

*The Parent Leadership Training
Annual Statewide Graduation*



Photo by Robert L. Caroti, CGA

**Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut**

June 23, 2010

PLTI History

The Connecticut Commission on Children was created in 1985 by an act of the Connecticut Legislature to bring representatives from the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government together with the private sector to promote public policies in children's best interest. This year marks the Commission's 25th anniversary. In 1992, focused on prevention and capacity building, the Commission created the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) as a statewide family civics initiative. PLTI is designed to enable parents to become leading advocates for children.

PSEE History

Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (Parents SEE) provides parents with knowledge and skills to become leaders, partners, change agents, and active participants in education at the school, district, and state levels. Parents See is a 12 week leadership development program for parents. It was developed by the Connecticut Commission on Children and the Connecticut Center for School Change, a private non-profit organization that partners with school districts on leadership development and educational improvement.

Leaders keep faith with the past,

Keep step with the present, and

Keep the promise of the future.

Goethe



***The Robert Haller Memorial Award for
Outstanding Community Service***

This memorial award was created in 2006 to honor Bob Haller and his contributions to PLTI. Recipients are selected based on their passion, commitment and ability to humbly lead on children's issues.

**2010 Haller Memorial Award Honoree for
Outstanding Community Service
*Cheryl Czuba***



**Cheryl Czuba, PEP Program
Creator and Coordinator**

The People Empowering People Program is a personal and family development program with a strong community focus. Created and coordinated by UConn Extension Educator Cheryl Czuba, the PEP program builds upon individual life experiences and strengths to encourage growth in communication and problem solving skills, parent/family relationships and community involvement. The program has graduated more than one thousand people in the last fifteen years.

Call to Order

Doug Edwards, PLTI '06

*Alumni Greetings – Noemi Gonzalez on behalf of State
Rep. Cathy Abercrombie, PLTI '02*

Pledge of Allegiance

Judge Dawne Westbrook, PLTI '04

National Anthem

Eddie Rozetta, PLTI '04

Remarks

State Representative Andy Fleischmann

Musical Performance

Maria Elena Otero, PLTI '10

Graduation Greetings

Elaine Zimmerman, Commission on Children

**The 2010 Robert Haller Memorial Award
for Outstanding Community Service**

Cheryl Czuba, UConn Extension – PEP

*Bonnie Burr, Uconn Extension to accept on Cherry's
behalf*

**Parent Leader Addresses &
Presentation of Citations**

Musical Performance

“What About the Children” - Alisha Smith, PLTI '10

Benediction

State Representative Bruce Morris

Beacon Falls-Prospect Graduates & Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Trish Spofford
Community Sponsor – Region 16 School District
Parent Leader Address – Kelly Soisson

JoAnn Bachelda – Bridge the Gap: Provide opportunities for children in grades two through five to interact and learn with people of older generations.

Linda Brylewski – Make a Child Smile: Make a child smile for the day at Mayor Bob's Fun week with crafts, singing, reading and playing games.

Shannon Cretella – Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia: An informational session for parents regarding the current drugs their children are exposed to.

Lisa DeGoes – Our Youth: Determining Assets & Strengthening Youth Services - broadening the PYS programming based on the needs of our youth.

Geovana Guevara – Refurbish the Ansonia Nature Center: Update the equipment and raise the funds to refurbish the playground at the Ansonia Nature Center.

Suzanne Jankovsky – Helping Kids Through Grief: Develop a pamphlet that will assist parents with support groups, books and conversation topics to explain death to children.

Donna Keegan – Click to Fix Prospect: Report findings, such as pot holes, down trees, light, etc. to the town for expedient resolution.

Kim Kiernan – Naugatuck Citizen's Audit Committee: Form a Citizen's Audit Committee to enhance and maximize Naugatuck's human, financial and physical resources.

Sue O'Donnell – Parent Leadership Outreach Program: Utilize the Region 16 website as a vehicle to get Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) information to the community.

Christina Rosato – Algonquin Elementary School Physical Wellness Program: Increasing physical activities for a child's overall wellness.

Tracey Scott – The We C.A.R.E. Kit Project: Collecting and distributing personal care kits to homeless families throughout Connecticut.

Lisa Sizer – It Takes Two: An interactive parent/child program developed to meet the needs of the early childhood and pre-school age-group.

