
Tuesday, April 24.  
Breakfast is on us!

## Annual Breakfast Serves Up Honors and Thanks

On Tuesday, April 24, the BFNC will honor its employees, friends and community supporters at its Fourth Annual Spring Thank You Breakfast, sponsored by M&T Bank.

This year's event will take place at the agency's Moot Senior Citizens' Center, located at 292 High Street.

According to Jan Peters, Executive Director, the breakfast offers a chance to say "Thank You" in a relaxed setting, while shining the spotlight on selected programs, volunteers and contributors.

"There are so many people who help make our programs a reality for those in need," said Peters. "This is our day to tell them how much they mean to our consumers, and to the community we serve."

In addition to a home-cooked breakfast served by the BFNC management team, guests will be treated to live jazz from the Pappy Martin Trio.

Congratulations to this year's Community Service Award recipients, including: Citibank/Citicorp, the Fruitbelt Friendly Neighborhood Block Club Coalition, General Mills and The Challenger.

Corine Burns Employee Recognition Awards will be presented to Daniel Brown (Residential Services), Vivian Clark (Residential Services), Betty Roberts (Senior Day Training Program) and Amina Tillett (Fun & Learn). This year's staff appreciation award will be awarded to E. Greenard Poles for his work on behalf of the Tax Counseling for the Elderly program.

Please join us at the breakfast, or call 852-5065 for directions or more information. □

## Inside:

- "Summer Fun Days" Happy Hour set for June 28 at the Calumet's LaLuna (pg. 2)
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- Sister-to-Sister Summit held at Buffalo State College (pg. 4)
- Supper Club offers more than a great meal (pg. 5)

## Noteworthy...

### Wende House Refurbished

Our community residence at 20 Wende Street (near Bailey) has a new and improved look. Recent renovations included the installation of new flooring and kitchen cabinets, and the purchase of new furniture for the living and dining rooms. Funds to support the projects were secured by Living Opportunities of DePaul prior to BFNC taking over the lease of the building in 2000.

### APPS Grant Awarded

The BFNC was the successful respondent to a 2001 request for proposals by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services branch of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. A \$500,000 grant was awarded to continue programs offered by Buffalo Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services.

### Fun & Learn Talent Show

The Fun & Learn Program held a talent show on Thursday, March 8 at Futures Academy (PS #37). Children and their parents enjoyed pizza and refreshments after the show. Fun & Learn offers after-school homework assistance, enrichment workshops and activities Monday through Thursday.

### Senior Outreach

The Moot Senior Center will host its Men's Club Breakfast on Saturday, April 28. The Center also held a meeting for Church of God in Christ pastors on Wednesday, April 4. The meeting offered details about services for elderly populations. □

## *Thank You for your contributions!*

(Donations received December 13–March 22)

Holiday Basket Program  
AAA Safe & Lock Co.  
Air-San  
Carol Beckley  
Chris and Pamela Brown  
Calvary C.M.E. Church  
Robert Chandran  
Adrian & Clotilde Decker  
Earle Hannel

Clothing & Gifts Inknd  
Evangeline Fuller  
Thelma Hardiman  
Materials Reuse Project  
Matthews, Bartlett & Dedecker, Inc.  
Kimberly Oshei  
Ann Ross  
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church  
Buffalo Xerographix

BAPPS Holiday Celebration  
Williams Advanced Materials

Program Services  
The Faith Baptist Church  
Goodfellows Fund  
Hamburg Middle School  
Richard & Marjorie Marcille  
Frank B. Mesiah  
Judge Michael Pietruszka  
The WNY Foundation

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)  
Deborah Hollingsworth  
Lois Meyer  
Edgar G. Poles

Allstate Giving Campaign  
Pamela L. Mosley

State Employees Federal Appeal (SEFA)  
Ruth D. Bryant  
Herbert Cadle  
Rufus Cooks  
Magda Cordell-McHale  
Doris M. Craig  
Dr. Augustine Dijj  
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James L. Ramsey  
Georgeann W. Redman  
Dr. Lawrence Shulman  
Sharon G. Simpson  
Pamela Stephens-Jackson  
James L. Taylor  
Letitia L. Thomas  
Lloyd D. Ware

## Support the BFNC's Sponsor a Child Campaign

Every child deserves a safe place to spend the summer with friends. Especially if that child could also use a little academic help before school starts in the fall.

