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REMARKS

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CHOICE

Victory Continued from page 1

Over the next two months, the U.S. Senate stood as a bulwark against this attack—voting twice against the de-funding of Planned Parenthood. Both U.S. Senators from New York stood up consistently for women's health and Senator Kirstin Gillibrand delivered several remarkable speeches on our behalf on the Senate floor. U.S. Representative Paul Tonko also voted consistently in support of Title X and women's health and spoke out at several local rallies. Of those who represent the UHPP service area in Washington, only Congressman Chris Gibson, (20th Congressional District), continued to vote against funding of Planned Parenthood and to malign the Planned Parenthood name.

The success of our local campaign depended on active involvement and support from local residents, staff, students, clients and volunteers, as well as community partners; on coverage from media representatives and editors who took time to sort through the rhetoric and provide the public with the facts about the services we provide; and

on clients who were courageous enough to share their stories.

Beginning in February, UHPP leadership organized and spoke at local rallies and earned extensive media coverage of the issues. UHPP staff and Board members made numerous visits to the offices of state and federal officials to make the case. *I Stand with Planned Parenthood* postcards and petitions were circulated in our health center waiting areas, on area campuses and at local events. The UHPP Facebook site and website carried continuous updates and links to media coverage, and urged people to pledge their support through the national *I Stand with Planned Parenthood* website. Current and past clients were urged to share personal stories (see page 3) and a growing list of activists were updated through email alerts.

In total, we gathered and delivered over 400 signed postcards and petitions to our U.S. Senators, telling them to hold the line and vote against the de-funding of both Title X and Planned Parenthood. Over 2,000 new activists joined our email alert list and over 60 people expressed interest in

volunteering. We helped fill buses that twice carried supporters from the greater capital region to rallies, first in New York City and then, on April 7, to Washington, DC for the Stand Up for Women's Health national rally and lobby day.

On April 8, President Obama and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid reached a final compromise with House Leader Boehner. The compromise required another vote, by both the House and the Senate, on a new version of the Continuing Budget Resolution that did not include the de-funding of either Title X or Planned Parenthood. House Republicans also won a separate vote on the de-funding of Planned Parenthood—a measure that passed the House, but was defeated in the Senate and therefore did not become law.

Thank you to all those who stood up for access to women's health care. Our battles are not over—but because of you, we will prevail. ●

A PUBLICATION OF UPPER HUDSON PLANNED PARENTHOOD
SERVING ALBANY, COLUMBIA, GREENE & RENSSELAER COUNTIES

CHOICE

SPRING 2011

REMARKS

VICTORY!

Late Friday night, April 15, 2011, the U.S. Senate defeated an outrageous and carefully orchestrated attack on women's health by anti-abortion organizations and Republican leadership in the House of Representatives. This victory was only possible because of the record-breaking *I Stand with Planned Parenthood* national campaign, organized by Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). That PPFA campaign garnered over 800,000 signatures on an open letter to Congress, brought tens of thousands of people to rallies and events and generated over 40,000 calls into legislator offices. Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood was a proud and active participant in this campaign.



Almost simultaneously, the House of Representatives introduced a surprise version of a Continuing Budget Resolution (HR1)—a bill necessary for the federal government to continue to spend money through the current fiscal year. The House version contained dramatic cuts to a wide range of domestic programs, including the total destruction of the Title X National Family Planning program. House Republicans also introduced and passed an amendment to HR1, introduced by Representative Mike Pence (R-Indiana) to deny federal funding of any kind to Planned Parenthood.

The attack on Planned Parenthood began on January 24, 2011, when the anti-abortion group Live Action released the first of a string of videotapes procured as part of an intensive 11-week undercover "sting" operation. Live Action volunteers had gone into numerous Planned Parenthood health centers with hidden cameras, looking to record situations that might appear to challenge the credibility and integrity of our staff and reputation.

The attack on Title X—a national system of health care that has been lauded as one of the most effective vehicles for the provision of preventive reproductive health care services to women in American—was both shocking and galvanizing. The targeting of Planned Parenthood, accompanied by blatant allegations and lies about our mission and services, incited a wave of protest and support that quickly swept the country.

SAVE THE DATE

JOIN US!:

UHPP ANNUAL MEETING AND RECOGNITION RECEPTION

May 18, 2011
5:30 pm to 8 pm

Location:

Emerson Community Hall at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany at 405 Washington Avenue in Albany

Guest speaker:

M. Tracey Brooks, President/CEO of Family Planning Advocates of New York State

For more information contact Amber at 434-5678, ext. 121 or email amber@uhpp.org.