Kelly Soisson – Parent Partnership: A support group for parents of special needs students in Region 16.

Andrea Sutton – Project Shut-Off Notice: Promote National TV Turnoff Week – Encouraging children and adults turnoff their TV during Spring Break and engage in real-life activities with their families, friends, and neighbors.

Rebecca Sweeney-Burns – Get Caught Reading: increase literacy, improve the relationship between the police and the community. Provide a safe place in wake of the recent violence in the neighborhood.

Stephanie Young – Algonquin Kids Clean Up: To bring awareness to elementary students the importance of respecting our environment and resources through a fun and educational event held at the school.

Bridgeport Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Donna Thompson-Bennett
Community Sponsor – The Parent Center & RYASAP
Parent Leader Address – Alicia Robinson

Patricia Berry - School Bus

Communication: A communication system that will send a mass voice mail to parents with information regarding bus breakdowns and delays.

Iboki Bolelembe – Add It Up: Afterschool mathematics tutoring and enrichment program for middle school students.

Sharon Bridges – The Waltersville Dragons: Basketball program for middle school students at Waltersville School designed to engage, motivate and foster positive interaction for male students outside of the classroom.

Ramon Bulerin – Reaching to Achieve: Youth outreach program to inspire youth to reach beyond their circumstances of today and plan for a fulfilling future.

Marie Charleus – Savings Power: Creating a financial partnership between parents and their K-8 students with a local community bank to open and maintain savings accounts.

Fernando Echeverri – Emmanuel Heals, Restores and Prospers: Faith-based marriage restoration seminars.

Iris Gonzalez – Abuse Hurts, Let's Stop It!: Spokesperson and advocate for survivors of physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Alva Jeffreys – Unique Youth at Heart: Bringing youth together via power sessions that include exercise, dance, painting, hot topic conversations and community service projects.

Patricia Kurowski – Live Like No One Else: Conduct finance classes based on Dave Ramsey's Financial University model for all age groups.

Maria Lambert – Reach Out-Raise Up: Helping Battered Women and Children One Bag at a Time. Providing displaced women and children a bag of personal care items.

Latasha Nelson – Breaking The Silence on HIV and AIDS: HIV – AIDS awareness fundraiser that will be comprised of education, on-site testing, moments of reflection, testimonies and prayer.

Michael Nembhard – MANSAH Youth Home: A residential youth home where young minds are molded and developed to be successful in life.

L. Tina Patrick - Safe Haven: Providing a support group for women who have been affected by drugs, alcohol and/or other abuses.

Clara Payne – Family Foundations – Each One, Reach One, Teach One: Establishing a legacy of faith, love, core values and unity by using family reunions as a pathway to the generations.

Claudine Phaire – Ready to Learn: Before School Program for Bridgeport Public School – expanding the “Lighthouse Before School Program”.

Alicia Robinson – Fit For Five: Promoting an active lifestyle through a community walking group that will complete a 5K walk.

Alisha Smith – Success 101: Freshman Seminar Course - Providing incoming 9th graders with a successful transition into high school.

Yolanda Stinson – From 197682 to Yolanda Stinson Giving Back: To develop and distribute a resource book for female offenders when they return home.

Bridgeport (Con't)

Jasedia Toro - Bridge A Port To A Child's Future: Informing families of all the free and low cost resources available to assist a child to grow positively in Bridgeport by creating a website link at Classical Studies Academy and providing information sessions.

Nathaniel Vinson - "Locked Up, Never Locked Out: Reading is the Key to Take You Where You Want To Be": Providing books and other educational materials for juveniles who currently reside in detention facilities in Bridgeport.

Michelle Walker - Advocacy Can Help Autism Make Progress (A CHAMP): Support and educate parents regarding autism awareness and serve as an advocate for them and their children.

Alice Williams - The Right to Live Again: Raise awareness about women who have been bound by various addictions and to connect them with resources and a mentor.

*Bear in mind
that the wonderful things you learn
are the work of many generations.
All this is put in your hands
as your inheritance
in order that you
may receive it,
honor it,
add to it
and one day,
faithfully,
hand it on to your children.*

Albert Einstein

Danbury Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator - Lauren Rosado Halpin
Community Sponsor - Danbury Children First
Parent Leader Address - LaKeema Moore

Rose Alonso - The Writers Corner:
Creating a parent-child book for third graders during the school year.

