



FALL 2012

PLANNED PARENTHOOD
OF THE SOUTHERN FINGER LAKES

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CHOICE

Youth Leaders GO TO ORGANIZING BOOT CAMP

by Casey Martinson



With another school year well under way, five local college students returned in September for a road trip to Albany. In the car, they were a pretty quiet bunch, diligently studying and doing their homework while a succession of pop radio stations played softly in the background. But once we reached Planned Parenthood's regional Youth Organizing and Policy Institute—or as we referred to it, YOPI (YOH-pee)—they wasted no time springing into action.

The idea behind YOPI was to bring student activists together in regional events throughout the U.S. for intensive, weekend-long trainings to build their knowledge and experience with a wide range of organizing skills: how to tell a compelling story about why your cause matters; how to create an organizational structure that sustains itself semester after semester; how to build a campaign to advance reproductive justice on campus, and so much more.

Eight YOPIs were conducted nationwide between August and September, training a total of 983 student activists! Our own regional training in Albany drew more than a hundred attendees from 35 campuses. Aside from the skills building workshops, our activists received practical, real-world experience on Saturday afternoon when we spent an hour making phone calls to educate voters in Florida about an anti-choice ballot initiative (which was defeated) in their state.

The best part for me, as the person who oversees PPSFL's work with student advocates, was bringing students from all three of our local campus chapters together for the first time. We had David Simons and Tia Van Winkler from Elmira College, Leslie Ortiz and Yani Frias from Ithaca College, and Renee Botelho representing Cornell. This fabulous five worked closely together all weekend in small group discussions, and it was great seeing how they brought different perspectives to the table.

After working hard all weekend, our group definitely deserved some rest, though judging by the conversations on our way home—turning once again to school work and exams—I'm not sure any substantial respite was forthcoming. But there's no doubt they also came home with new skills, new friends, and a renewed enthusiasm to do some great work with Planned Parenthood on their campuses this fall, and for many semesters to come.

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LETTER FROM JOE SAMMONS, CEO

Dear friends:

As we prepare this latest edition of our newsletter, we can't be certain about how recent elections will impact health care or the economy. But there is one thing about which we can be certain: Planned Parenthood always rises to the challenge, and our commitment to sexual health and reproductive freedom is unwavering.

Regardless of how politicians tackle the pressing issues that face our country, the simple fact is that our patients need us – today more than ever. And our agency is proud to continue making the investments we need to serve our patients, both in our health centers and in our communities. Over the last few years, even in this challenging political and economic environment, we have:

- » hired new community educators working in Elmira, Corning and Hornell
- » opened a new health center in Hornell, with nearly double the capacity
- » re-organized our agency for the first time since the merger, increasing support in areas like human resources, facilities and information technology
- » increased our public affairs and communications activities
- » made rapid advances on our plans to create new health and education centers in Ithaca and Corning – we believe the construction of our long-awaited Ithaca health and education center is just months away

It is hard work, but it is work we do with all of our hearts, and with a steely-eyed resolve that our patients matter, that young people and honest, relevant sex education and programming matters, and that politicians should let women and men make their own decisions about their own bodies.

As you will see in this newsletter, the past few months have given us the chance to celebrate this work and the incredible family that carries our work forward – our staff, our volunteers, our board, our donors, and our supporters. Thank you all for being a part of this work, and for everything you do to keep the power and promise of Planned Parenthood alive.



All my best,

Joe Sammons
President / CEO

GIVE THE GIFT OF ACCESS

We are thankful. Because of your support, Planned Parenthood was able to help over 11,000 people in our four-county region last year and provide sexuality education to over 8,000 more in 2011, and we're on target to do the same in 2012.

The truth is, no matter the time of year or the political affiliation of our elected officials, the people in our communities need the essential health services and honest, accurate sexuality education programs Planned Parenthood provides.

But we couldn't do it without you. Your generosity ensures that the people in our community receive the care they need, regardless of their ability to pay for services. From life-saving cancer screenings to contraceptive care, to STI testing and more, we are here for our community because you have been here for us.

Please help us keep people safe and healthy by donating to PPSFL today, with any of these options:

- * check or money order
- * credit card – by mail or online at PPSFL.ORG (select PPSFL from the drop down menu to ensure your gift stays in our community)
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New Regional Center FOR HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION IN ITHACA

On October 23, we reached a historic milestone in our ongoing efforts to serve the health care needs of our community when, by a unanimous vote, the Ithaca City Planning and Development Board granted final approval for our proposed regional health and education center to be constructed in downtown Ithaca. The board was extremely pleased with the design for the new building, which will be located on the 600 block of West Seneca Street.