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REMARKS

Last November, when I wrote this column for our winter newsletter, I described the battle we anticipated regarding coverage of birth control in health care reform. I concluded by writing “Here we go again.” Little did I know: the birth control issue was minor compared to what was in store for us. The new Republican controlled House of Representatives aggressively moved to pass a bill that eliminated any federal funding for Planned Parenthood whatsoever. In a stunning illustration of indifference to the needs of women across this country, they also eliminated funding for Title X, the highly successful, 40 year old federal public health initiative for the provision of basic family planning services, such as birth control counseling or sexually transmitted infection testing. Additionally, programs such federal sex education

Geoffrey Moore

Chairperson,
Board of Directors

Patricia A. McGeown

President/CEO

Blue Carreker

Editor

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www.uhpp.org

President's Corner

From Patricia A. McGeown, President/CEO

initiatives across the country would exclude Planned Parenthood, as would HIV/AIDS prevention programs supported by the Centers for Disease Control. Since Medicaid is 50 percent federally funded, Planned Parenthood would be barred from receiving Medicaid reimbursement as well. Here at UHPP, we faced the potential loss of \$1.5 million in funds out of a \$4.3 million budget.

Planned Parenthood is the largest reproductive health care provider in the country. Three million women and men walk through Planned Parenthood's doors every year. We are the only health care provider for many of our patients. One woman in five will walk through Planned Parenthood's doors at some point in her life. Despite all these facts, Congress tried to defund us. Despite the fact that access to health care is already a problem for millions of people in this country, Congress tried to defund Planned Parenthood's 800 health centers.

They want to defund access to family planning services, but the issue is—as always—abortion. The zealots in Congress who oppose abortion claim that by funding Planned Parenthood, federal funds are being used to support abortion. There is no basis in fact for that position. For 35 years, federal law—the Hyde Amendment—has prohibited use of federal funds for abortions. While we regard the Hyde Amendment as wrongheaded and mean spirited, we nonetheless have always operated within the confines of that law. In truth, those in Congress who want to defund Planned Parenthood want to do so because we provide abortions, plain and simple. They have tried to bolster their attacks on Planned Parenthood by working in concert with groups such as Live Action whose stated purpose is to “bring down” Planned Parenthood. Live Action attempts to discredit and malign Planned Parenthood by videotaping “undercover stings” that are then obviously edited to misrepresent the encounter and

manipulate public opinion. Representative Mike Pence (R-Indiana) announced his bill to defund Planned Parenthood with the head of Live Action standing next to him.

Planned Parenthood does more than any other organization in the United States to help women avoid unintended pregnancies and reduce the need for abortions. But we do not apologize for providing abortions. Instead, we publicly advocate for the continued availability and legality of abortion. We work with medical schools to teach the procedure. And we treat the women who choose abortion with respect, compassion and dignity. Abortion continues to be available in this country because Planned Parenthood refuses to be bullied and intimidated into stopping its provision. That is why our opponents want to defund and discredit us. And they are willing to sacrifice the nation's family planning program and the millions of women and men who depend on it in the process.

But the value of our health services to millions of men and women in this country could not be ignored and cooler heads prevailed. Planned Parenthood supporters across the country, including those here in the Capital Region, “stood up” for Planned Parenthood, participating fully in what was an enormously successful national campaign. As a result, we turned the media coverage 180 degrees, from questions about Planned Parenthood's integrity to strong assertions and detailed descriptions of the essential care we provide every day. The truth won out and we were not defunded. We will continue to receive federal funding to provide affordable, preventive care and comprehensive sex education. The attacks will come again, but, with the active support of people across the country, we emerged from these recent battles stronger than ever. ●



Our Patients Speak Out:

“As a college student it can be difficult to make ends meet. I need to balance paying college tuition, textbooks, and other course expenses—rent, energy bills, misc expenses, and most importantly healthcare. The last thing I need right now would be to find out I was pregnant, which is why I decided to go on some sort of contraceptive. I went to Planned Parenthood and found out I was not only eligible for the Family Planning Benefit Program (FPBP); they would help me complete and file the necessary paperwork. This program covered all of my bills, from appointment fees to prescriptions. I also expressed a desire to not go on a hormonal birth control and the clinician introduced me to the ParaGard Copper IUD. It’s a non-hormonal form of birth control that is safe to use, even for young women like myself. My entire experience with Planned Parenthood has surpassed my expectations since day one. The staff and clinicians have always been more than pleasant, answering all of my questions and concerns, guiding me to benefits such as the FPBP program. I’ve always left feeling as though they really do care about my health. If it were not for Planned Parenthood, I would be having so much difficulty paying for my reproductive healthcare. I’m so glad they were there for me and able to guide me as I chose a contraceptive and made it a viable option by covering expenses.” **Nita P. Troy, NY.**

How Can You Answer The Opposition?

