

Community Call

News from Community Family Life Services

September 2010

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When the spirit of people is strong, focused and vibrant, wonderful things happen."

Harrison Owen

Dear CFLS Friends and Family,

This **Community Call on Education** invites you to experience the joy of learning that is alive at Community Family Life Services. CFLS holds true to the principle of education and we support those we serve in their educational journey through our programs and through our partnerships with many educational institutions in this city. Education is the way out of poverty and prepares families to live a better life. Opening the doors to education closes the doors to prisons of the mind, spirit, and body.

At CFLS our mission is to cultivate the minds of all persons we are honored to serve. You will hear first hand the educational experiences of our program's participants, Ms. Plowden and Mr. Perkins, and how they have come to value education as the way to create bright futures.

We thank you for your continued support and partnership in providing educational opportunities and in transforming lives.

With Gratitude,
Claudia Thorne, MSW, LISW
Executive Director



Please Join CFLS in Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Walkathon

For over two decades Fannie Mae has hosted the Help the Homeless Walkathon on the National Mall in order to raise awareness and funds for organizations like CFLS dedicated to ending poverty and homelessness in the Washington Metropolitan Area. There are three ways you can partner with us in this endeavor and help CFLS reach our goal of 1,500 walkers!!

Walk on November 20, 2010:

Send in the registration form (enclosed) and have CFLS be your Beneficiary Organization.

Host a Mini-Walk by November 7, 2010:

As part of the Walkathon, Fannie Mae developed a Mini-Walk program designed to educate the community about homeless issues and to engage everyone in our community. The Mini-Walk includes a fifteen minute walk, paired with an educational presentation held on the date of your choice at your church, school, community center or any location that works for you!

Become a Sponsor:

Individuals and many types of organizations can become Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Sponsors. Large corporations, small businesses, law and accounting firms, associations, community service groups, faith-based communities, and student groups all have served as Help the Homeless Sponsors in the past.

**To plan a Mini-Walk or become a Sponsor contact
Development: 202.347.0511 ext 415.**



CFLS' Family-to-Family Success Story



Myra at a Family-to-Family event.

Hello Everyone,

My name is Myra Plowden and I am going to share a little bit of my journey. I am a single mother of three children and I attend The University of the District of Columbia full-time. Going to school, working, and taking care of three children is not an easy job but I love it. My children are the greatest gift that was given to me. So as a mother my job is to make sure that I can fully support them the best way that I possibly can. Supporting them in my opinion does not only mean putting a roof over their heads or making sure they have food in the house. In order to support them I have to also have the proper education to make sure that they can in return be the best that they can be in the future.

My journey has not been an easy one because I have never had a support system when I needed one, but I managed. I dropped out of high school my last year so I was never able to get my high school diploma. After the birth of my third child I took the opportunity to enroll in night school and obtain my diploma. After receiving that I then enrolled in college. Going to college can be quite difficult because it interferes with your job and your time with your children.

As a mother I had to sit down and explain to my children the benefits of an education in this day and time. At one point in our lives a high school diploma was all you needed, but now the only thing that will get you is a job at McDonalds. As a single mother I want more for my children and they even want more. They know that after they graduate from high school they are going straight to college.

My journey over the last few years - I have had to struggle by going from job to job because of my class schedules and then there are days when I have to miss important classes because of the little things but mainly my children. Going to school is again stressful but in the end it is so worth it. As of this year I am proud to say that I have made it to that point where I can say that I am a senior.

Education is so important now that one should never stop learning. Learning does not stop when you graduate because things change. Each generation is different from the last, what I learned in high school is what you may have learned in elementary school. We as parents have to be able to keep up with our children in order to help them succeed in their lives.

To my children they know that education means better opportunities and better chances of becoming that doctor or that police officer that they want to become. As far as me, I know that having an education means that I can show my children that down every dark path there is a light. Then also being a single mother is not always a bad situation.

Ms. Myra Plowden
CFLS' Family-to-Family Mentoring Program



CFLS' Milestone Place Success Story



Gregory, Milestone Place Resident

Hello,

My name is Gregory Perkins, a resident of CFLS' Milestone Place, SRO and a cancer survivor. After battling lymphoma last year, I decided to do all the things I needed to regain my life. One of my major goals involved furthering my education. I have over 13 years of experience working in medical administration and management. With my experience and compassion, I could better serve my community by returning to the health field.

I am now attending TESST College in Beltsville, Maryland and studying Medical Billing and Coding. I am scheduled to receive my certification in January 2011. I admit after 20 years of being out of school, studying has indeed been a challenge at times. Overcoming that challenge by working diligently and has earned me a 4.0 grade point average with perfect attendance. My future goals involve returning back to school to obtain an Associates Degree in Health Information Technology.

This endeavor is the next step toward my regaining my self sufficiency and affordable housing. The services of organizations like Community Family Life Services and The District of Columbia Rehabilitation Services Administration has given me tools to build a better life for myself and have a positive impact on my community. I only regret that I didn't start the process earlier in life because education is truly the key.

Leckie Elementary Afterschool "Forward-to-School" Party



Community Family Life Services' Afterschool Academic Enrichment Program at M.V. Leckie Elementary School funded by the Children's Youth Investment Trust Corporation is off to an excellent start. With in-kind donations from *The Sanctuary at Kingdom Square* and the *CFLS Breakfast Group* each student in the program received a book bag containing all the necessary supplies to jumpstart their academic success for the 2010-2011 school year.

Currently there are 30 youth in the 3rd-6th grades enrolled in the afterschool program. Our program focuses on academic skills through tutoring, cultural education, and recreation. With the support of individuals and organizations in the DC Metropolitan area such as Shakespeare Theater and Loving Yourself through Creative Expressions Art, students in CFLS' afterschool academic enrichment program have exposure to activities that assist in character development and self-awareness.





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CFLS Social Media Outlets

www.cflsdc.org

CFLS is now on Facebook, please become our fan!
Username: Community Family Life Services

If you like to "Tweet," follow us on twitter!
Username: cflsdc

Check out our Youtube video for a quick highlight of CFLS and
inspirational success stories!
Search: Community Family Life Services

Designate #8818 United Way
Designate #60759 CFC of the National Capital Area