DeeDee Amarante - Beautiful Girl:
Self-Esteem for mothers and daughters.

Marivel Barnard - Volleyball Clinic,
Unified Sports: Integrating an equal amount of middle school aged special needs children with typical children.

Estela Camacho - Creative Action Play (CAP) - supervised play time for children in a non-competitive environment.

Cheryl D'Souza - AIM: Artist Inside Me - a one day art competition for all kids to prove their creativity based on topics given to them.

Amauri Ferreira - Love One Another - providing free pastoral care to the Brazilian Community to strengthen families.

Angelina Hernandez - Easy, Healthy and Nutritious Food for Children: provide information, internet resources and tips.

Radhika Jain - Community Within School: School uniforms for public schools.

Paul Minigiello - Mentoring: Making a Difference, Changing a Life.
Mentoring a youth to give guidance and support to deal with life's many challenges.

Claudia Mora - Leader as a Single Parent: Helping single parents share their stories and struggles and to help each other draw positive things for raising our children.

LaKeema Moore - Acting Out! - A 6 week drama training program for grades 4-8.

Heather Nunes - Two Peas in a Pod:
Music and movement class for toddlers and preschoolers.

Niraj Patel - Early Mentoring: A Leadership Development Tool.
Bringing together a pre-teen girl with a college-bound teen girl to serve as a role model.

Delsa Quade - Leadership Workshop for The New Generation - workshops for middle school students.

Bladi Zhunio - Daddy: A Loving Father. The importance of father involvement.

Hartford Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Elsa Jones

Community Sponsor – The Mayor’s Office for Young Children

Parent Leader Address – Terry Brown

Rosemary Acevedo - Having Frank Discussions with Teens – preventing teen pregnancy.

Terry P. Brown - Hartford Can Spell: A Spelling Bee Contest for Grades 4 & 5 – promoting literacy in the middle grades.

Ana Cartagena - The Best Place to Learn Starts at Home – capacity-building for Spanish-speaking home child care providers.

Tanesha Davis - Autism Friendly: Creating an autism waiting area at the Institute of Living.

Lisa Feliciano - Educating Parents on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Planning Placement Team (PPT) Process: resources materials for parents of special needs children.

Lyn Kendrick - F.L.Y. for Youth Achievement – creating a youth leadership group in Hartford.

Shyleen Lopez - A Walk-A-Thon for Hartford Public Schools – bringing the community together to support schools.

Monica Malaver - Crayons for Cancer: Survivors Helping Survivors – a community event and fundraiser for children with cancer.

Carmen Marrero - La Casa De Dona Aurora: Transition to a Safe Place – transitional housing and support services to honor the memory of my grandmother.

Heydie Melendez - Giving Children with ADHD Choices – strategies to help ADHD kids and their teachers.

Maria Elena Otero - Planting A Seed: Spending Quality Time with the Elderly –an intergenerational learning and support program.

Angela Periche – Willing to Give: Helping Citizens of Peru – bringing lessons learned in the state back to Peru to help disabled people.

Evelyn Richardson - From Reading to Learning: Creating a Library at Global Communications Academy.

Jennifer Robinson - Providing Families with Community Resources – keeping families together and out of the DCF system with support services.

Maria Silva - Child Maltreatment in Our Community – reducing child abuse.

Meriden Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Noemi Gonzalez

Community Sponsor – Meriden Children First

Parent Leader Address – John Brooks

John Brooks – D.A.D.D. – Dads Against Discrimination – To ensure that both parents are treated fairly during custody battles.

Antonina Cheshkova – Dangerous Walk Path on East Main Street (Cone Ave-Pomeroy Ave) Transformation of a dangerous walk path for pedestrians.

Elizabeth Davis – Child Abduction – Inform Yourself – Parents rights during a child abduction.

Marinerva Diaz – Enforcing the Anti-Blight Ordinances – To ensure that the Zoning Committee follows thru with blight fines.

Colette Gardner – Say It Loud In Your Community – To create a link to Jordan Coleman’s film, “Say it Loud” that provides a brief summary of this film and Jordan’s commitment to get young people to stay in school.

Deborah Lawrence – Crosswalks In Motion. To inform the neighborhood and city officials of implementing a crosswalk and/or cross signals at a dangerous intersection.

