

FOCUS

Summer 2015



GET TO KNOW PLANNED PARENTHOOD
WHERE YOUR VOICE GETS STRONGER BY THE NUMBERS

Griswold v. Connecticut: *The Historical Significance*

Fifty years ago Estelle Griswold, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut and Dr. C. Lee Buxton, chairman of the Yale Medical School Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, were arrested for providing birth control to married women. At the time, administering contraception was illegal in the state. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, which ruled in a 7-2 decision that the Connecticut law barring contraception violated the constitutional right to privacy. This was a landmark success for advocates of access to contraception across the country and helped lay the foundation years later for a favorable decision in *Roe v. Wade*.

Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, the organization that Griswold led, has since become Planned Parenthood of

Southern New England (PPSNE). We are so proud to carry on the legacy of Estelle Griswold by making contraception available to the many patients who seek it each year.

Join us as we celebrate this amazing part of our history!

On April 30, PPSNE and the American Association for the History of Medicine hosted a roundtable discussion celebrating the 50th Anniversary of *Griswold v. Connecticut*.

Judy Tabar, President and CEO of PPSNE, was a key member of the distinguished panel that discussed how the *Griswold* decision impacted the lives of women, men and families over the past half century.

Continued on the back cover



*A distinguished panel discussed the landmark 1965 U.S. Supreme Court *Griswold v. Connecticut* decision. The discussion was moderated by Barbara Sicherman, far left. Panelists included (L-R) Reva Siegel, Judy Tabar, President and CEO, PPSNE, Linda Greenhouse, Rosemary A. Stevens and Heather Munro Prescott.*

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PPSNE Legacy Has Major Impact on Future of Women's Health

Judy Tabar, President & CEO

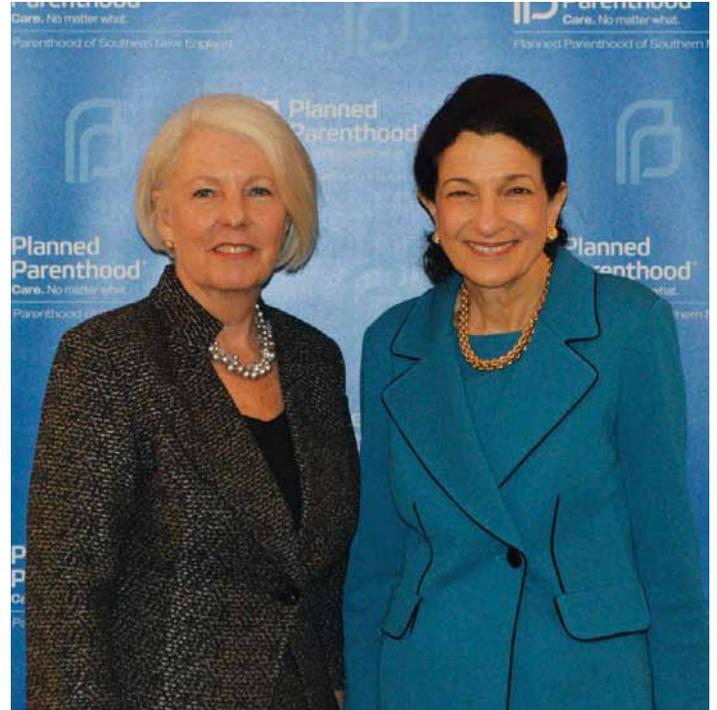
Spring is in full bloom and so is our work here at PPSNE. With your support, we were able to close out our fiscal year this past March—raising more than \$3.9 million in annual gifts. WOW! Thank you for helping us make a positive difference in communities across our two states.

Because of you, we are able to provide life-saving cancer screenings, birth control, prevention and treatment of STDs, breast health services, pap tests, sexual health education, information and health counseling.

BIG NEWS! We are thrilled to announce that our Stamford health center will be moving to a new location later this year! We've found a spacious and welcoming new location that is accessible by public transportation and includes off-street parking. The new location will expand our ability to meet the needs of Connecticut residents of lower Fairfield County, and we absolutely cannot wait to settle into our new home!