America must balance its budget, so denying Planned Parenthood federal funds makes sense. Barring Planned Parenthood from participating in federal health coverage programs like Medicaid would not save the taxpayers a dime. Programs like Medicaid that reimburse our health centers for services would still receive the same amount of federal money (net savings: zero), but people who rely on Planned Parenthood services would have nowhere to turn for them. In fact, federal costs are likely to go up, not down. Planned Parenthood is a very cost-effective provider, as well as the leading provider of women’s health care in the United States.

Most important, when women don’t get preventive care, the cost of treating their health problems goes up. For every dollar invested in family planning, taxpayers save nearly four dollars in public funds.

How can you honestly say that no government funds go to fund abortions, if you are using government funds to cover your rent, salaries and overhead? Federal funds are strictly accounted for, and no federal funds are used to pay for abortions at UHPP or other Planned Parenthoods. For more than three decades, it has been against the law to use federal funds to pay for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest and when the pregnant woman’s life is in danger.

Every dollar from the federal government that Planned Parenthood receives pays for preventive family planning services such as cancer screenings, birth control, annual exams, STI and HIV testing. Like all

health care providers, our finances are routinely audited to ensure that public funds are being used in compliance with the law.

Planned Parenthood’s health centers are like hospitals that receive payments from public coverage programs like Medicaid for specific medical visits, treatments, and procedures. Like Planned Parenthood, some hospitals receive public funding and provide reproductive health care — and safe, legal abortion is part of that. But, no one is proposing to bar hospitals from receiving federal reimbursement for visits, treatments, and procedures.

Lastly, the federal courts, including the Supreme Court, have upheld the principle that public funds can pay for activities of an organization so long as it is used for permitted purposes and for no other.

Why should citizens who oppose abortion have their tax dollars go to Planned Parenthood? First and foremost, Planned Parenthood does more than any other organization in the United States to prevent abortions. Planned Parenthood is the single largest provider of birth control, family planning and sex education in the United States. Second, the suggestion that tax dollars fund abortion is not true. Anyone who wants to decrease the number of abortions in the United States should join with Planned Parenthood in ensuring that women and families have access to affordable family planning and birth control, the best way to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and reduce the need for abortion. ●

In Her Own Words

“When I was a college student with no health insurance coverage, the local Planned Parenthood health center was my only source of preventive health care services. I went to the center for annual exams and preventive screenings, as well as for birth control. This particular year, I went in for my regular screening and when my Pap test results came back, I was notified that it had come back abnormal. After a second test, it was confirmed that I had precancerous cells. Of course, I was scared. But the staff treated me with great care and concern. I received appropriate treatment and had no further problems. Who knows what could have happened to me if Planned Parenthood had not been there to provide that screening and treatment. Thirty-four years later I have two birth sons, one adopted son and three grandchildren. I remain cancer free, and continue to be thankful to Planned Parenthood.” **Melissa W.**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



NYS Senate Switchboard: (518) 455-2800 NYS Assembly Switchboard: (518) 455-4100

CHOICE
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REMARKS

Good News in State Budget

The state budget agreed to by the Governor and both the NYS Assembly and Senate includes level funding for family planning services. This is a great achievement in such difficult economic times and is a testament to the work done by our staff and volunteers, and other advocates throughout the state. We were able to clearly and effectively communicate the important role of family planning services in both ensuring access to critical preventive services and saving state dollars over the long term. Thank you to all those who made phone calls, sent emails, wrote letters and talked directly to state legislators.

Medicaid Reorganization Poses Challenges

A major priority of Governor Cuomo is the reorganization of Medicaid, with the goal of cutting expenses. Several changes will directly impact family planning providers including Planned Parenthood. First, the state will convert \$8 million in family planning funds to Medicaid. Specifically, this has meant a loss of special funding for Planned Parenthoods to provide and promote free emergency contraception and HPV vaccines. Other actions will include a spending cap on total Medicaid expenditures, the elimination of special additional funds for employee recruitment and retention and a restructuring of HIV/AIDS testing and counseling reimbursements.

