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# CHOICE

## PPSFL Joins More Than 4,000 for NYC Rally

by Casey Martinson

As we emerged from the Chambers Street metro station, we weren't sure at first which way to go to reach the rally, but flashes of hot pink amongst the crowd of pedestrians migrating through the station told us we were definitely close.

Then we heard the muffled sounds of a crowd cheering in response to a voice on a loudspeaker. We followed the sound, and soon, Manhattan's Foley Square was before us, filled with more than 4,000 Planned Parenthood supporters from all across New York.

PPFA President Cecile Richards stood at the podium to remind New Yorkers and the country: “Because of Planned Parenthood this year, more than a million women will get cancer screenings...more than 1.2 million teenagers will get honest sex education that will keep them safe and protected, and...over two and a half million women will receive birth control to allow them one of the most basic freedoms, to plan their families for themselves!”



PPSFL staff and volunteer activists



NYC crowd rallies for Planned Parenthood

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## LETTER FROM JOE SAMMONS, CEO

Dear Friend –

In our Winter 2011 edition of CHOICE, I mentioned that anti-choice groups and politicians were planning sharper attacks on Planned Parenthood and the reproductive rights we defend. Little did we know just how intense those attacks would actually be. The Republican majority in Congress, with a few noble exceptions, has sacrificed campaign promises of economic reform to make opposition to women's health care and reproductive liberties its top priority this year.

Among their first orders of business was voting to strip all federal funding from Planned Parenthood, the nation's leading provider of preventive health care for women. Next on their list is HR 3, the deceptively titled "No Taxpayer Funding For Abortion Act." There has been no federal funding for abortion for more than 30 years, except in the most extreme cases, but HR 3 takes an imaginative view of what constitutes "funding." For example, it eliminates tax breaks for Americans who buy health insurance that covers abortion.

While these threats are just the tip of the iceberg, there is good news. As we see on the cover of this newsletter, pro-choice Americans are standing up like never before. We will not give up, and we will not go back. With the support of our communities and friends like you, we will hold politicians accountable for intrusive, dangerous legislation and advance public policy that improves access to essential health care.

Today more than ever, political advocacy is critical to our mission. Yet, we never forget that the reason we do all this organizing is to ensure that we can continue to provide the highest quality health care and education for the people in our communities. Throughout this issue, you'll see how we are moving resolutely forward with strong services and programs, undaunted by political storms.

You'll get an inside look at how PPSFL educator Christine McLear is empowering Steuben youth to make informed decisions about their relationships and their bodies. You'll learn about how Project CAP is helping to prevent teen pregnancy. And I hope you will be inspired to support our work by joining us at our Mother's Day brunch benefit in Ithaca. As spring finally arrives in the Southern Finger Lakes, there has never been a better, more exciting time to sow seeds for tomorrow. Here's to a new season of hope.



All my best,

Joe Sammons  
President / CEO

## PPSFL JOINS MORE THAN 4,000 FOR NYC RALLY

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One speaker after another followed Richards – from celebrities like actress Kathleen Turner and musician Kathleen Hanna to pro-choice elected officials like Rep. Yvette Clark and Senator Chuck Schumer – to denounce the ideological attacks by anti-choice politicians.

PPSFL's contingent of 12 activists were proud to be a part of the crowd that day. "The atmosphere of defiance and determination was wonderfully inspiring!" said PPSFL board member Wendy Robertson. "I felt really energized to keep fighting so Planned Parenthood can continue its vital work."

Cornell senior Lauren Schneider came away feeling empowered to bring the energy of the demonstration home with her. "I can't wait to bring more pro-choice events to my campus," she said, a perfect embodiment of the notion that we must think globally and act locally.

For information about how you can act locally, e-mail [action@ppsfl.org](mailto:action@ppsfl.org), and be sure to visit the Planned Parenthood Action Center at [www.plannedparenthoodaction.org](http://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org), for the latest updates on how you can make a difference.

### GET INVOLVED

- » Did you know that April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM)? The theme for SAAM 2011 is "It's Time to Get Involved." Volunteering for Rape Crisis of the Southern Tier is a significant way to engage with your community and get involved. For more information on volunteer opportunities, call 1-888-810-0093 or visit [RCST.ORG](http://RCST.ORG).