We're also commemorating an important milestone in the reproductive rights movement this spring with roots right here in Connecticut. June 7 is the 50th Anniversary of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Griswold v. Connecticut* that established the right to privacy for couples who wished to use contraceptives. *Griswold* opened a pivotal door for the expansion of vital reproductive health services for women and their families. We plan to celebrate this historic moment throughout the year.

For starters, I recently participated as a panelist at the annual meeting of the American Association of the History of Medicine. It was a privilege to speak at this national gathering alongside a dynamic panel of scholars including Linda Greenhouse and Reva Siegel of Yale Law School as well as Rosemary Stevens, who was a witness in 1965 in the *Griswold* case. The event, which drew a diverse crowd of scholars and activists to the Omni Ballroom in New Haven on April 30, also was recorded by media outlets C-SPAN and CT-N for future broadcast. It was truly a pleasure to consider the impact of *Griswold* from many different points of view and to engage in thoughtful dialogue about the future of reproductive health and rights. This event was the first of several opportunities we will have this year to reflect on how *Griswold* has impacted the



Judy Tabar (L) stands with Olympia Snowe, former Republican U.S. Senator at the 2015 Spring Luncheon, Stamford, CT.

lives of women, men and families over the past half century. We look forward to celebrating with you. See page 6 for details on our culminating event in October!

Your partnership makes it possible for us to continue growing and serving our mission in new and exciting ways. By the time *Focus* reaches your mailbox, we hope that a Connecticut state budget will have passed reflecting our values and protecting Medicaid services to our state's most vulnerable families. Rhode Island also is threatening to reduce spending on its Medicaid program and has proposed a \$90 million budget cut to Medicaid.

As you and I both know, these misguided policies have a dramatically negative impact on some of our most vulnerable populations – young women, low-income women and women of color. This is unacceptable and, rest assured, PPSNE is strongly advocating with our coalition partners to ensure that these critical funds remain available to the women and families who depend on them for access to vital health care services. We invite you to add your voice to this effort and contact your legislators in support of protecting the Medicaid program which provides critical health care coverage for families across our two states.

Thank you for all you do to support our mission.

True Colors: When Blue and Pink are Not Enough

A snowy weekend couldn't freeze any of the excitement at the 22nd Annual True Colors Conference. Held March 20-21, the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth conference in the nation, drew more than 2,000 attendees. Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) co-sponsored the incredible event that took place at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. The conference's theme—"When Blue and Pink Are Not Enough"—focused on gender identity, expression, and honoring and respecting our differences.



New Haven STARS use the trivia wheel at the PPSNE resource table at True Colors

PPSNE led several educational sessions, including various workshops hosted by the PPSNE STARS (Students Teaching about Responsible Sexuality), our high school peer education group. The STARS presented about healthy relationships, decision-making and sexuality, and more.

Social media played a major role at the conference with PPSNE coordinating live, interactive social activities for participants. Keynote sessions and select workshops were "live tweeted" using the hashtag #TrueColors22.

Many conference goers used the hashtag to talk about their True Colors experience on social media.



Bridgeport STARS after their True Colors presentation "Keeping It Drama Free"

 @jayclifford1234

"Best thing about #TrueColors22 is that I could be the real me without any judgement, unlike how at my school I'd get bullied for being me"

 @Paulwashere82

"#TrueColors22 made me so happy and made me feel like i could be myself i love the event cause everyone gives compliments to everyone :)"

 @xxhaleyxo

"Today was the best experience I've ever had! #TrueColors22"

