

COMMUNITY SERVICES CLUSTER

20 South Broadway, Suite 501, Yonkers, NY 10701 ♦ 914-963-6440 ♦ www.clusterinc.org

CLUSTER provides services in four major program areas:

- ♦ Mental Health Residential Services
- ♦ Westchester & Rockland Mediation Centers
- ♦ Youth and Family Programs
- ♦ Housing Resource Center

Tom Roth

President,
CLUSTER Board of Directors

Toni Volchok

Executive Director

Diana M. Campos

Newsletter Editor

CLUSTER's Mission is "to provide services and programs that assist residents in Yonkers and Westchester & Rockland Counties to build a better future for themselves and their communities."

SUMMER CAMP

On July 3rd, CLUSTER's Summer Day Camp opened for its 42nd season. Camp is being held at the Pearls Hawthorne School in Southwest Yonkers. Transportation is provided for campers who need it as well as free breakfast, lunch,

snack and a CLUSTER Camp t-shirt. Campers participate in weekly swim and water safety instruction, yoga sessions, arts and crafts, sports, music and dance lessons, literacy activities, and much more. Weekly trips include the NY Aquarium, Central Park Zoo, FDR Park and Sarah Lawrence College. This year, for the first time, campers will also attend a NY Liberty (WNBA) basketball game at Madison Square Garden. Over 100 children are registered for the Camp which provides a safe, nurturing environment filled with fun learning activities.



Toni Volchok Set to Retire



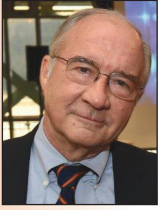
Toni Volchok has been with CLUSTER for over 30 years--- as long as almost anyone can remember. We are sad to announce that Toni, the heart and backbone of our organization, will be retiring at the end of this year. Everyone at CLUSTER is sad to see her leave.

Originally a volunteer, in 1984 Toni accepted a position as an administrative manager at CLUSTER. Six years later she became the Assistant Director for Program Development and Administration, a position that included oversight of Youth and Family Programs. During this time, Youth and Family Programs expanded to include two summer day camps, in-school and community after-school programs and the development of the Study Buddy Program. In 1998, Toni became CLUSTER's Deputy Executive Director, a position she held until 2005 when she became the Executive Director. Toni expertly guided the agency through the recession of 2008 and the difficult funding challenges that it presented. During Toni's tenure as Executive Director, CLUSTER's budget increased by over one million dollars and the agency's services and

programs expanded beyond Westchester into Rockland County.

Toni feels strongly that non-profits should work together to strengthen the impact of the services they provide. She has demonstrated this through her involvement in many community initiatives, collaborations, and county wide partnerships and as an active member in statewide organizations. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Nonprofit Westchester, a membership collective of over 140 non-profit organizations; she also Co-Chairs their Policy Committee. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Community Planning Council of Yonkers and served as Vice President. Through Toni's leadership, CLUSTER programs continue to grow and provide crucial services that address unmet needs throughout our community.

At this year's Harvest Tasting Event, Toni will receive the Rev. Burt Ulrich Founders' Award. We hope to see you there, as we wish Toni well as she moves on to the next phase of her life.



Happy Summer!

These are exciting and challenging times for CLUSTER.

Exciting because our fantastic summer day camp is in full swing. CLUSTER's Day camp is held at a school in Southwest Yonkers. It provides six weeks of sports, music, reading, art, and swimming highlighted by weekly field trips, and ending in a wonderful block party for campers, parents and supporters.

Challenging because Toni Volchok, our Executive Director, has announced her intention to retire at year-end. You all know that Toni has had an immensely positive impact on so many lives. We will honor Toni at our annual Harvest Tasting Event in October which you will hear more about in the coming months. For now be assured that CLUSTER's Board is working diligently on the search process.

Now more than ever we need to build the community of CLUSTER supporters. If you are not already a CLUSTER supporter, I invite you to join us; our web site, www.clusterinc.org, explains how you can do this. If you are already a CLUSTER supporter, I sincerely hope you will consider increasing your support. And, just as important, please tell your friends about your support for CLUSTER and ask them to join us. Together we can accomplish so much.

Tom Roth
President, Board of Directors

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I am writing to share the news that I will be retiring from my position as Executive Director of CLUSTER at the end of this year.

It has been a privilege to lead an organization that is committed to improving the lives of children, individuals and families in our community. And it has been a pleasure to work alongside the dedicated and talented members of the CLUSTER staff. I continue to be inspired by their level of commitment and I will always be grateful to them for the work they have done to make CLUSTER such a valuable resource for so many.