# Sex Ed in Steuben County

## CHRISTINE MCLEAR TALKS ABOUT HER FIRST YEAR AT PPSFL

PPSFL Sexuality Educators provide age-appropriate, accurate sexuality education to our communities. Working with teachers in schools as well as community organizations, our educators bring programming to thousands in our region. Last year, the addition of a full-time educator in Steuben County allowed us to fill a gap that had developed in the area. After a year on the job, we wanted to check in with Christine McLear to see how she's coming along providing programming in Steuben County.

### What has your first year at Planned Parenthood been like?

It's been great, and really busy! By working with area committees, attending trainings, and getting to know teachers and local stakeholders, I've learned a lot about the needs of Steuben County and I've been able to help people meet their sexuality education needs.

### What has surprised you the most about your work?

I've been really surprised by how excited people are to have an educator back in this area. I have new requests all the time, and I'm always scheduling events. I've seen about 900 different individuals in programs over the past year! It's been great to be so warmly received.

### What type of setting do you usually work in?

I mostly work with health teachers and youth-serving organizations. I've been in the classrooms of 9 public schools across the county, and many local organizations such as the Corning Area Youth Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and after school programs have requested long-term, continuing programming. I've also sent resources and supplies to organizations like the public libraries in Corning and Bath, and Corning Community College.

### What are your programs usually like?

While contraceptives and sexually transmitted infections are certainly popular and important topics, our education department offers a larger variety of programs than I imagined before I came to PPSFL. Our Safe Text program covers digital privacy information, Breaking Up is Hard to Do offers tips for break-ups, and Beyond the Sparkle uses Stephanie

Meyer's Twilight to talk about gender and healthy relationships. These programs help demonstrate that sexuality is much more than just sex.

### What do you like most about your work?

That is tough to answer because I have many favorites! I really enjoy being recognized as the "Planned Parenthood Lady" by students who have been in my programs. I like that they feel comfortable greeting me that way in public.

I like that I can be a resource to anyone who needs me. Once, after doing a program for a group of students, I was stopped by a community center staff member who asked, "Are you only here for the kids, or can we ask you questions too?" Of course, I stayed and answered their questions! I think it's great that I can reach people formally through programs, or casually when they feel comfortable.



## GET EDUCATED

- » If you would like to book a sexuality education program in Steuben County, please contact Christine McLear at 607-962-4648. Call 607-734-3313 to speak with an educator in Chemung County, or 607-216-0021 for an educator in Tompkins County.
- » Did you receive a great program from one of our educators? Tell us all about it at [www.facebook.com/ppsfl](http://www.facebook.com/ppsfl).

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## NEED TO CONTACT US?

### Health Centers

Corning	962-4686
Elmira	734-3313
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### Admin. & Development Offices

Ithaca	273-1526
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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

Jan. 1, 2011 - Mar. 24, 2011

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## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HR 3

by Casey Martinson

HR 3 is the so-called “No Taxpayer Funding For Abortion Act” introduced in Congress in January by Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey.

More aptly known as “Stupak on Steroids” by reproductive rights advocates, this anti-choice legislation attracted a lot of attention early on for ruling that rape victims could no longer receive federal Medicaid funding for abortions unless they had been “forcibly” raped. After significant public outcry, that offensive provision was removed. However, HR 3 is still one of the most odious anti-choice bills we’ve ever seen in Congress. Here are just a few of its other implications:

1. In the state exchange systems established by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA, aka Health Care Reform), no insurance company could offer an insurance plan that covers abortion, even if consumers were to purchase such a plan with their own money.
2. While PPACA currently provides individuals and small businesses tax breaks for purchasing health insurance, HR 3 would prohibit any tax break if the purchased insurance plan includes abortion coverage. This is effectively a tax increase on Americans purchasing comprehensive health insurance.
3. Under HR 3, a woman using her health savings account to pay for an abortion could be forced to prove to the IRS (if audited) that she was either in danger of dying or a victim of rape or incest at the time of the procedure.

