

# Wellspring connection



The Newsletter of Wellspring House, Inc., Gloucester, Massachusetts  
VOL. 35, NO. 1 SUMMER 2016

## Commitment, Passion, and Creativity

Dear Friends,

As we enjoy the heat and sun of summer, I am excited to share with you what is a celebration of the hundreds of people who make Wellspring House's work possible. In this current newsletter, you will see stories of commitment, passion, and creativity. All across our organization, from our Shelter Programs to our Education Programs, our physical grounds to our annual Women's Luncheon event, peoples lives are



Melissa Dimond

enhanced every day by the volunteers, interns, and staff members who contribute their time and talents. I am inspired by their gifts and I hope you are, too.

This publication is crafted to give you some enticing examples of the ways in which volunteers are connected with Wellspring House. If you yourself are looking for a way to get involved, please do not hesitate to let us know.

With gratitude,  
Melissa Dimond  
*President & Executive Director*

### MAKE A BETTER WORLD

With your help we can make a better world. Please consider making a gift. Your donation is needed to help support  
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To make a gift visit  
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Wellspring House  
302 Essex Avenue  
Gloucester, MA 01930

## Forest Foundation Internship

Intern **SARAH WALSH** joins us this summer through an internship program sponsored by the Forest Foundation, a grant making foundation focused on non-profits that support underserved youth and families in Essex County.

Each summer the Forest Foundation matches fifty interns with non-profits in the Boston area, with the purpose of introducing undergraduate college students to the non-profit sector. Students are placed based on their academic pursuits, interests and skill sets.

Sarah requested an internship at Wellspring House, and we are especially excited to have her with us because of her Spanish language skills. She will be working on several projects within the education department.



Wellspring's English Language Learning program has partnered with Gloucester Public Schools to help develop communications and programs catered to non-English speaking families. Sarah will be translating the school system's master calendar of events and designing fliers so that parents who speak Spanish will be able to read about upcoming events in the schools, such as open houses and recitals.

At the Sawyer Free Public Library, Sarah will be working with Executive Director Deborah Kelsey, and library staff members to create work stations for non-English Speaking people. The stations will help people navigate to websites that offer self-teaching tools such as ESOL tutorials and webcasts.

**Many thanks to Sarah and the Forest Foundation!**

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JEAN KOULACK-YOUNG

Jean Koulak-Young is a retired school teacher who once also worked as a technical writer. Interested in working with people of diverse backgrounds, Jean took courses on teaching English as a second language. In 2013, she came across a notice on the bulletin board at her church looking for volunteers for a new English language (ELL) program at Wellspring's motel shelter in Danvers. She contacted Jack Billings, Wellspring's Director of Education, and learned that the program was also in need of a coordinator. Jean enlisted the help of her friend and former colleague from the Beverly School for the Deaf, Sharon Clark, and together they set up the ELL program.



At first only adults attended, but soon three children originally from the Dominican Republic who speak Spanish as their first language came to them for help learning English. When school began, the children requested help with their homework, and so Jean organized an evening program four nights per week. More children began attending. Many parents of children at the motel are unable to help their kids with homework due to the language barrier, making this program vital to students' success in school.

Jean's students range in age from kindergarten to fifth grade. Although the students all live at the motel, they attend schools from Lawrence to Lynn, so assignments vary. This makes it necessary for there to be at least two tutors at once to help out. Some volunteers bring their own English speaking sons and daughters to help out the other kids.

The Homework Club just completed its second successful year on June 21. Jean and her volunteers celebrated with a pizza party and potluck for their students, but the fun doesn't stop there. Jean has created a summer program to keep the children in the motel entertained and engaged throughout the summer months. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays Jean and her volunteers will be providing games, crafts and music.

"We hope it's making their lives a little better. It can't be easy living in one room in a shelter with your family," said Jean.

Jean is always looking for volunteers. If you might be interested in helping out with Jean's Homework Club, or if you have a craft or music you'd like to share with the summer program, please contact Jean at [jeankoulackyoung@gmail.com](mailto:jeankoulackyoung@gmail.com).

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## LET'S GET TO WERC, Groups!

The Wellspring Educational Resource Collaborative (WERC) recently convened its first WERC Groups, led by nine trained volunteer mentors. The mentors represent the diversity of Cape Ann, encompassing an array of ages, backgrounds and life experiences, from a college student to an 85-year old retired architect. Mentors take their life experiences and skills, and work with students on their *Pathway for Personal Success*—a roadmap consisting of key deadlines for achieving educational and career goals.