This summer, you can offer that safe place and so much more to children through a gift to the BFNC's "Sponsor a Child" campaign.

We'll be sending a letter about the program in May. Please give what you can to support this important program for Buffalo children and their families.

Your donations will help provide reading and math tutors, fun-filled field trips, and workshops on a variety of topics.

Favorite activities planned for this summer include chorus, music and dance classes; art, nature and wildlife exploration; swimming, visits to museums, zoos and theme parks.

With your help, we hope to keep our fees as low as \$80.00 per child for a full eight weeks of camp.

Thank you for giving as generously as possible to this year's campaign!

For more information about how you or your organization can help through a leadership gift (\$500+), please call John Senall at 852-5065.

□

### You're invited to the first ever **Summer Fun Days Happy Hour**

to benefit the BFNC's Youth Services

**Thursday, June 28**  
**5:00 to 7:30 p.m.**  
**LaLuna at the Calumet**  
**54 West Chippewa Street**

Tickets: \$60 individual    \$100 couple



Come enjoy live jazz entertainment by the Jim Beishline trio featuring vocalist Janice Mitchell. Your ticket price also includes hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, two free bar drinks (or wine) and unlimited soda, coffee and tea. Help us kick off the summer while raising funds for a great cause!

Call 852-5065 to reserve your tickets, or e-mail [jcsenall@bfnc.org](mailto:jcsenall@bfnc.org). Corporate sponsorships available until April 30. Call today for details.



# The Client Specific Planning Program:

## How alternatives to incarceration benefit the client and community

by Selena J. Garr, C.S.W.  
Director, Client Specific Planning Services



Does every person who commits a crime belong behind bars? Most experts would argue no. Especially considering the average cost to taxpayers from

\$30,000 to \$40,000 annually per inmate.

Yet, alternative sentencing programs have faced great challenges over the years gaining acceptance and widespread use. What philosophy underlies such programs? Are alternative sanctions appropriate for community safety? And what role do advocates have in the courtroom?

In this article, I'll try to answer some of those common questions about programs like the BFNC's Client Specific Planning Services. First, let's turn to some of the philosophy behind the sentencing advocacy movement.

### Humanitarian Origins

Sentencing advocacy supports the least restrictive environments necessary for defendants to insure community safety. Whether we advocate for probation with strict conditions or the minimum jail/prison sentence allowable, our goal is to limit the offender's exposure to a correctional setting.

Our proposed sanctions target the underlying reasons for the defendant's criminal involvement. By doing so, we hope to restore the individual to the highest level of functioning possible. Our overall purpose is to promote a more humane criminal justice system.

### The Benefits of Advocacy

Call us the middleman between the defendant and his/her attorney, sentencing

advocates have the time, resources, and expertise to work with defendants on a case-by-case basis. Our goal is to help attorneys provide a higher standard of legal representation to their clients.

A client evaluation includes a developmental, family, educational, employment, mental health and substance abuse history. With the help of a competent sentencing advocate, an attorney will have relevant and in-depth information about his/her client's background, the underlying reasons for his offense, and the circumstances leading up to it. Most importantly, we provide a sentencing plan that uses resources in the defendant's community to help keep him/her out of jail.

Judges routinely have large numbers of defendants appearing before them whose histories, at least on the surface, may seem to have similarities. Relevant information about a defendant presented to the judge in a well-written and professional format can personalize the individual, transforming him from a statistic into a person with strengths and weaknesses who has had many obstacles to overcome in his life.

Sentencing advocates actually give judges alternative sanctions on which they can "hang their hats." Most judges realize that incarceration is not appropriate or necessary for every defendant who comes before them, yet they are reluctant to simply place the individual on the more standard type of probationary sentence. Our experience has been that most judges welcome the more extensive background information provided to them by sentencing advocates and consider it carefully.