In summary, HR 3 seeks to impose the most heinous barriers to abortion access we have seen since *Roe v. Wade* became law. Many experts have projected that the burdensome provisions of the bill would actually lead most private insurance companies to stop offering abortion coverage under any circumstances.

# Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programming

## FUNDING AWARDED TO PPSFL FOR CHEMUNG COUNTY

by Tammy Miller

PPSFL is proud to announce the receipt of a \$200,000 state grant for teen pregnancy prevention programming in Chemung County. This funding is part of New York State's Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (CAPP) and is an annual award given annually for 5 years. These funds will be utilized through Project CAP, a program of Planned Parenthood.



“Teens in Chemung County are the real winners. This new money will provide them with important skills and the information necessary to prevent teen pregnancy and lead healthy lives,” said Tammy Miller, PPSFL Education Director and Director of Project CAP. “When you examine teen pregnancy rates, Chemung County consistently ranks as one of the top counties with the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state. The most current data available ranked Chemung County at 6 out of 62 counties.”

Programs awarded CAPP funding are tasked with four main goals:

1. implementation of comprehensive, medically-accurate, evidence-based curricula in schools and community settings
2. ensuring access to clinic services
3. expanding educational, social, recreational, vocational, and economic opportunities for area youth
4. advancing community-wide efforts to improve outcomes for area youth.

Decades of research have identified several programs that are effective in helping young people reduce their risk for pregnancy, HIV, and STIs. These evidence-based programs utilize strategies that include accurate, honest information about abstinence as well as contraception. Over the past year, PPSFL and Project CAP staff members have worked with several schools and community organizations to choose appropriate curricula for our community.

In a survey conducted last spring, PPSFL determined the top 3 teen-identified barriers to accessing clinic services: lack of knowledge of location, fear of the physical exam, and concerns about cost of services. Armed with this information, PPSFL and Project CAP applied for and were awarded special technology add-on funding. This funding allows PPSFL to reach out to potential teen patients through technology.

In February, a flat-screen TV was installed in the Elmira Office. This television plays a slide show complete with information on services, contraception, STI's, sexual assault, LGBT issues, and monthly fun facts and trivia. The slide show provides information to patients before they enter the exam room and makes their wait more enjoyable. Education staff produces the slide show in-house.

In addition, pre-production is underway for a “virtual visit” video. This 3-5 minute video will show what happens in a typical visit to PPSFL. The video will help to demystify a visit to the clinic and help to allay any fears a teen or young adult may have when accessing services. This video will be posted on PPSFL and Project CAP websites and will be used by education staff in community presentations. Other technology projects include a text for info service, text message appointment reminders, and online training for teachers and parents.

One way we can protect our teens from an unintended pregnancy is through the advancement of developmental assets. Developmental assets are the positive characteristics and factors that form the foundation of the healthy development of children and adolescents. Students with more assets are more

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## TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMMING FUNDING

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likely to show positive attitudes and outcomes such as leadership, positive relationships, good health, valuing diversity, and school success.



Through this initiative, Project CAP staff and partners will be implementing programs designed to expand educational, social, recreational, vocational, and economic opportunities and promote asset development among area youth. Some examples of programming offered to Chemung County youth will include a youth-led monthly teen cinema, “Girls on Track” – a 5K training program for middle school girls, “Kids Having Kids” art exhibit produced by local teen parents, a boys summit, and monthly podcasts produced by our Peer Advocates.

The final aspect of the Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative includes creating a comprehensive community plan to improve productive health outcomes for our teens. Using a combination of social marketing, public events, and the development of a community advisory council, adolescent pregnancy prevention in Chemung County will become a community-wide effort.

PPSFL is excited to move forward in this project. The need in Chemung County is great and there is much work to be done. “The evidence is undeniable — when young people get programs that give them the skills they need to make responsible decisions and take care of themselves, they avoid early pregnancy and risky behaviors. We are so pleased to be part of making sure Chemung County teens get the help they need,” added Miller.

### GET INFORMED

- » For more information about Project CAP or to become a member of the community advisory council, please contact Project Director, Tammy Miller, [tammy.miller@ppsfl.org](mailto:tammy.miller@ppsfl.org), and visit [PROJECTCAP.ORG](http://PROJECTCAP.ORG).

