

PARTNERS IN ACTION
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

I'd like to thank everyone for the many kind words about our initial newsletter. I am so glad that you found it interesting and helpful.

My hope is that this newsletter can be a forum for poverty issues and I welcome your contributions. This month is the 100th celebration of International Women's Day. Women and children are still the primary persons living in poverty here in Springfield and around the world. The majority of local families living in poverty are headed by single mothers. Many of our clients are single mothers. We are struggling every day to help them out of poverty. We feel that many of our programs, like scholarships, childcare and IDAs can break the cycle of poverty by providing education and assets.

Many more women these days are going through difficult times and we are seeing increased numbers in all programs. Please consider making a generous contribution to Springfield Partners so that we can serve everyone who needs our help.

I plan to update you about our projects and programs through this newsletter every quarter. So, look forward to reading the next edition of *Partners in Action* sometime in July.

Sincerely,
Paul F. Bailey

Springfield Partners Updates and News

We are pleased to welcome eight new employees. They are Joseph Kerigan, Director of Energy Programs, Craig Tomlinson, Energy Auditor, Frank Picard, Energy Auditor, Tanya Jones, IDA Program Coordinator, Martin O'Conner, Tax Advocate, Maria Perez and Ramiro Collado, Childcare Teachers, Rosa Figueroa, Teacher Aide, and Heather Rose, Human Resource Director.

All of these employees bring experience and dedication to the agency.

We all wish Joe Rosenburg the best as he ventures over to work at our sister agency in Greenfield. Joe worked at Springfield Partners for over 12 years, the last six as Director of Energy Programs.



Pictured with Joe Rosenburg (second f. left) are energy program staff members Justine Williams, Brian Legg, Scott Holbrook and Lena Villalongo

On Friday, January 30, we held a press conference to highlight National Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Day and the opening of our income tax preparation site. Speaking at the press conference were Congressman Richard Neal, Mayoral Aide, Jesus Arce, Springfield City Councilor Bud Williams, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Matilde Tamburrini and Executive Director, Paul Bailey.

We are extremely grateful for the support from Congressman Neal, Mayor Sarno, Councilor Williams, the Internal Revenue Service and the local media.

We have provided Volunteer Income Tax Assistance for the past six years. In that time, we have assisted over 12,000 taxpayers. The IRS estimates that our program returned nearly \$13 million in Earned Income Tax credits to greater Springfield communities and saved taxpayers over \$3 million in income tax preparation fees.



Speaking at our National EITC awareness day, left to right were, Paul Bailey, Councilor Bud Williams, Congressman Richard Neal and Mayoral Aide, Jesus Arce

Program Profile

This edition features our Housing Counseling Program particularly the component that works with those at risk of eviction.

Our Housing Counselors hold weekly Eviction Clinics where they work with people who have been summoned to appear at the Hampden County Housing Court and help to prepare them for that appearance. A counselor also goes to court each Thursday to provide advocacy and mediation in conjunction with the Mass Justice Project. In this way we can help families to maintain their homes and not enter into shelters.

Upcoming Events

On Saturday, April 18, we will host our second Food Policy and Obesity Conference at the

YMCA on Liberty Street from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Hope to see many of you there.

Our income tax preparation site is open and operating at 721 State Street, second floor. Call to make an appointment now through April 11.



Springfield Partners Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program

New Beginnings Childcare Center

The center conducted fundraising activities on February 13 with a Valentine's Day theme. Childcare staff raised \$172 to purchase educational supplies for the classrooms.



Children enjoying Springfield Partners Childcare Program activity room

Board Members

Welcome to our newest Board members, Ben Swan, Jr., Olivia Walter, Melvin Edwards and Mickey Harris.