

# Family Focus

The Newsletter of Family Guidance Center and Family & Children's Services of Central NJ

Volume 12, Fall 2009

## How We Learned to Love Collaboration

Since January 2008, with the support of a generous, three-year United Way grant, our agency and five others - Womanspace, PEI KIDS, CONTACT, CASA and Homefront - have collaborated (that reads, “co-labored” as in “worked together”) to provide, under one conceptual roof, mental health, financial, housing, foster care, domestic violence, supportive hotline, and abuse prevention services to our county’s most at-risk families. Our six staffs have learned more about our respective specialties; they have developed new regard for the challenges inherent in each other’s work. Most important, clients and their families have gained tremendously because they are now spending less time navigating between agencies that formerly stood fully separate from each other and instead getting what they need.

What is also an unforeseen gain is the psychological uplift staff have felt in collaborating (that reads, “co-laboring,” as in “working together,” see above.) We’ve combined a wider array of staff competencies than ever before, to help the families who entrust us with their care. Our staff appreciate that more help is available to our clients and to them, thus rebalancing workloads considerably.

Family Guidance Center has also collaborated (that reads, “co-labored”, as in “working together,” see above) with the Henry J. Austin Health Center since



Mark Lamar, Executive Director

2005, providing mental health services alongside of Austin’s vaunted primary and specialized health care services. Austin’s medical staff who discern a mental health or addictions problem in a patient now refer that person to one of our staff, literally down the hall, and instant access to mental health care becomes a reality. In the past, medical staff would have given referrals to patients and hope that they found their way to the right place, somewhere across town. Integrating the care of mind and body- psyche and soma – is a lofty goal promoted by many, like a sensible diet, regular exercise, and saving wisely for a rainy day, but too often it never materializes.

At Austin, it has.

Why do formal collaborations make so much sense but remain so elusive? I

submit that the reason is our enduring embrace of short term thinking, which itself is a default condition of our busy lives; we defer to the comfortable space of doing things and relating to people that are familiar. Opening ourselves to new methods and new people takes effort; we have to work hard and creatively to explain our perspective and ideas, and we have to work hard to expect and insure that others do the same. All of this needs to be achieved in an atmosphere characterized by basic trust. The allure of the short term or the familiar is strong, but the uplift experienced in a new enterprise causes us to wonder what took us so long to take a creative risk. Dreamers and idea champions are needed to stir the pot.

Well, we’ve stirred the pot and we are savoring the flavor of our collaborations.

FGC/FACS

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# Donors Continue Support of Fundraisers

**T**his fiscal year Family Guidance Center/Family & Children's Services (FGC/FACS) raised over \$74,000 in combined income from its two annual fundraisers. In October, the agency held its first fundraiser as a merged agency. The Board of Trustees hosted the 7th Annual Jim Hughes Memorial Golf Outing. Golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the greens followed by an awards reception which included a silent auction and wine arbor. Black-Rock sponsored the outing's reception with Ford Motor Company supporting a luncheon for the golfers. Triune Color donated printing for the event's brochures.

In April FGC/FACS was entertained by Dr. Michael Fowlin, actor and psychologist, who performed "You Don't Know Me Until You Know Me." His one-person show addressed the issues of race, discrimination, gender equity, homophobia, and the emotional pain felt by special education children. In a gripping, fast paced performance, Dr. Fowlin slipped in and out of several



*Michael Fowlin*

"characters" who "shared their stories" for the audience. The evening was generously hosted by Janssen, a Division of Ortho-McNeil Janssen Pharmaceuticals. Other major sponsors included Walsh Benefits, Pepper Hamilton, Amper Politziner & Mattia, and Henry J. Austin

Health Center. Special guest and former First Lady of New Jersey, Mary Jo Codey, presented an award in her name to Phyllis and William Wilmot for their work as community mental health advocates.

All of the proceeds from these events supported the programs and services of FGC/FACS. These programs include:

- Outpatient mental health services
- Outpatient substance abuse treatment
- Debt management services
- Housing Counseling
- Family Preservation Services
- Prenatal screening for at-risk women
- Children's Day Treatment
- Children's Day School
- School-based counseling

Thank you to everyone who contributed to these events in 2008-2009. We look forward to your involvement again in the near future. For more information, please visit our website at [www.fgccorp.org](http://www.fgccorp.org) or call us at 609-586-0668.