The WERC mentoring program is divided into four groups, one each for participants seeking new jobs, occupational education, an Associate's degree, or Bachelor's degree. The *Seeking New Jobs* WERC Group focuses on



From Left, WERC mentors: Stephanie Rogers; Frank Robinson; College and Career Placement Coordinator, Patrick Devanney; and Florence Williams.

resumes, cover letters, networking and interview preparation. The *Seeking Occupational Education* WERC Group includes students who are pursuing Wellspring's MediClerk Program as well as certificate programs at North Shore

Community College and McNeilly EMS Educators. The *Seeking Associate's Degree* WERC Group is co-led by a recent graduate and a current student at Salem State. Finally, the *Seeking Bachelor's Degree* WERC Group ranges from students who are nearing completion of their Associate's degree and pre-requisite courses for nursing, to graduates of Wellspring's MediClerk Program who are pursuing Bachelor's programs.

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The next mentor training session takes place in October. If you or someone you know may be interested in mentoring, please contact College and Career Placement Coordinator, Patrick Devanney at (978) 281-3558 X323.

# Women Honoring Women Luncheon

Wellspring's 18th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon was a great success. With the theme of hope, courage, and action, and 650 people in attendance, the event brought in nearly \$150,000, which will go towards Wellspring's homelessness prevention, education and job training programs.

This year's keynote speaker, Yolanda Taylor was born in Vietnam during the war. At age two, she and her father fled as refugees to the United States where they lived off of the land in Northern California. It was during these years of homelessness that she developed a strong sense of hard work and determination, ultimately graduating from an Ivy League college and earning an MBA. As a mother, Yolanda began to reflect back on her childhood and the values she had acquired during her early and challenging years. She published her memoir, "Take Me Back To Redway," which compares her childhood to the one of her own children who are being raised in an environment quite distinct from her own.

Wellspring participant speaker, Justine Baez recently graduated from Wellspring's MediClerk program. She is also a valued member of Wellspring's shelter program team. An eldest sibling to eight brothers and sisters, Justine has



From left, Wellspring Women's Luncheon 2016 Honorees: Mollie Byrnes, Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante and Juni Van Dyke.

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a deep commitment to helping others. In addition to her job as administrator for Lahey Health System, Justine also serves as weekend case manager for Wellspring's shelter program.

Wellspring Honoree, Mollie Byrnes is an active community volunteer and philanthropist, whose work has been instrumental in improving the lives of many families and individuals on Cape Ann and beyond.

Together, she and her husband, John, have focused their attention and resources on causes that speak to their hearts including the arts, social services and education.

In her tenure as Representative for the Fifth Essex District, Wellspring Honoree Ann-Margaret Ferrante has been a lead sponsor and active advocate for key pieces of legislation

to strengthen local communities, stimulate small business and promote the local creative economy.

Artist and Wellspring Honoree Juni Van Dyke has served as the Art Director of the Rose Baker Senior Center for 23 years. As a passionate motivator, Juni has orchestrated such large-scale projects as paintings installed in empty downtown storefronts, expansive ceramic murals and quilted tapestries. She has mobilized older members of the Cape Ann community to create art that inspires. An accomplished artist herself, her work is held in the permanent collection of the Cape Ann Museum.

Many talented women have made Wellspring's work possible. Our sincerest thanks go to speakers Yolanda Taylor and Justine Baez, as well as this year's honorees, Mollie Byrnes, Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante and Juni Van Dyke, and all those who attended this year's 18th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon.



From left: keynote speaker, Yolanda Taylor; Wellspring participant speaker, Justine Baez; Wellspring's Board Chair, Kim McGovern; and Wellspring's Executive Director, Melissa Dimond.



Many thanks to the Pewter Shop for their generosity and to all those who have contributed to their wishing pond on Bearskin Neck in Rockport to benefit Wellspring House.

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Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930

[www.wellspringhouse.org](http://www.wellspringhouse.org)

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## NEW GARDENS AT WELLSPRING HOUSE

If you've driven by 302 Essex Avenue in the past year, you may have noticed a few changes to the landscape.

Last summer, the City of Gloucester began a stream restoration project in the area adjacent to 302 Essex Ave. This effort coincided with Wellspring's project to expand student and staff parking in the same vicinity.

The parking lot project is now in its final phases and life springs anew thanks to our friends at Brookwood School, Backyard Growers, and Generous Gardeners.

Brookwood's first grade class has been coming to Wellspring House every spring and fall for more than twenty years to plant spring annuals and bulbs. This spring the class spruced up the gardens with flowers, herbs and vegetables.

Backyard Growers is a local grassroots organization that provides resources and support

to home gardeners, housing communities, organizations, and schools. The organization visited Wellspring House in late May to plant raised vegetable beds. The produce from these gardens will go to residents who live at Wellspring House properties, and to meals that are provided to Wellspring staff and volunteers.



Volunteers from Generous Gardeners of Gloucester plant perennials for Wellspring's new garden.

In June Generous Gardeners, a thriving volunteer initiative that maintains gardens all over Gloucester brought their talents to Wellspring by designing and installing a 600 square foot perennial garden at the end of Wellspring's new parking lot.

302 Essex Avenue continues to evolve to suit Wellspring's program participants and those in need. Many thanks to all who have helped bring Wellspring's Gardens back up to snuff after the big dig!