

Liberty

Spring 2010



News Brief

DINNER AT SIX

- The fascinating and touching non-fiction book "Dinner at Six: Voices from the Soup Kitchen", by acclaimed author Helen Hudson is available on our website: www.libertycs.org for a donation.

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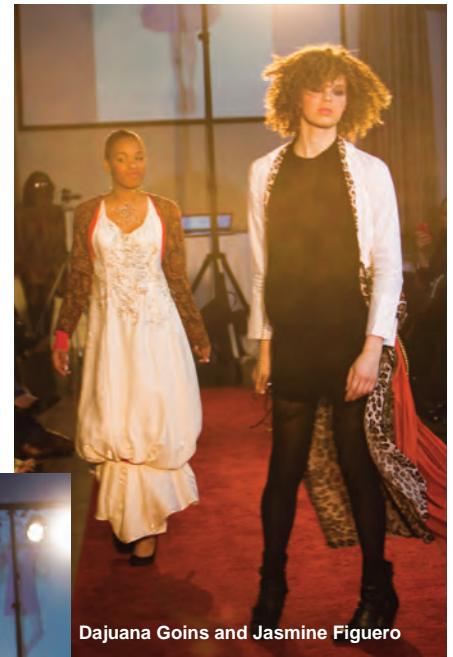
Project STYLE...

Approximately 200 guests enjoyed a lovely spring evening of fashion at Liberty's Project STYLE fundraiser at the New Haven Lawn Club on April 1, 2010. The event included a special guest appearance by Kara Janx, a designer from Project Runway, showing some of her latest spring fashions. In addition, Liberty recruited seven New Haven area designers who were given the challenge of creating an outfit based upon clothing donations given to Liberty. The New Haven designers engaged the crowd with their creative, well-crafted, and stunning designs. Desiree Fontaine from WTNH's Connecticut Style introduced the designers. Proceeds from the event will be used to advance Liberty's mission of providing permanent housing for people who are homeless. Special thanks to Kara Janx, Desiree Fontaine, and Tracy Bonosconi who devoted countless hours to the project. Visit our website to see more photos from the event!

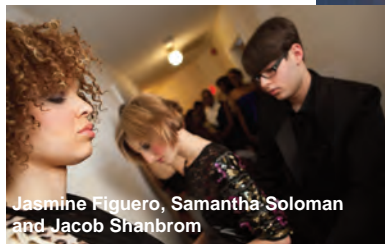
See our "Thank you" section for a full list of acknowledgements.



Brittney Fielstra, Jacob Shanbrom, Kara Janx, and Desiree Fontaine



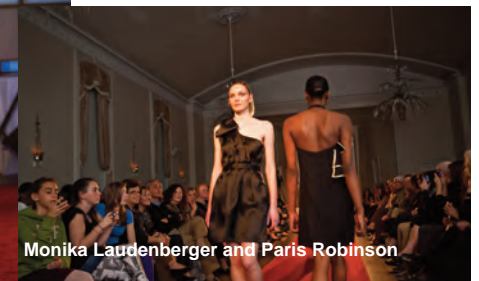
Dajuana Goins and Jasmine Figuero



Jaemine Figuero, Samantha Soloman and Jacob Shanbrom



Carine Narcisse



Monika Laudemberger and Paris Robinson

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A Note from the Executive Director...

One March morning, I was walking from the parking garage to the Liberty office on College Street. As I passed one of the alleys leading from College St to the parking garage, I noticed a young man that I knew from our Day Program. I knew that he has not had any permanent housing for months. I wondered where he had slept that night and how he had coped with the cold of a March night. It's still a new experience for me to run into people on the street that I know are homeless and struggling. Of course we understand the people who ask for money may be homeless but I'm often more struck by the people who blend in at the coffee shop, the bus stop, and the street. These are the men and women who appear to be leading a normal life but have chaotic lives of trying to find food and shelter in the city.

Liberty's mission is to help find and maintain permanent housing for people in New Haven who have challenges of HIV/AIDS or mental illness. Recent federal studies have found that it is more efficient to provide rental assistance than to provide emergency shelter. So we need to find the resources to increase permanent housing and decrease homelessness and give people the basics of a decent life.

Board Update/Welcome...

The Board is happy to be welcoming two new members, Cheryl Henderson, PhD and Johnny Scafidi. Cheryl is a resident of New Haven who came here years ago to complete her training in psychology. She has worked in both the clinical side of psychology and in organizations. She currently has a private practice that focuses on couples and families.

Johnny Scafidi came to New Haven as a student and has stayed to join the community and start a family. Johnny is the Program Director of Dwight Hall and deals with Yale students who are volunteering in the community. Johnny has been involved in advocacy to maintain homeless services funding in New Haven through the Inside at Night campaign through Dwight Hall. We are thrilled to have Cheryl and Johnny join our Liberty Board.

Safe & Secure...