### Punishment Fitting the Crime

While incarceration may be considered the ultimate penalty because of its deprivation of liberty, the reality is that offenders often do little during their time in custody. The effects of a jail/prison environment are toxic and may only be a continuation of the kind of treatment and living conditions many offenders have been exposed to in

their lives.

For most offenders, participation in a community-based sentence can be extremely demanding. Attending treatment, performing community service, studying for a general education diploma, reporting to a probation officer, and undergoing random drug testing require far more of an individual than passively sitting in a jail cell. These type of sanctions also have a much greater chance of producing behavior change and helping an individual become more productive, which ultimately should be the goal of any sentence.

BFNC's CSPS program has operated since 1983 with funds from the N.Y. State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives. Selena Garr currently sits on the governing board of the National Association of Sentencing Advocates.

### Alternative Sentencing... a case study...

A 37-year old client had a history of substance abuse, mental illness, failed treatment attempts and minor criminal involvement. He had resided briefly in one of the BFNC's community residences.

On the day of his arrest, he claims to have been drinking with a friend who asked him to hold a car stereo for him. The friend left, and a short time later, the client was arrested for burglary and criminal possession of stolen property.

CSPS had the man psychologically evaluated to support its sentencing recommendations. In the two month period before his sentencing date, he successfully participated in alcohol abuse and mental health treatment.

As recommended in CSPS' report, the client was finally sentenced to five years probation, ordered to make financial restitution to the victim, and to continue mandatory mental health and substance abuse treatment, refraining from all drug use.

## BAPPS/FACES Spotlight ...

### Buffalo Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services & Family Abstinence Comprehensive Educational Services



(Top) Sandra Fenderson of BAPPS leads participants in an exercise about the unknown risks of early sexual activity. (Bottom) In the Teen Reality Theatre workshop, girls learned about positive and negative media images of women.

## Sister-to-Sister Summit Held at Buffalo State College

On Saturday, March 24, the BFNC/BAPPS program co-sponsored the Fourth Annual Sister-to-Sister Summit held at Buffalo State College. The summit invited teenage girls from across Buffalo and Western New York to a full day of workshops, activities and discussions with facilitators and their peers.

According to Ellen Trautman, BAPPS Project Director and Co-Chair of the event, the event aims to provide an outlet for the girls to address common challenges and concerns.

"Sister-to-Sister provides a relaxed setting for the girls to talk openly about whatever is on their minds," said Trautman. "It really pushes them beyond their normal boundaries."

Most importantly, the participants are encouraged to identify actions that can lead to solutions in their lives.

Over 130 teens attended this year's summit. The day began with a welcome from Kate Masiello, Honorary Chair, followed by a performance by Planned Parenthood's Teen Reality Theatre Company and chat room discussions.

Topics ranged from women's health and building healthy relationships to media literacy, dating violence, substance abuse and teen pregnancy.

After lunch, the girls explored more physical activities like self-defense, yoga and meditation, salsa dancing, artistic expression and college tours.

In addition to the BFNC, this year's Sister-to-Sister sponsors included the American Association of University Women, Adelphia Cable, Citibank, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County, Project Flight, Verizon and Niagara Mohawk. Additional thanks are extended to all the contributors, volunteers and community organizations who made the event a success.

### *Attention Teens!*

Win \$500 in the 2001 "First Things First" poster contest! Design a poster showing one reason to avoid teen parenthood. The winning design will be displayed as a billboard and on busses across Buffalo! **Entry deadline is May 15, 2001.** Call us today for official rules at 885-1455 or see details online at [www.bfnc.org](http://www.bfnc.org).

For more information about the services available through the BAPPS and FACES programs, call 885-1455, or stop-by their offices at 1225 Main Street.

# BAPPS Spotlight...

## Womanfocus Supper Club

Sometimes the best way to help our youth is just to listen. However, when you throw in a great meal, there's no telling where the conversations might lead.

The Womanfocus Supper Club has been offering lessons in meal planning and life for girls since 1990. It is operated by Preventionfocus, Inc., through funds from the BFNC BAPPS program. And it's goal is to provide a comfortable place for young women to share life experiences, and to gain strength from each other's support.