I am also indebted to all of the members of the CLUSTER Board of Directors, past and present, who have been a great support to me and guided us in our mission.

CLUSTER has partnered with many organizations over the years, and I have had the opportunity to work with many incredible people in the non-profit community who share our vision and are passionate about the work they do. I've learned so much from all of you, and I thank you for your ongoing support and friendship. I am also very grateful to our government partners, to CLUSTER's many donors and contributors and to those in the philanthropic community who have supported our work.

Of course, at CLUSTER, our real motivation and purpose comes from the people that we serve. The children in our community are bright, engaging and full of promise and the adults show incredible strength and resilience even when faced with difficult challenges. They have inspired me in more ways than I can say throughout the years.

CLUSTER has a strong foundation and will continue to succeed and thrive during this transition to new leadership. I am grateful for the many years I have had the opportunity to serve this organization and I will miss all of the wonderful people who I have met through my work here. Our community will always be a better place because of your kindness and support.

Toni Volchok
Executive Director

HELP US GO GREEN

CLUSTER is working hard to go green. You can help be a part of that effort by providing us with your e-mail address so that we can send this newsletter to you electronically. That means, lowering the number of newsletters we print and reducing the amount of paper that ends up in the landfill. Please help us make our little corner of the earth that much better. E-mail dcampos@clusterinc.org. Of course, your email address will not be shared with any entity and you will be added to our e-mail distribution list.

Thanks!

CLUSTER Honors GRADUATING STUDY BUDDIES

CLUSTER is proud to announce that we have four Senior Study Buddies who are graduating this year. Each one has worked hard to excel in their academic careers and to set a positive example for other students. Now, they will move on to the next stage of their life, college.



Samantha Mensah

is graduating as Valedictorian of her class at Riverside High School. Samantha has been a Study Buddy for the past two years. Samantha, who is originally from Ghana, Africa will be attending the University of Rochester in September.



Sarah Mensah

is also graduating from Riverside High School. Sarah, who is not related to Samantha, and is also from Ghana, has been a Study Buddy since 2015. Sarah will be attending SUNY Stony Brook.



Yvonne Johnson

followed her brother Michael Johnson, who was a previous graduating Study Buddy. She has been involved in the program since she was a Sophomore.

Yvonne is graduating from Gorton High School and will be attending Fordham University this fall. Yvonne is also from Ghana.



Stephanie Quarcoo

joined Study Buddies this past September as a Senior who was looking for some support and positive involvement. She is graduating from Lincoln High School, and will be going to Buffalo State College in September.



CLUSTER is also proud to recognize **Melanie Quinones**, this year's Yonkers Montessori Academy (YMA) Salutatorian. Melanie is the daughter of Danay Quinones, who is a Housing Coordinator at CLUSTER. Melanie is

a member of the National Honor Society. Melanie will be attending Hofstra University on Long Island, where she will be a pre-med student. Melanie hopes to become a pediatrician. Melanie, who lost her father when she was 13, remembers well the life lessons he gave her.

CLUSTER's 2017 HARVEST TASTING



CLUSTER Community Services is proud to announce that we will be honoring three outstanding individuals at this year's Harvest Tasting, which will be held on Thursday, October

19th 2017 at Peter Kelly's X20 on the Hudson.

This year CLUSTER's Community Spirit Honorees are Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State Senate and Hon. Shelley Mayer, New York State Assembly. Sen. Stewart-Cousins is the leader of the Senate Democratic Conference and currently represents District 35. She previously served as a Westchester County Legislator from 1996 - 2006. Assemblywoman Mayer is currently representing Assembly District 90 and is the Chair of the Assembly Task Force on Women's Issues. She has spent her career as an advocate for New Yorkers. We will also be honoring CLUSTER's very own Executive Director, Toni Volchok, who is retiring at the end of the year with the Founders Award. Toni has been working at CLUSTER for over 30 years. These three women have continuously been strong advocates for CLUSTER and have made an impact in the community.

This is CLUSTER's 11th Harvest Tasting event. It will feature food and drinks provided by renowned celebrity chef Peter Kelly. There will also be a live and silent auction which will feature tickets to sporting events, fine jewelry, a wide variety of dining options, and theatre tickets.

Tickets for the evening are \$200 per person. Sponsorship packages are still available. For more information, please contact, Diana Campos at: 914-963-6440 ext. 220 or at dcampos@clusterinc.org.





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Yonkers, NY 10701

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CURRENT OCCUPANT



SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 19, 2017
Peter Kelly's X20

COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD

NYS Senator
Andrea Stewart-Cousins

NYS Assemblywoman
Shelley Mayer

FOUNDERS AWARD

Toni Volchok, Executive Director
upon her retirement