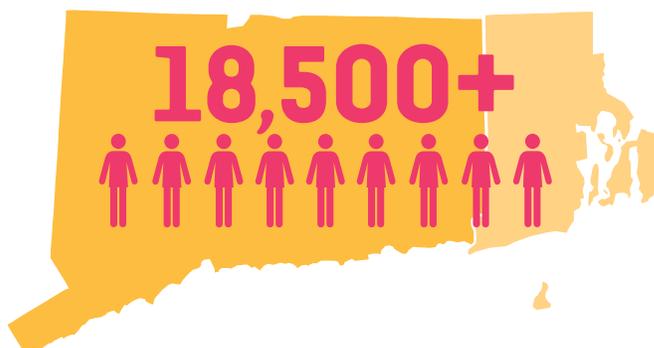
PPSNE hosted a "True Colors Social Media Scavenger Hunt" during the event where conference attendees searched for items, took pictures, and shared their photos on Instagram using the hashtag #TrueColorsHunt.

For all conference attendees that were giving away "free hugs," PPSNE also hosted a "Share-A-Hug" photo contest on Instagram where participants took photos of themselves and new friends hugging while wearing FREE HUGS stickers from PPSNE. Relive all the excitement of True Colors 22 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #TrueColors22, #FreeHugsCT, and #TrueColorsHunt.

Get Yourself Tested and Increase STD Awareness

In April, PPSNE launched the Get Yourself Tested (GYT) campaign aimed at encouraging young people to get tested for STD/HIV. The purpose of the GYT campaign is to increase awareness about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and link young people to STD testing and treatment. This campaign is a national partnership between MTV, Planned Parenthood and the Kaiser Family Foundation with consultation provided by the Centers for Disease Control.

Each year in the U.S., 10 million people under the age of 25 contract a STD and most do not know they are infected. In Connecticut and Rhode Island, more than 18,500 new cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis were detected in young people under 25 in 2013.



In recognition of GYT, PPSNE held special teens-only clinics in Bridgeport, Hartford, New London, New Haven, CT and Providence, RI. In addition, our teen peer educators (STARS) held visibility events to encourage their peers to get tested.



President and CEO Judy Tabar and U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe pose with honorees Nancie Schwarzman (L) and Kate Lannamann (R)



2015 Spring Luncheon - Photo Gallery Stamford, CT



Below L-R: Mary Hull, Leslie Lee and Natalie Pray*

L-R: Dana Effron, Event Co-Chair Erica Buchsbaum and her mother Cherie Bramley*



Jerry and Sheree Friedman*



Sen. Olympia Snowe and event host, the hilarious Jane Condon



Mary Himes and Leslie Bhutani*



Betsy Galindo and Wear Culvahouse*



L-R: Susan Rogers, Elizabeth Boutry, Giovanna Miller and Alessandra Messineo Long*



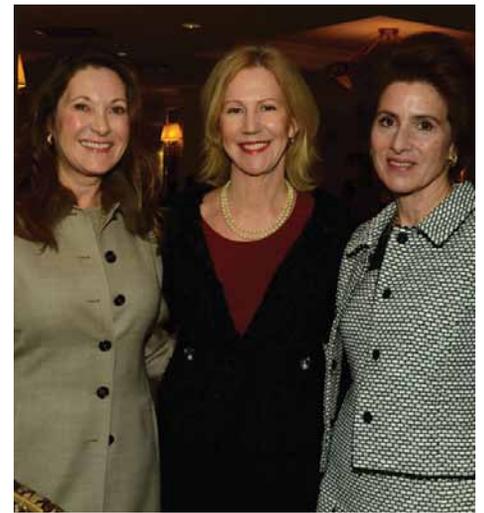
*Photographs courtesy of Bob Capazzo



*Audrey Ward, Jack Moffly and Ali Nichols**



PPSNE Board members Simone Joyaux (L) and Frances Padilla



*Susan Bevan, Nancy Northup and Cynthia Blumenthal**



Event honoree Nancie Schwarzman standing with husband Mark Schwarzman (L), daughter Caroline Schwarzman, son Zachary Schwarzman and Sen. Olympia Snowe



Spring Luncheon Co-Chairs L-R: Donna Moffly, Callie Sullivan, Erica Buchsbaum, Danielle Eason and Sheila Mossman



*Stephen and Naomi Myers**



*L-R: Leslie Petrick, Carole Purse, Julie Church and Linda Munger**



*Nancy Weissler and Sheila Mossman**



*Louise Hastings and Phoebe Erdman**

Global Family Planning: Saving Lives and Resources



U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D, CT) shares PPSNE concerns in recent editorial.