**FGC/FACS**



*Pat Grannatt (right) thanks Peg Forrestel of Janssen for their support.*

## Family Guidance Center Family and Children's Services Thanks the Following Sponsors for Their Support

### SUSTAINING SPONSOR

Janssen, Division of Ortho-McNeil  
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### SPONSOR

Walsh Benefits

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Mark and Michelle Lamar  
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Doolittle's Deli  
Eagle Building Maintenance & Janitorial  
Crest Paper Products  
Robbins Behavioral Healthcare

*\*Special thanks to Willis Greenhouses,  
Inter-Networx & Diane Kluxen*

# Helping Victims of Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

In 2007, Family Guidance Center/Family & Children's Services (FGC/FACS) entered into a formal collaboration supported by the United Way of Greater Mercer County. FGC/FACS, Womanspace, PEI Kids, CASA, HomeFront and CONTACT joined forces to form the Community of Services Collaboration. The joint work of these agencies continues today and offers comprehensive services for multi-problem clients in Mercer County.

As a result of this effort, FGC/FACS began working closely with Womanspace to provide professional mental health services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Womanspace is Mercer County's leading provider of counseling services, emergency shelter, and advocacy for victims. As many as 4 million women suffer from physical, emotional and sexual abuse in the United States every year. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 out of every 4 women experience physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. As a result, violence against women has become a major health concern with long-term consequences. The repeated injury and stress of living in an abusive relationship often results in long-lasting mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and reoccurring panic attacks for many victims. Abused women are also more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol.

FGC/FACS addressed this need in our community by creating a mental health treatment group for victims referred by Womanspace. The group is held at the agency's Hamilton Center and gives victims access to mental health professionals who provide group and individual treatment, psychiatric evaluations and medication monitoring services. Additionally, a bilingual counselor from Womanspace is now available to provide support and advocacy for women at our Princeton Center, located at 120 John St., Princeton, NJ. For more information, please call our access center at 609-587-6641.

**FGC/FACS**

*FGC/FACS would like to thank the United Way and the Princeton Area Community Foundation for supporting this project.*

## FGC/FACS Mission Statement

The Mission of Family Guidance Center/Family and Children's Services is to provide high quality, community based services to a culturally diverse population through its programs in mental health, addictions, family and financial counseling and education. The center is committed to providing services that are geographically and financially accessible based upon evaluations of individual and family needs which are delivered in a fair and compassionate manner.

# Volunteers Needed to Help with State Health Insurance Assistance Program

In 2008, Family Guidance Center began coordination of Mercer County's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). The program offers free help to New Jersey Medicare beneficiaries who have problems with, or questions about their health insurance benefits. Wendy Poulsen, SHIP Program Coordinator, takes the initial calls from individuals seeking assistance, and then links them to volunteer counselors who provide information on dealing with claims, choosing plans and evaluating health insurance needs.

The Program Coordinator attends health fairs and other events throughout the year in an effort to bring awareness to the community about SHIP, its

services and volunteer opportunities. Family Guidance will host a SHIP Open Enrollment Event on October 30, 2009 at the RWJ Health and Fitness Center in Hamilton, NJ. The purpose of the event is to provide information to Medicare beneficiaries who need to update, change or cancel their health insurance plans. Changes can only be made during the open enrollment period of November 15, 2009 through December 31, 2009, so contact SHIP at 609-924-2098 if you or someone you know has any questions or concerns about their plan.

Volunteers are needed to provide this valuable service in our community. Counselors are located throughout Mercer County at a variety of locations,



**LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE**

and extensive training is provided to volunteers by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. Reaching out to seniors and their families is a gratifying way to volunteer your time. Individuals interested in serving as a volunteer counselor should contact the SHIP Program Coordinator at 609-924-2098. **FGC/FACS**



*Frank McDougald, Peter Lawson-Johnston, Bill Burks and Alexander Buck at the 2008 golf outing.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### The Jim Hughes Memorial Golf Classic

**Monday, October 5, 2009**

Bedens Brook Club, Skillman, NJ

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**CALL**

**609-586-0668**

*Golf – Silent Auction – Raffle  
Awards Reception*

# The Children's Day School Welcomes New Principal

**J**im Rigel has served the Children's Day school ably and well for the past 17 years; he is leaving this fall to become a professor at Warner University in Florida, where he will teach social work to undergraduates and work in the university's counseling center.