Guest speakers and workshops add to the Supper Club experience.

The club meets every Monday from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Home Economics room at Grover Cleveland High School, just down the street from Kleinhan's Music Hall. Each week, a small group of girls ages 13 to 17 learn a new recipe, and prepare a community meal to share. While eating together, the girls share common experiences, and learn a little more about themselves along the way.

Madeline Gathers is the program coordinator and mentor



PreventionFocus Coordinator Madeline Gathers with members of the Supper Club.

### BAPPS Collaborating Agencies & Services . . .

#### Bob Lanier Center

- Service: peer education, activities, behavioral modification
- Location: School #6, School #74, Kensington High School
- Time of Program: after-school hours
- Ages: 12 – 18
- Contact: Yolanda Sanders, 834-2052

#### Native American Community Services

- Service: case management, group activities
- Location: 1005 Grant Street
- Time of Program: varies
- Ages: 10–20
- Contact: Rob Stalker, Pete Hill 874-4460

#### Hispanics United of Buffalo

- Service: Teenagers Coming Together — emphasis on self-esteem building
- Location: 254 Virginia Street, Grover Cleveland High School
- Time of Program: after school
- Ages: 12–21
- Contact: Laurie Santiago, 856-7110

#### The Heritage Centers

- Service: Spanish language supper club for teen girls
- Location: Heritage Family Support Center 1451 Main Street
- Time of Program: Tues. 4–8 p.m.
- Ages: 10–21
- Contact: Theresa Andrews, 833-8603

#### Kaleida/Niagara Family Health Center

- Service: Teen peer counseling and education
- Location: multiple sites, 135 Grant Street office
- Time of program: Wed., 4–6 p.m.
- Ages: 14–17
- Contact: Maria Baraba, 856-8411 or 873-2337

#### Preventionfocus

- Service: "My Bottom Line" preventive skills training & "Womenfocus" supper club for teenage Hispanic girls
- Location: school, community sites
- Time of Program: varies
- Ages: 11–18
- Contact: Kathryn Neeson, 884-3256

#### Reaching Out Case Management

- Services: housing, social services, health, education, tutoring, transportation
- Location: Grover Cleveland, Kensington, South Park, Buffalo Alternative and Emerson High Schools; also by appt. at 1225 Main Street.
- Office Hours: M–F 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Ages: 10–21
- Contact: Sandra Fenderson, 885-1455

BAPPS funding is provided by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. FACES is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

for the club. She says that the club offers a safe environment where friendship, caring and trust are encouraged. "We try to help teens look at their lives, envision their futures and begin setting goals," said Gathers. "The club also explores living healthy and drug-free lives, and encourages the girls to value themselves and others."

On a recent Monday, six club members chatted with Justine Barry, a community trainer from Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County, Inc. In their "Body Image" discussion, they learned about advertising tricks used to objectify women. More importantly, the girls discussed how to view themselves as healthy, attractive teens.

"When you join a club like this, you can feel good as you get to talk and listen to what other girls are feeling," said Mivicia Howard, one of the participants.

Member La'Nisha Powell seconded Howard's appreciation for the program and her fellow members. "I like to come here because we have the chance to learn something about each other."

For more information about the program, call Madeline Gathers at 884-3256, ext. 203.



## BFNC Mission Statement

To prepare, equip and empower individuals to address life management issues, and to improve the quality of life in their communities.

BFNC, Inc.  
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- I am receiving duplicate copies of BFNC News.
- Please remove my name from your mailing list.
- I have changed addresses. Please update as specified above.
- Please add my name to the BFNC mailing list.

Please mail to the address above, or fax to 852-6270, att. J. Senall. You may also email your update to [jcsenall@bfnc.org](mailto:jcsenall@bfnc.org). Thank you!



For detailed program information, please call 856-0363, or visit our website at [www.bfnc.org](http://www.bfnc.org).

Fun & Learn Program: 856-0363

Youth Advocacy Program: 853-0600

BAPPS/After-School Enrichment: 856-0363

Moot Senior Citizens Center: 882-4637

Comm. Services for the Elderly: 856-0521

Tax Counseling for the Elderly: 853-0600

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