While PPSNE is working hard in CT and RI to improve access to family planning, Planned Parenthood as an international movement is advocating to improve the lives of women and girls globally. PPSNE recently received a “global advocacy” grant from our national organization, PPFA, and we will be calling attention all year to the need for Congress to reverse the onerous “global gag rule” on U.S. family planning funds. We

are thrilled that U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D, CT), who has a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, shares our concerns. Below are excerpts from a September 26 editorial the senator wrote for The Hill.

“While we’ve seen a lot of progress over the course of the last 15 years, the statistics still feel shockingly anachronistic in the 21st century. Every two minutes, a girl or woman dies from pregnancy-related complications. Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to tragic complications. Sadly, pregnancy is still the leading cause of death for adolescent girls in low to middle-income countries across Asia and Africa. As a father, husband, and senator, I find these statistics simply heartbreaking. And yet the biggest tragedy of all is that the United States and its international partners have a solution that could change this bleak picture, and we’re not acting on it.

There are currently more than 220 million women who want to delay or prevent pregnancy, but are without access to modern contraception. International experts agree that if we were to meet this need, we could cut maternal mortality by a third and infant mortality by up to 20 percent... If that’s not enough of an incentive, consider that while meeting the need for contraception would cost an estimated \$4.1 billion, it would save \$5.7 billion in other development costs. In fact, a recent Wall Street Journal article just named universal access to sexual and reproductive health as one of the top-five most valuable interventions. Returns could be as high as \$150 for every \$1 spent.

The evidence makes this abundantly clear: family planning is a simple, cost-effective solution that can save lives today, and create a better world for tomorrow...it’s time to rally bipartisan support for increased funding for international family planning, a human rights cause the United States should back robustly.”

Winning the Teen Pregnancy Battle!

During National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month each May, PPSNE highlights the need for comprehensive sexual health education and access to youth-friendly health services across CT and RI. About 30 percent of young women in the U.S. become pregnant at least once before the age of 20 and nearly 750,000 teenagers in the U.S. will become pregnant this year alone. In CT and RI, the teen pregnancy rate is 44 pregnancies per 1,000 teenagers—which ranks 10th in the country.

From its peak in 1988, the teen pregnancy rate has dropped 59 percent in CT and 49 percent in RI. This is a battle we are winning!

Access to birth control and sex education is what works. We know when young people have the information they need, they make smarter decisions about sex. Sexual health education has been proven to help young people delay sex and to use contraception and condoms if they do decide to become sexually active. PPSNE is the region’s largest provider of sexual health education and is proud to offer resources, guidance and encouragement to teens and to their parents/guardian about relationships and sex.

PPSNE is committed to helping young people make the best decisions for their sexual health. We work every day to reach teens with information about healthy relationships and sexuality, as well as the importance of protecting themselves against unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. In order to reach young people where they are—in schools and online—we have embraced social media and technological innovations and are available to teens online on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr.

Stay connected with PPSNE by liking, following or making our social media pages one of your favorites today!



Our Voices, Our Stories: A Personal Reflection from Arvia Walker

Throughout National Minority Health Month in April, women in the African-American and black community—my community—have seen stories highlighting the importance of making ourselves, our health and our community a top priority. We have been presented with an array of statistics demonstrating the stark differences in health disparities between us and our white counterparts across the country. When our health is discussed, it's often accompanied by statistics about how we are disproportionately affected by various diseases. However, we are more than a statistic on a sheet of paper.



Arvia Walker, Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator has worked at PPSNE for nearly two years.

African-American and black women are real-life people with real-world concerns that go beyond health disparities and data analysis. Many of us worry about feeding our children, keeping our family sheltered and not having our loved ones gunned down in the street by the police. A countless number of us worry about the cost of health care and how we will get our children or even ourselves to the doctor. These are our real worries. These are stories no one else but we can tell.