Challenge to Medicaid Funding for Abortion Defeated 91 to 57:

A bill that would have denied Medicaid recipients in New York coverage of abortion services was defeated in the NYS Assembly 91 votes against to 51 votes in support. While the federal Hyde amendment bans the use of federal Medicaid dollars for abortion, New York State has continued to ensure equal access to these services by including abortion in the full range of reproductive health services covered by state Medicaid dollars. Those Assembly members in the UHPP service area who voted to retain coverage included Canestrari and McEneny. Those who voted to deny coverage included Jordan, Lopez, Molinaro and Reilly.



To Stay Updated: "Like" UHPP on Facebook!

UHPP staff and volunteers get ready to lobby at the NYS Capitol for the Women's Health Matters Day of Action.



Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121

Health care reform

As readers may recall, last year's historic health care reform legislation brought many new important improvements in access to health care including the elimination of pre-existing conditions, the ability to continue including adult children in a

family plan until the age of 26 and expansion of coverage to millions of previously uninsured Americans. However, it also included a major setback in abortion coverage, requiring insurance companies to only offer abortion coverage as a separate rider with an additional cost to consumers that could not be paid with federal assistance. But, as outrageous and discriminatory as this was, it was not enough for those determined to make abortion inaccessible. Just recently, Rep.

Chris Smith (R-NJ) introduced the misleadingly named bill, "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion" (HR3). This bill imposes new tax penalties on both individuals who choose a health plan that covers abortion, as well as small businesses who offer such a plan. The bill could end private health insurance coverage for virtually all abortions, including private insurance coverage that Americans pay for entirely with their own money.



UHPP S.T.A.R.S. (Seriously Talking About Responsible Sex) peer educators are high school students recruited and trained to provide factual information and guidance on sexual health and responsibility to their peers. In March, they joined other students from across the state at a Youth Leadership Conference where they attended workshops and staged a visibility event for legislators to promote the need for more medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education in the schools.



Advocates of Planned Parenthood, including UHPP staff and volunteers rallied at the State Capitol Tuesday, February 15, 2011, urging state lawmakers to join the fight to save federal funding of family planning health care services.

ALBANY VOX Rally



This has been a busy and exciting month for VOX: Voices for Planned Parenthood, University at Albany chapter. Under President Sara Musacchia and Vice President Kristen Johnson, the group has successfully raised awareness about harmful legislation threatening the future funding of Planned Parenthood. Through their tabling and “dorm-storming” efforts they have educated their fellow students on the issue and provided them with the means to take action and show support for not only UHPP, but all Planned Parenthoods.

Their greatest efforts culminated with a student led rally and speak out at the Leo O'Brien federal building in downtown Albany. In attendance were student groups including VOX, CATALYST and the Young Democrats, and community groups including Family Planning Advocates of NYS, New York Civil Liberties Union and Interfaith Impact.



Musacchia and Melissa Ursi, a UHPP intern from UAlbany, greeted the crowd and got them fired up by explaining the extreme proposal passed by the US House of Representatives to bar Planned Parenthood from receiving federal funding for family planning services. The 85 attendees responded with enthusiastic cheers and boo's as students, legislators and community members shared their verbal support for Planned Parenthood. Congressman Paul Tonko also spoke, pledging his support and willingness to fight for women's health. And UHPP President/CEO Patricia McGeown brought the proposed cuts home by sharing details of the potential impact on UHPP and Capital Region residents. A representative from U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand's office also came to show support for the rally. ●

Welcome: UHPP's New Volunteer Manager

This April, Alicia Ortiz began working as UHPP's new Volunteer Manager. Alicia is



a graduate of SUNY New Paltz where she served as a Planned Parenthood peer mentor, a Resident Assistant and a campus organizer for NY Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). She also went to Ghana as part of a cultural exchange and worked with local community leaders to begin an HIV/AIDS education campaign for youth. Since graduating, Alicia worked as an organizer with UNITE Here, International Union and helped found Albany Queer Rising, a community organization dedicated to winning equality and justice for LGBT people. She is a performing musician and a Zumba instructor. We know Alicia will bring some terrific energy and new ideas to this new part time position. If you would like to volunteer, contact her at alicia@uhpp.org. ●



**Seriously Talking
About
Responsible Sex**

Community Education

CHOICE

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REMARKS

UHPP Working with Rensselaer Schools to Provide Sex Education Expertise

In 2010, Rensselaer High School staff met to discuss the growing incidence of student pregnancies. On the advice of the NYS Department of Health, they turned to UHPP for guidance and expertise.

