

PARTNERS IN ACTION **QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

I hope that you enjoy this long overdue newsletter. Its purpose is to keep poverty and the many issues around poverty, on everyone's mind. We also want to let people know about our efforts as the *Premier Poverty Fighting Agency for Springfield*.

About two years ago, we purchased the building that houses our early education and care program, New Beginnings Childcare, at 721 State Street. We are currently in the process of renovating the building so that we can move our administrative and program operations to the second floor. A timetable for moving has not yet been set as we are seeking funding assistance for the renovations. Our ultimate goal is to renovate the first floor into a state-of-the-art early education and care facility. However, we need financial assistance to make the goal a reality.

I plan to communicate with you through this newsletter every quarter. So, look forward to reading the next edition of *Partners in Action* sometime in March 2009. By that time, our new president and his administration will have settled in and hopefully be working on the issues of poverty.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Bailey
Executive Director

Springfield Partners Updates and News

At the Annual Meeting of Springfield Partners Board of Directors, held October 30, we presented nine Community Scholarships to Myosha Boynton, Edgar Martinez, Talasha Carrington-Lewis, Khyree Pleasant, Emily Rosario, Madeline Medina, Chak Ming Chu, Donna Williams and Yesinia Mendez. All are residents of Springfield and attending colleges and universities in Massachusetts.



E.D. Paul Bailey, (left) and Board President Robert Jackson (back row, 4th from left) with scholarship recipients.

We thank the United Bank Foundation for their generous award of \$7,500. Their generosity allowed us to complete the replacement of the roof at our 721 State Street location.

At a recent press conference held at our administrative offices, Taylor Caswell, the Regional Administrator from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, announced an award of \$50,000 so that we may continue our work as a HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency. Mr. Caswell noted that we have added eviction clinics to the scope of work in this area to try to keep people in their homes.

Program Profile

Each newsletter will highlight one of our programs to make people more aware of the

different kinds of work we do. This edition features our free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA). Between January and April of each year, we have IRS trained and certified volunteers who assist low and moderate income folks with their taxes. These volunteers look for tax credits that will return more money in refunds. They particularly look for the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Care Tax Credit for eligible taxpayers.



VITA volunteer, Max Ervin, assists a taxpayer.

Last year, we helped more than 1500 people file their taxes. That means that we saved \$261,825 in tax preparation fees, returned almost \$2 million in federal refunds, over a quarter million dollars in state refunds and another \$1,085,705 in Earned Income Tax Credits. That's a lot of money! And all of this is accomplished with extremely dedicated volunteers.

Like all our programs, VITA needs additional funding. A gift of \$50 would provide coffee and bagels for our volunteers at one tax prep site. \$200 would buy a computer for one site so that taxes can be filed electronically, returning refunds much quicker for our taxpayers. Of course, donations of any amount are always appreciated.

Upcoming Events

There will be a Weatherization workshop on Wednesday, December 3 at one o'clock at 721

Our mission is to empower people in need to attain self-sufficiency and economic stability
619 State Street, Springfield, MA 01109 413-263-6500 FAX 413-263-6511 www.springfieldpartnersinc.com

State Street. Our Energy Auditors will provide tips on cutting back on your utility bills while staying warm and keeping safe. Call us for further details.

New Beginnings Childcare Center

The center has reached full capacity with over 90 children between the ages of one month and five years enrolled.



New Beginnings preschoolers pick pumpkins at Randall's Farm in Ludlow.

Board Members

Springfield Partners would like to welcome two new members, Zaida Luna and Edgardo Figueroa to our Board of Directors.

Robert Jackson, President
Robert Clarke, VP
George Bruce, 2nd VP
Rosemary Morin, Treasurer
Jeffrey Chandler, Clerk
Corrina Houston
Sherryl Duxley
Lloyd Creswell
Robert Clarke
Ana Andino
Laureen Jones
Demetrice Dawkins