My brothers and I were raised in Hartford by my mother in a single parent home. Growing up, we never understood what our mother was going through to raise us. We never understood that we were poorer than our classmates. We never knew our mother had to choose between putting food on our plate or clean clothes on our back. These stories hold our power. These stories show the world the whole person behind the statistic.

As women of color, we have pushed our stories to be heard and included in conversations that affect our daily lives. However, throughout history, we've seen that far too often our voices were erased, silenced, shutout or shutdown. We've also seen throughout history, women who resisted, spoke out, and used their voices to create meaningful change.

As African-American and black women, we can create meaningful change by controlling our narratives, embracing our stories and realizing the inherent power we hold by doing so. We are the experts on knowing the needs of our community and the barriers standing in our way to living a healthy and safe life. The Planned Parenthood *Our Voices, Our Stories* campaign elevates these stories and the voices of women of color because far too often, we are silenced and left out of decisions that affect us.

I invite you to stand with us as we cultivate an empowered space for women of color through ownership of our voices through storytelling. It is essential that we own our stories and use them to move to action and fight for justice. We cannot stop until everyone has the right to have children, to not have children and to parent the children they have with dignity in a safe and healthy environment.

Become a part of Planned Parenthood Black Community's online space @PPBlackComm

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Griswold v. Connecticut *continued from page 1*



Judy Tabar, President and CEO, PPSNE, spoke about the public health legacy of the landmark *Griswold v. Connecticut* decision.

“Birth control is mainstream health care and has a profound impact on women’s lives,” Tabar said. “The impact of accessible contraception has health benefits that extend well beyond preventing unintended pregnancies.”

Distinguished guests gathered in New Haven, the city where access to birth control was made a reality. Guests filled the

ballroom at the Omni Hotel to hear more about *Griswold* and its impact over the last half-century.

Estelle Griswold, the executive director of Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, and C. Lee Buxton, doctor and professor at Yale Medical School, were arrested in 1961 and found guilty as accessories to providing illegal contraception. They were fined \$100 each. *Griswold* and Buxton appealed to the Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut, claiming that the law violated the U.S. Constitution. The Connecticut court upheld the conviction, and *Griswold* and Buxton appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. A decision was made on June 7, 1965.

In addition to Tabar, other panelists were Linda Greenhouse, Joseph Goldstein Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School; Heather Munro Prescott, Professor of History at Central Connecticut State University; Reva Siegel, Nicholas deB. Katzenbach Professor of Law at Yale Law School; and Rosemary A. Stevens, DeWitt Wallace Distinguished Scholar, Weill Cornell Medical College, Department of Psychiatry. The engaging discussion was moderated by Barbara Sicherman, Kenan Professor Emerita at Trinity College.

Stevens was prescribed birth control by Dr. Buxton and was a witness in the *Griswold* case. She recalled her thoughts at the time: “The law was hypocritical and grossly unfair. It was a stupid law and it needed to be abolished,” Stevens said.

Tabar also reflected on the successes over the last 50 years, but said that more needs to be done.

“The time to act is now, so when an event like this occurs 50 years from now to celebrate *Griswold*’s 100th Anniversary, we will have erased the persistent health disparities that currently exist for young women, low-income women and women of color,” Tabar said. “Let’s work together to build a future where all women, men and teens can access the information and services they need to make smart and healthy decisions so they can fully pursue their dreams, wherever they may lead.”

In 2015, PPSNE will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of *Griswold v. Connecticut* through a series of events including panel discussions, networking receptions and many other fun and exciting activities. Stay tuned for more information about these can’t-miss events!

SAVE THE DATE
OCTOBER 29, 2015
Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven

50 Years

Griswold v. Connecticut 1965
Access to Birth Control Happened Here

Featured Speakers:
Cecile Richards, Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders and
Jonathan Eig

For more information, go to ppsne.org

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