They were especially enthusiastic about the “street experience” of the design — the positive aesthetic complement to the community the design provides. Most importantly, they were very happy to learn that Planned Parenthood’s critical services will remain available in downtown Ithaca.

Credit for the design goes to our amazing architects, Grace Chiang of Chiang/O'Brien and Kim Michaels of Trowbridge, Wolf and Michaels, who translated our vision for a modern, efficient, and welcoming facility into a beautiful “green” building that fits well in its environment and will transform PPSFL’s ability to serve the community for generations to come. Chiang and Michaels, along with our CEO Joe Sammons, have skillfully guided our application through the complicated city approval process.

This approval brings the agency another step closer to our goal of creating facilities throughout our service area that reflect the quality of care and the level of respect we are committed to providing to our patients. Work on this broader vision began in 2007 when PPSFL renovated the Elmira clinic and just last month PPSFL celebrated the grand opening of our newly renovated health center in Hornell. We are also currently studying options for improving our health center in Corning. All of these improvements are part of a long-term plan that, when complete, will allow the organization to better meet community need for the services we provide.

The new Regional Health and Education Center in Ithaca will be the biggest project ever undertaken by PPSFL in its history—it is also the most critical. Our aging facility at 314 West State in Ithaca was designed to accommodate half the patients it serves today—waiting rooms are crowded, exam rooms are few and most are far too small to be comfortable, there is little privacy for patients when they arrive to check-in, and protesters stand on the street, sometimes harassing patients as they enter the building. Our patients deserve better.

The new health center will have twice the number of exam rooms which will dramatically improve the quality, privacy and efficiency of our services. The off-street entrance will greatly increase privacy and security for patients. The second floor will feature offices and a large conference room for our award-winning education staff to conduct youth programs and trainings on-site. For the first time since our merger in 2005, the agency’s management team and support staff will be housed in one building, again saving money and improving efficiency.



» *The board was extremely pleased with the design for the new building, which will be located on the 600 block of West Seneca Street.*

Our architects are working with engineers to create construction documents for us to begin the bidding process in January, and we expect to break ground in the spring. All of our construction projects are being funded primarily with private contributions from individual donors who are passionate in their support of our work. We have also received early support from area foundations as well as a small number of grants. We look forward to sharing more details when we publically launch our capital campaign in 2013.

The unrelenting political attacks have only served to strengthen the resolve of the PPSFL Board of Directors and leadership team in their commitment to creating facilities that reflect on the outside the quality of care and compassion happening on the inside. To that end they have courageously decided now is time to build for the future, to create health centers that send a message to our patients, our communities, our supporters, and our opponents, that this Planned Parenthood is committed to serving the reproductive health care and educational needs of our community for many generations to come.

Hornell Grand Opening CELEBRATION A HUGE SUCCESS!

On October 24, 2012, Planned Parenthood supporters from across our four-county affiliate came to celebrate the grand opening of our new health center in Hornell, N.Y.



Mary Smith, Mayor Shawn Hogan, and CEO Joe Sammons cut the ribbon at the entrance of the new Hornell Health Center

“This is a very exciting day for our patients and our staff,” said Joe Sammons, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes. This health center improvement is one of three that PPSFL has planned to better meet the needs of the communities it serves.

With approximately twice the space as Planned Parenthood’s former location on Main Street in Hornell, the new health center offers increased convenience and privacy for patients. Ample off-street parking affords patients the ability to enter the health center without being harassed by protesters. “It is a very nice building in an ideal location for us,” said Sammons.

Planned Parenthood provided services to approximately 1,400 patients in Hornell in 2011 and Sammons projects visit increases now that the new health center is fully operational. With a 15% increase in patient visits during the summer of 2012 compared to the summer of 2011, these projections are already being realized.

On hand to commemorate the Grand Opening was Hornell Mayor Shawn Hogan, who along with former board member Mary Smith and Joe Sammons, helped cut the ribbon on the Hornell Health Center. Sammons called the opening a “regional success” for the organization and said that the new health center reinforces Planned Parenthood’s commitment to the community.

MIXED COMPANY VOLUNTEER PROJECT GROUP TO RELAUNCH IN 2013

Please join us for the relaunch of our volunteer project group Mixed Company in January 2013.

Mixed Company is a volunteer program where volunteers, board members, staff, and students will mix and mingle while providing support on fun projects. The group will meet at the Education Office on Seneca Street in Ithaca about once a month for just a couple of evening or weekend hours. Just join in when you can - there’s no major commitment!

Want to pitch in on some easy special projects while building and strengthening connections within our community of supporters? If you have even one free hour per month that you would like to put to good use, then come over and get busy in Mixed Company!

E-mail Jenn Foy for an application or for more information at jenn.foy@ppsfl.org.