Liberty is pleased to announce the start of a five-year grant awarded by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for a new program called Safe & Secure ("S&S"). S&S provides crisis stabilization for the chronically homeless with substance abuse disorders, mental illness, and HIV/AIDS. S&S, offered through Safe Haven, will partner with South Central Rehabilitation Center ("SCRC"), a 24-hour detox, primary care, and outpatient drug treatment/integrated service center.

S&S consists of two parts; the Crisis Coordinator who will work with EMS, police and Emergency Departments ("EDs") to retrieve or redirect intoxicated individuals to SCRC and then offer S&S services including intensive case management. The second part is directed at providing services to homeless individuals such as case management, possible placement into short/long term housing, an expansion of the Day Program, and expansion of mental health services -- all coordinated with easy access to drug detox, outpatient drug treatment, mental health services, primary medical care, specialized HIV care and Hep C treatment at SCRC. Homeless individuals will enter the S&S program via EDs, EMS, police, the Day Program, community referrals and through SCR. Safe & Secure can be contacted at 203-497-2300 and coming soon, look for a link to their resources and information on Liberty's Website.

Client Story: A Hope Renewed...

Since I was young I've had to face many of life's challenging circumstances that were meant for someone beyond my years. Though times were tough, I'm glad for them because they've made me who I am today. Currently, I'm going through a dark and challenging period that doesn't seem to pass. Just as it seems as though the clouds are parting, and it feels safe to begin piecing my life back together another disaster is brewing. However, I feel I've grown the most since May. In May, I was briefly incarcerated. I've learned and lived since then, and I'm starting from the bottom. It has been 8 months since I've been involved in the Safe Haven Day Program. In numerous ways the program has become a life saver.

Anyone who has ever been homeless knows that there's nothing easy about it. Thanks to the Day Program I'm able to feel more human which helps me function better in these trying times. The Program has the most resources out of all the programs in New Haven that allow me to stay on track with finding employment and housing. It really goes a long way to have a place where I can wash clothes, bathe in a private shower, have internet access to job search, access to a local and long distance phone line to keep in touch with employers, doctors, and family. The Program also provides 2 meals a day which I'm grateful for days that I haven't eaten. Even more so it's a blessing to have the program provide transportation. Among all these great benefits, the Program is equipped with excellent supporting staff who actually care about the clients.

Since this program has been such a bright light in my life it has inspired me to give back. For the past 3 months I've been allowed to conduct a group entitled "Employment Empowerment". By leading this group it allows me to help others in my situation with the tools, know how and job readiness to re-enter the work force. Within the last few weeks I've also started another program, Safe Haven Media Library. This media library is growing every day. It allows clients to relax and get some mental therapy by enjoying a movie. Now I can only hope to continue helping others and to better the program in any way to enable fellow peers to self liberation and to see the light at the end of this unforgiving tunnel.

"HIS ENDURANCE, PATIENCE & DETERMINATION TO SUCCEED WHILE GETTING BACK ON HIS FEEL AT THE DAY PROGRAM IS AN EXAMPLE THAT MOTIVATES OTHER CLIENTS..."
- DAY PROGRAM FACILITATOR

Day Program Update...

Making the final turn on the winter of 2009-2010, the clients at the Day Program share hope and optimism for the coming of spring! The elements of winter are very trying on the homeless population of New Haven. We've been able to a warm, friendly, safe atmosphere for the clients to spend their days out of the cold. Providing two warm meals a day, access to all the resources we offer for employment and housing, transportation to and from the shelters and Wellness Groups like coping skills, relapse prevention and stress management. The Writing Group facilitated by volunteers from Yale has been very beneficial for our clients with creative writing to resume writing!

Plans for the 'Springside Garden of Liberty Safe Haven' are officially underway! This year should be better than the last with the recent expansion of available plots for growing and harvesting. The garden project has empowered our clients (seeing the results of their efforts working at the garden) to have it carry over in their efforts to reach goals for themselves. We already have a handful of volunteers looking forward to getting out of the downtown area and doing a little gardening!



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About Us...

For over two decades, Liberty Community Services has offered a new beginning to individuals in our community facing homelessness, addiction or chronic illness. Liberty provides a stable place to live with supportive services that help foster physical and psychological health. This combination of stability and care helps to bring about life-saving changes.

We are proud to be a part of the success of those we serve and to support the community we share one individual at a time.

Thank you...

On behalf of the individuals we serve, our Board and staff, we wish to thank all our donors, volunteers and sponsors. We'd like to pay special thanks to the following for their commitment to Project STYLE :

- * Daisy Abreu, Pansy Croft, Megan Csire, Leah Dudley, Avinash Gandi, Gary Greco, Jennie Fresa, Anne Jones, Eileen Krause, Devon McKay, Carol Orr, Kristin Pearlman, Kim Pedrick, Andy Rubenoff, David Sackheim, Chelsea Tyler, Don Vincent
- * Martha Alexander and the Whitney Food Center
- * Theta Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- * Chris Volpe
- * Jennie Fresa Beauty Library
- * Yale New Haven Hospital, The Community Foundation of Greater New Haven, Maybelline

**For more information about our programs, staff and events
please visit our website:
www.libertycs.org**