## DATES & EVENTS

### **May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month (NTPPM)**

- » NTPPM seeks to involve communities in promoting and supporting effective teen pregnancy prevention initiatives.

### **Please join us for PPSFL’s first annual Birds & Bees Luncheon**

- » Where: Tony R’s in Corning, NY
- » When: Friday, May 20, 2011  
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- » RSVP: Contact Amanda Gilbert  
607-796-0220 x302  
[amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org](mailto:amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org)

### **June is National LGBTQ Pride Month**

- » A month devoted to the celebration of sexual diversity and affirmation of the rights and respect deserved by all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

### PLEASE JOIN US

Want to pitch in on some easy special projects while strengthening the connections within our community of supporters?



Mixed Company is a low-commitment level volunteer program at PPSFL where volunteers, board members, staff, and students mix and mingle while providing support on fun projects. The group meets at the Education Office on Seneca Street in Ithaca about once every other month for just a couple of evening or weekend hours. If you have even one free hour this month that you would like to put to good use, then come get busy in Mixed Company!

For more information or for an application, e-mail Jenn Foy at [jenn.foy@ppsfl.org](mailto:jenn.foy@ppsfl.org).

## From Concerned Passerby TO PPSFL BOARD MEMBER

by Alicia Kenaley

Last spring, while taking a Saturday morning writing class in the building across from 314 W. State Street, Rebecca Weger heard singing on the street outside. Her curiosity piqued, Rebecca soon discovered that the singing was coming from a group of anti-choice protesters targeting the Ithaca Planned Parenthood health center as part of the 40 Days for Life movement.

Inspired to take action, Rebecca walked across the street to have a conversation with the patient escort sitting on the porch, CEO Joe Sammons. It turned out to be a fortuitous moment for PPSFL! When the fall 40 Days for Life campaign began, Rebecca volunteered to be a regular patient escort and we were delighted when she agreed to join PPSFL's Board in January of this year.

Empowering people by providing access to information and resources has always been important to Rebecca, who is inspired by Planned Parenthood's mission to promote healthy sexuality and reproductive choice through exceptional services, honest education, and fearless advocacy. Rebecca says she is happy to be a part of an organization that "helps people make healthy decisions about their bodies and their lives." We are grateful to have Rebecca on PPSFL's Board of Directors. Please join us in welcoming Rebecca!

Rebecca works in prospect management at Cornell University and has lived in Ithaca for the past ten years.



## SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE CONSTANCE E. COOK AND MARGARET SANGER-KATHARINE HOUGHTON HEPBURN AWARD AWARDS

Each year, PPSFL bestows the Constance E. Cook Award and the Margaret Sanger - Katharine Houghton Hepburn Award in recognition of outstanding contributions to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Cook Award recipients may include individuals, groups, or organizations in Tompkins County; Sanger-Houghton Award recipients may include individuals, groups, or organizations in the Southern Tier. If you know a person or group deserving such recognition, please let us know!

All nominations should be sent to Amanda Gilbert at [amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org](mailto:amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org) by May 30, 2011.

Presentation of this award is made at PPSFL's Annual Celebration, to be held this September in Ithaca.

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR PLANNED PARENTHOOD AND CELEBRATE THE WOMEN IN YOUR LIFE

This Mother's Day, Sunday May 8th, Moosewood Restaurant is hosting a special benefit brunch for Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes. Brunch will include coffee, juice, assorted breads, soup, and a choice of vegetarian or vegan entrees. The restaurant will offer two seatings: one from 10:30 a.m. to noon, and another from noon to 1:30. The cost of the brunch is \$18 per seat, with all proceeds going to support Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes.

Moosewood is located at 215 N. Cayuga Street in the Dewitt Mall in Ithaca. Reserve your seat now by contacting Amanda Gilbert at 607-796-0220 x302 or [amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org](mailto:amanda.gilbert@ppsfl.org). Seating is limited and reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. *Please do not call Moosewood for reservations.*

We look forward to seeing you there!



314 West State Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850

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