Annual Celebration

HONORING VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORTERS, AND STAFF

On October 4, we held our 44th Annual Celebration at the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning. Over 200 friends of Planned Parenthood gathered to celebrate and honor our award recipients Penny Whitford (2012 Margaret Sanger/Katharine Houghton Hepburn Award recipient), Sandy True (2012 Constance E. Cook Award recipient), and Shelby Davis (2012 Youth Advocate Award recipient), whose efforts and commitment to our mission are nothing short of extraordinary.

In lieu of a traditional State of the Agency, President and CEO Joe Sammons ceded the stage to Vice President for Patient Services Rosaire Karij, who delivered a moving speech about her personal commitment to our patients, our staff, and our work.

Connie Schultz, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and wife of Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown, delivered the keynote address, which celebrated the efforts of Planned Parenthood supporters in our region and highlighted the meaning of that work for the people in our community and across the nation.

We are grateful to everyone who attended this year's Annual Celebration and to all of the staff, volunteers, donors, and sponsors who helped make the event possible.



Guests at PPSFL's 2012 Annual Celebration



CEO Joe Sammons and son Julian



Pulitzer Prize winner Connie Schultz



Sandy True, Cook Award Recipient

Board members Gary McCaslin, Carmen Strong

Rosaire Karij, VP for Patient Services

CornellVox members mingle with the crowd



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Sexuality Education & Outreach

Tompkins County 216-0021

Chemung County 734-3313

Steuben County 962-4686

Rape Crisis of the Southern Tier

888-810-0093

TRIBUTES

Jun. 23, 2012 - Nov. 8, 2012

IN HONOR OF

Joan Adler

Liz & Gary Weissbrot

Margo Alexander

Liz & Gary Weissbrot, Lucia Jander

Shelby Davis

Margaret Callas, Mary & Jim Doss, Joel Grace, Ian Harrop & Lynette Estep, Anne Kenlon, Lynn Bradley Leopold, Sue & Steve Ruoff, Katie & Bruce Thompson, Nianne & David VanFleet, Ann & Matthew Wall

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The marriage of Jenna Milner & Chris Leskovec

Kate Potteiger & Stephen Goggin

Leia Raphaelidis

Anna Raphaelidis

Katie Thompson

Jennifer Engel Young & Larry Young

Sandy True

Katherine Anderson & Max Pensky, Anonymous, Stewart Auyash & Patricia R. Zimmermann, Beverly Baker, Brenda & Ron Bricker, Jim & Terry Byrnes, Laura Call & Robert Andolina, Margaret Callas, Constance Colbert, Mr. & Mrs. G. Walton Cottrell, Mary & Jim Doss, Matthew & Madelyn Estill, Katie Foley, Katie & Olan Forker, Martha Frommelt, Margaret Gibson, Jean & Carl Gortzig, Joel Grace, Mary & Brad Grainger, Ian Harrop & Lynette Estep, Anne Kenlon, Lynn Bradley Leopold, Alice Moore & Robert Smith, Susan Murphy, Carolyn & John Neuman, Kate Potteiger & Stephen Goggin, Wendy Robertson & Doug Antczak, Susan Robinson, Sue & Steve Ruoff, Kathy & Ray Schlather, Diane & Richard Shafer, Katie & Bruce Thompson, Carol True-Palmer & Glen Palmer, Julie & Richard Uhlig, Nianne & David VanFleet, Ann & Matthew Wall, Kathleen Woodcock, Eugene & Jeanne Yarussi

Barbara Warland's birthday

Susan Robinson

Penny Whitford

Anonymous (2), Margot A. Bliven & Richard A. Rosenberg, Margaret Callas, Mary & Jim Doss, Joel Grace, Ian Harrop & Lynette Estep, Sally L. Hopkins, Anne Kenlon, Beth Landin, Lynn Bradley Leopold, Kate Potteiger & Stephen Goggin, Sue & Steve Ruoff, Mark Smith, Mary Smith, Christine Thomas, Katie & Bruce Thompson, Nianne & David VanFleet, Ann & Matthew Wall, Annie & Murray Werner, Terry Woehr

Maria Winston

William & Ann Bishop

IN MEMORY OF

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Robert Aronson

Margaret Bowering

Jean Bowering & Emory Nordberg

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Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss

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Lynn Lupino, Alan Angell & Beth Dollinger and Arielle, Marissa, & Chava Angell

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Connie Jonas

Harry & Beverly Jonas

Betty & Noah Kassman

Elizabeth B. Gordon

Jack Lewis

Jan & Janice Nigro

Ruth Potteiger

Alice Moore & Robert Smith

Marjorie Wolga

George Wolga

Volunteers Honored at Annual Celebration



Penny Whitford

A part of the Planned Parenthood family for over 11 years, **Penny Whitford** has worked tirelessly in support of our mission. For 35 years, Penny was a school teacher in the Canisteo school district, where she became increasingly alarmed by the lack of accurate information her middle schoolers were receiving about sexual health. After retirement, she became a volunteer at our Hornell Health Center, and she served on our Board of Directors for three years. On top of her daily commitment to the work of Planned Parenthood, Penny's insights and guidance were essential in making our new Hornell Health Center a reality. As her friend Mary Palmesano said when presenting the Margaret Sanger/Katharine Houghton Hepburn award to Penny, "Thank goodness for Penny. She has the love, conviction, and courage to work for what she believes is right for the community."