Jim was instrumental in growing the

school's enrollment and increasing the richness of resources available to students and their families. He managed the move in 1996 from Trenton to our current home at the former William Lanning School in Ewing and has overseen many renovations throughout the years since then.

Mr. Dennis Cruz will become the principal of the Children's Day School, beginning this fall. Dennis has a twenty year background in administration, and has taught in public, private, university, and government agencies. He has

worked as a principal for over 12 years and holds principal and teacher certifications.

Dennis has most recently served as principal of Lakeside school in Orange, New Jersey; fluent in both Spanish and English, he holds an Ed.M. in Special Education Administration from Teachers College, Columbia University, and an M.S. in Education from Hunter College.

We are pleased to welcome Dennis to our agency, and we wish Jim the best of luck with his new endeavors in Florida.

FGC/FACS

## Corporate and Private Foundation Grants Received 2008-2009

- PNC Bank- \$8,000
- Countrywide Home Loans- \$4,500
- Horizon Foundation- \$15,000
- Charles Schwab- \$2,500
- Church & Dwight- \$2,500
- Janssen Pharmaceutica- \$12,500
- Bank of America- \$10,000
- Twin Chimney Foundation- \$700
- New Jersey Manufacturers Bank- \$500
- The PNC Bank Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation- \$2,000
- J. Seward Johnson Sr. 1963 Charitable Trust- \$20,000
- Princeton Area Community Foundation- \$15,000
- Dorothea Van Dyke McLane Associates- \$1,000
- Kiwanis Club of Trenton, NJ- \$3,500
- Novo Nordisk- \$5,000
- Chase Card Services- \$10,000
- TJX Foundation- \$5,000
- TD Bank Foundation- \$2,000
- Dr. James J. O'Connell Fund- \$5,000
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Commission- \$1,500
- Bristol-Myers Squibb- \$15,000
- Wells Fargo Foundation- \$2,500
- Bloomberg, LP- \$15,000
- The Bunbury Company- \$10,000
- van Ameringen Foundation- \$50,000

## Staff Spotlight

**Julie Daley**, Day School Social Worker, was awarded the 2009 Michael F. Spicer Prize for Educational Excellence for her outstanding work with the school's special needs students..

**Amanda Saari** and **Nicole Maccarone**, clinicians at the Trenton Center, acquired the credential of Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the state of New Jersey.



*Mark Lamar, Julie Daley and Jim Rigel*



*Marcia Alig, Board Member, with Michelle McMullen as she receives the Mardi Considine Remarkable Award.*

**Wendy Poulsen**, Administrative Assistant, completed a 5 day training and is awaiting certification as a counselor for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

**Mary Halupa**, Housing and Credit Counselor, received certification as a Reverse Mortgage Specialist.

**Michelle McMullen**, Assistant Director of Children's Day Treatment, was presented with the 2009 Mardi Considine Remarkable Award for her steadfast dedication and service to the agency.

## Family Guidance Center/ Family & Children's Services

Administration  
1931 Nottingham Way  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-586-0668

Hamilton Center  
2300 Hamilton Ave.  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-587-7044

Consumer Credit  
Counseling Service  
1931 Nottingham Way  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-586-2574

Princeton Center  
120 John St.  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
609-924-2098

Children's Day School  
1925 Pennington Road  
Ewing, NJ 08618  
609-882-2288

Trenton Center  
946 Edgewood Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08618  
609-393-1626

Children's Day Treatment  
1925 Pennington Road  
Ewing, NJ 08618  
609-882-1898

Access Center  
609-587-6641  
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**United Way  
of Greater Mercer County**

Family Guidance Center/Family & Children's Services is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc; is licensed by the NJ Departments of Banking & Insurance, Human Services, and Health & Senior Services; and is a member of the NJ Association of Mental Health Agencies, the Association of Schools and Agencies for the Handicapped, and the NJ Association of Treatment Providers. FGC/FACS is certified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide housing counseling services.