Last fall, UHPP External Affairs staff Rob Curry and Meaghan Carroll had a series of meetings with the Superintendent, Principal and health teachers, as well as the School Board and PTA. Our staff helped define the scope of the problem, identified appropriate curricula and provided guidance on condom distribution models.

Thanks to this cooperative approach, Carroll was able to provide a six-part

sex education series to both eighth and 10th graders this spring. The eighth grade classes focused on puberty, healthy relationships, communication and refusal skills. The 10th grade classes emphasized prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, and healthy relationships. Carroll will teach 11th and 12th grade classes this fall.

“Many challenges could have slowed this process,” said Curry. “It was a pleasure to work with a district that recognized the problem and took action quickly for the benefit of all their students.”

Principal Karen Urbanski added, “UHPP is providing quality sex education and doing such a good job that we don’t know what we would do without their help and collaboration.”

UHPP S.T.A.R.S. Recognized for HIV/AIDS Education Work

On March 28th, Umberto Cruz, Executive Director of the NYS Department of Health’s AIDS Institute presented the UHPP S.T.A.R.S. high school peer educators with the Commissioner of Health’s Distinguished Service Youth Award. The teens were recognized for their provision of educational tours and workshops during World AIDS Day 2010, and for their on-going commitment to peer education.

Present at the event were all UHPP staff members (the event was timed to coincide with a UHPP staff meeting), family members of the peer educators, representatives from the NYS Dept. of Health—AIDS Institute Policy and Planning Unit and Prevention Unit, members of the UHPP Board of Directors, and representatives from the NAMES Project—New York Capital Region Chapter.

Dr. Cruz presented individual certificates to each peer educator, and complimented the group on the difference they are



S.T.A.R.S. Peer educators: Brihan Ford, Krishona Brown, Zaraya Merritt, Brandon Walker, Shamar Tillman, Adnan Azad, Amber Markham and Giovanna Markham

making in the public health effort to fight HIV/AIDS. Pat McGeown, UHPP’s President/CEO, challenged all in attendance to realize that while society often perpetuates negative stereotypes of young people, our peer educators are wonderful examples of the positive impact youth can have in our communities.

This year marked the 14th year that the S.T.A.R.S. peer educators participated in the NYS Dept. of Health World AIDS Day Commemoration Event. Throughout the week-long event in December, they facilitated dozens of educational programs and tours of the AIDS Memorial Quilt to hundreds of youth from throughout the state.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that one out of every two new HIV infections in the United States is occurring in young people under the age of 20, and that only one in every four HIV-positive persons knows his/her HIV status. ●

UHPP Receives Grant Funding for Comprehensive Sex Ed

In December 2010, UHPP was the recipient of a five-year NYS Department of Health Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (CAPP) grant. Through a very competitive RFP process, UHPP was the only agency funded for CAPP in our four-county service area. The grant will enable us to continue our school-based sex education programming, and the S.T.A.R.S. peer education program, in the cities of Albany and Hudson, and will fund transportation assistance for students in those cities who come to our weekly Teen Clinics.

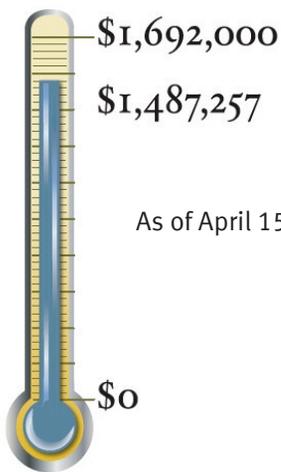
The funding for the CAPP grant was historic, as the dollars came to the Health Department as part of the first ever round of federal funds dedicated to the provision of comprehensive sex education.