Sandy True

Sandy True, an Ithaca native, moved back to the area and became interim Director of Patient Services at Planned Parenthood in the mid-1990s, after having worked as a nurse at a high risk obstetrics practice, where she observed first-hand the need for women to have access to safe and legal abortion services. Sandy worked at Planned Parenthood during a time of significant organizational change, and treated her staff with the same compassion and care with which they treated their patients, making her a beloved leader.

Sandy has been an ardent advocate for choice and has worked to ensure that the people in our community have access to a full range of reproductive health care services. She has spent countless hours as a volunteer fundraiser for PPSFL, both for our annual campaigns and for special projects. We were thrilled to honor Sandy with the 2012 Constance E. Cook Award at this year's Celebration, and the award was particularly meaningful to Sandy, whose mother knew Connie Cook personally. We are so fortunate to have Sandy working on our behalf.



Shelby Davis

Shelby Davis joined our Corning LGBT Youth Group last fall, and earlier this year, she volunteered with educator Christine McLear, helping to organize the group and reaching out to groups in other cities and Corning Community College's group Equal about opportunities to collaborate. She also volunteered with RCST and performed in the Vagina Monologues.

Shelby is an outgoing and creative leader. She created an anti-bullying art exhibit for school and invited our youth group to create bullying related t-shirts to wear on the night of the show.

McLear says "In the short time that I've known her, Shelby has demonstrated that she is a young leader in our community. She's passionate about sharing resources and encouraging safe spaces for LGBT youth in our region."

WHY I SUPPORT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Continued from page 8

was made a special agent of the United States Postal Service, with police powers up to and including the right to carry a weapon. With this power he zealously prosecuted those he suspected of public distribution of pornography. At one point, even some anatomy textbooks were prohibited from being sent to medical students by the U.S. Postal Service.

These laws remained unchallenged until Margaret Sanger made it her mission to fight the Comstock Act. She was arrested in 1916 for opening the first "birth control" clinic (a term she coined). In 1921, Sanger founded the American Birth Control League, which, as we know, later became the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. The continuing activism of Sanger and other women's rights supporters contributed to the landmark 1965 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which legalized contraception for married couples in the United States.

I know I am not responsible for the Anthony Comstock's actions. After all, he died more than 40 years before I was born. But because I share a name with the man who inspired George Bernard Shaw's term "Comstockery" (meaning "censorship because of perceived obscenity or immorality"), I feel a certain obligation to try to right past wrongs. My partner and I donate what we can each year, and I have named Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes as a beneficiary in my will. This Comstock is 100% behind Planned Parenthood.

WHY I SUPPORT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

by Karen Comstock

I support Planned Parenthood for the same reasons millions of other people do. I believe that all women should have access to quality reproductive health care, and that every child should be a wanted child. And, like many, I have been a recipient of the professional, caring services that Planned Parenthood provides. When I was much younger and living in New York City, I turned to Planned Parenthood when I chose to terminate an unplanned pregnancy. I was relatively lucky, as the circumstances of my pregnancy were not traumatic and I had a strong support group. Still, I was unexpectedly touched by the compassionate care I received. The Manhattan Planned Parenthood office was, as you can imagine, an extremely hectic place. Yet the attending nurse made me feel as if I was her only concern. As she led me into the operating room, she gently held my hand. That one small gesture meant the world to me. At that moment, I knew that she, and the entire organization, was totally on my side. That was 23 years ago, and I remember it as if it happened yesterday.



And, I have another, more unique, reason for supporting Planned Parenthood. I have a remote connection to its origin. The driving force behind the original anti-birth-control statutes was a distant relative of mine, a New Yorker named Anthony Comstock. Founder of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, Comstock persuaded Congress to pass an anti-obscenity bill, including a ban on contraceptives, that he had drafted himself. Known as the Comstock Act, the statute defined contraceptives as obscene and illicit, making it a federal offense to disseminate birth control through the mail or across state lines. Soon after, 24 states enacted their own versions of Comstock laws to restrict the contraceptive trade on a state level. A savvy political insider in New York City, Comstock

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