

February 2009



## On Turning 75

*Seventy-five years ago, what is known today as Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley started as a community volunteer project in Poughkeepsie. It was followed two years later by a similar project in Newburgh. Our long-ago champions saw women in their neighborhoods struggling to make ends meet, trying to be healthy but unable to access critical health services. These women were having children too young and too often, and desperately wanted a way to plan their families. The visionary volunteers took personal risks, organized their community and fought long and hard to establish reproductive health services for their neighbors.*

*As we start our 75th Anniversary year, I am pleased to share with you the stories of some of the volunteers who are working with us today, and who, like our founders, have given of themselves to make life better for their neighbors and empower them to make healthy and responsible decisions.*

– Clare Coleman  
President & CEO

## upcoming EVENTS

**March 25**  
*New Global Agenda for  
Women's & Girls' Health  
Rights*  
Vassar College

**April 22**  
*Archives Preview  
& Lecture with  
Dr. Robyn L. Rosen*  
Marist College

**May 9**  
*Community Benefit*  
Warwick

**May 16**  
*75th Anniversary Gala*  
Hyde Park

**visit us at**  
**ppmhv.org**  
**for more details**

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## The Choice for Generations

### *Anniversary Gala Co-Chairs Inspire Daughters to Continue Work*

Planned Parenthood couldn't be more honored to have Anne Conroy and Phebe Banta, along with their daughters Kathy Moynagh and Jane Fisher, co-chairing our 75th Anniversary Gala on May 16th.

When Anne moved to Poughkeepsie in 1965, Phebe was one of the first people she met – and the two have been volunteering together ever since. Inspired by Vassar Professor Margaret Meyers, Anne and Phebe became involved in a number of community organizations, but Planned Parenthood was always at the top of their lists. Their daughters Kathy and Jane, who were born just one week apart, are proof that support of Planned Parenthood is an inheritable trait!

Anne recently reflected on her years of service: "I've known the importance of family planning since I was a student at Vassar, where I became convinced that family planning is fundamental to solving problems of poverty, civil rights, health, even the environment," observed Anne. "In 1965 my college advisor introduced me to volunteer opportunities at the Planned Parenthood clinic in a basement in downtown Poughkeepsie. I have been hooked ever since. Volunteering for Planned Parenthood has been fun, interesting, meaningful, and deeply rewarding. It is cause for celebration to know the next generation will continue the work."

# Telling Our Stories

## *Conversations Across Generations*

Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley and our supporters have stories to tell. The agency's 75th anniversary inspired us to gather our archives and record our oral history for permanent housing at the New York State Library in Albany. Both projects will offer the public new access to terrific educational and community resources.

We are working on our archives project with the help of Dr. Robyn L. Rosen, Associate Professor of History at Marist College. Kristine Kennen—a Marist College intern who also happens to be the daughter of a former Planned Parenthood board member and volunteer—is inventorying and readying the materials for the Library. Select items will be available for viewing at Planned Parenthood events in the mid-Hudson Valley throughout the year.

Our oral history project, *Conversations Across Generations*, will record and document the stories of

generations of Planned Parenthood supporters and volunteers within families. Chris Tessler, Planned Parenthood board member and volunteer, is participating in the project with his mother and his sister. He

recently said of his own commitment: “My grandmother, a PhD chemist, could not get any reliable information about reproductive health and contraceptives until she found Planned Parenthood. My mother saw that women could not be empowered without information and options. They taught [our family] that support of Planned Parenthood was essential to the people in our communities.”

If you have any Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley momentos like photos or publications that could be included in our archives, or you would like to participate in *Conversations Across Generations*, please contact us at (845) 294-9975, extension 112 or [development@ppmhv.org](mailto:development@ppmhv.org).



*Kristine with our first annual report dated 1936-37.*

# Teens Take Responsibility

## *Using Education to Empower Youth*



*Shaqueena, a star SOS Peer Educator*

Planned Parenthood's team of teen volunteers has become one of the most effective voices in our local communities. Their main mission: keeping their peers educated and safe.

Shaqueena, a junior at Poughkeepsie High School, got involved through her

first visit to Planned Parenthood. “My mom found out I was having sex and brought me to Planned Parenthood. They told me about the SOS (Safe or Sorry) Program. I was interested in learning more so I signed up.”

The SOS Peer Education Training Program trains young people, like Shaqueena, to tackle the needs of teens.

“Kids ask me questions about what to do if you get pregnant, how to use condoms and birth control. I always have a supply of condoms and educational pamphlets.”

Shaqueena's favorite part of her job is helping her peers, which in many cases also helps their parents. “Some parents don't [feel comfortable] talking to their kids about sex, so the kids ask their friends. SOS helps them get the right information so they can stay safe.” It's not just accurate information that's important to teens—it's the way they get it. “No one judges you here—everyone is open-minded.”

Thank you to Shaqueena and our peer educators for all that they do in our communities. And thank YOU for helping to keep programs, like SOS, accessible to any who need it.

*For more information about our programs and services, or to make a donation, please visit [www.ppmhv.org](http://www.ppmhv.org).*