EXPANDING ACCESS MEETING NEEDS
 A CAMPAIGN FOR UPPER HUDSON PLANNED PARENTHOOD
Capital Campaign Update:



UHPP clients LOVE our new center at 855 Central Avenue! And, we love serving them in our large, state-of-the-art facility. Thank you to all who already helped make possible our new headquarters and health center. It's not too late for everyone to help. In the coming months, our Campaign Committee, led by Chair Mary Kahl, and Honorary Chairs Phoebe Bender and Chuck Liddle, will be reaching out to all UHPP supporters to help us finish and reach our goal (see thermometer). Our Capital Campaign is the most important effort UHPP has undertaken in decades. "Expanding Access*Meeting Needs" will help secure UHPP's future in these volatile times and strengthen our capacity to care for those most in need of our exceptional health services. ●



As of April 15, 2011

To Our Donors

UHPP once again had a successful fundraising year. Your generosity makes a world of difference to those we serve.

THANK YOU!

Gifts in Tribute

Giving tributes is a special way to remember or honor someone special, while helping others in our community. If you would like more information about tributes, please call (518) 434-5678 x121.

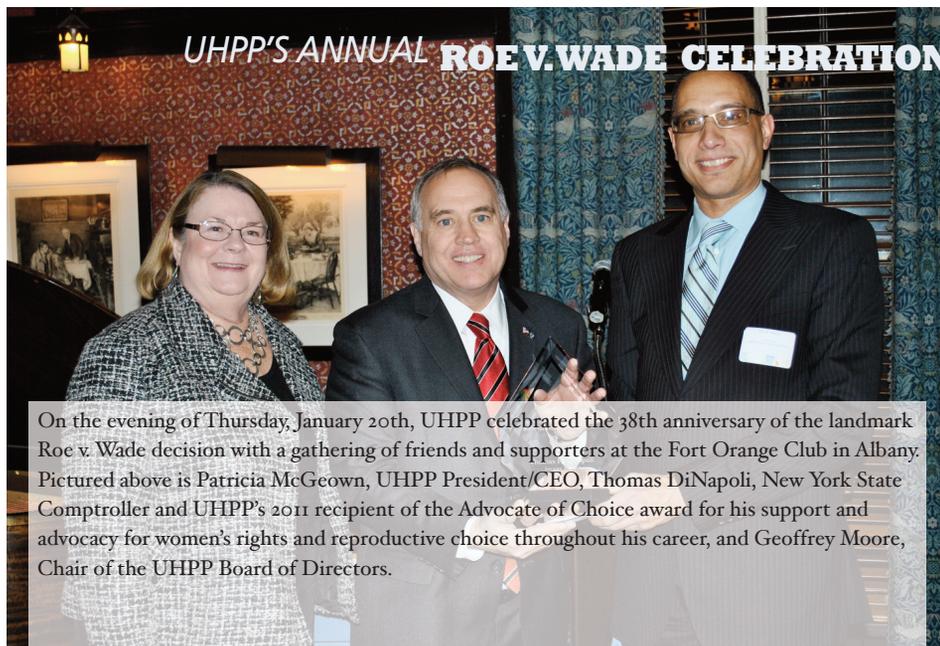
- In honor of Rob Curry**
Ms. P. Clay Stephens
- In memory of Robert Ferrari**
Ms. Susan Campbell
- In memory of Florence Kapner**
Ms. Shirley W. Brand
- In memory of Meredith Meislahn**
Mr. Harry Meislahn
- In honor of JoAnne McDonough**
Mr. James Bradley and The Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, Inc.
- In memory of Miriam Netter**
Mr. Sumner Shapiro
- In memory of Anna Pantini**
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- In memory of William Scanlan**
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- In honor of Carol Stenger**
Mr. Matt A. Neco
- In memory of Pola Yolles**
Ms. Lydia Kosinski
- In honor of Alison Zajicek**
Ms. Beverly Bendix

This list is inclusive from October 22, 2010 to March 31, 2011. Please notify us if we have made any errors and accept our apologies.



Congratulations!

Amber Sickles was promoted from Development Associate to the Director of Development. In this new position, Amber will provide leadership and implement fundraising programs to raise government grant and private funding support for UHPP programs and services. She will also coordinate special activities and events.



On the evening of Thursday, January 20th, UHPP celebrated the 38th anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision with a gathering of friends and supporters at the Fort Orange Club in Albany. Pictured above is Patricia McGeown, UHPP President/CEO, Thomas DiNapoli, New York State Comptroller and UHPP's 2011 recipient of the Advocate of Choice award for his support and advocacy for women's rights and reproductive choice throughout his career, and Geoffrey Moore, Chair of the UHPP Board of Directors.