Rashah Hussien – Reaching Minds and Souls of Young Adolescents – Trying to influence having an orchestra program in Meriden High Schools.

Yvonne Jimenez – Funding 4 Casa Boricua of Meriden, Inc. – contribute to the building renovations of this non-profit organization.

Dorothy Johnson – Children’s Zone – Assist Meriden Children First with the Summer Enrichment Camp.

Nikole Mayo – Direct Hit into Meriden’s Hands – To ensure that the Resource Directory, created by MCFI, reach the mass majority of Meriden’s population of school aged children families.

Jessica Muniz – BUS: Bring Us Safety – to have monitors on every bus to avoid bullying or any kind of bad behavior.

Mary Myers – Take Me Out to the Ball Game – Acquire Fall-ball scholarship for the South Meriden Little League Team.

Daniel Roman – Respect Counts – A Workshop on Etiquette. A workshop designed to help children and young adults understand what it is to have true RESPECT for themselves and others.

Christina Ross – Pet Points Bulletin – To inform the public on how they can help animals, without it being costly.

Selina Sayeed – Reading and Writing Development – helping students in a local school reach reading level and meet their school requirements.

Debbie Sears-Dontfrad – Family, Friends and Fun – Encourage Meriden Parks and Recreation to invest in one of its smaller local parks.

New Haven Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinators - Merryl Eaton & Sylvia Cooper
Community Sponsor - Christian Community Action
Parent Leader Address - Lissette Cruz

Micheal Ben-Elohim - Unity is Strength: An initiative to bridge the gap between single mothers and fathers.

Lissette Cruz - Common Grounds Family Care - A support group for families and their children who have experienced divorced.

Nyesha Eaton - G.I.R.L.S. "Giving Information on Real Life Experiences" - A program for young girls ages 11-14 years old to learn about themselves and foster inner power.

Yvone E. Jones - P.E.G.S.S. "Parents Expecting Greater Student Success" - The development of a After School Program in Hamden, CT.

Lesley Foster - Protein Center PRO-FIT Program - A Nutrition support group for Teens.

Roddrick Goodjohn - Father's I.M.P.A.C.T.T. - A support group for men to provide resources and information for single fathers.

Laura Jackson - Moving Forward to Giant Steps - A community conversation about parks and community programs for families with special needs children.

Phoenix Rumley - Walk It Out - A walk group designed for families to spend quality time together while becoming healthier.

Jerry Smart - ZION Place: Zealous, Independent, Opportunity for Now - A support group for men to provide resources and information for single fathers.

Michelle Tillery - Holey Roads - Public Awareness message about pot holes in our streets.

Vera Davis Woolfolk - Teen Works - Empowering teens through mentorship, work ethics, and career options.

*How wonderful it is that nobody
need wait a minute before starting
to improve the world.*

Anne Frank

Norwalk Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Josephine Fulcher Anderson

Community Sponsor – Norwalk Public Schools

Parent Leader Address – Arden Church

Jean Bobwich – When Your Senses Shut Down – Informing students, parents and staff on recognizing Sensory Integrative Disorder (SID).

Arden Church – An APPLE for Your Teacher: Applied Plan for Practical Learning Enhancement – Educating school staff on practical techniques for Special Needs Children.

Eric Croswell – Let’s Talk About Students Response Teams (SRTs) - Knowing when the red flag goes up and how to prepare for the process when your child has ADD.

Margaret Halpin – Dead End at Lilac Lane – Getting a traffic sign to protect the children on Lilac Lane.

Emily Hartwell – Prayer Van – Using prayer to achieve positive outcomes for school aged students.

Wanda Paz – Welcome Wagon – Creating a network to welcome new families into the school system.

Shantia Rooplal - The challenges of a disadvantaged Pre School Child -Demonstrating the challenges of low income families in accessing quality pre school services.

Lee Turner – Save Tomorrow’s Kids Today – Create a safe place for teens to hang out and learn.

Doris C. Velez – Inside Out - Providing information to parents and children on how to eat right.

The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created - created first in the mind and will, created next in activity.

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating.

The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.

John Schaar

Stamford Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Lucy Freeman

Community Sponsor – City of Stamford

Parent Leader Address – Danette Melchionne

Monica Beltran – Parent Illiteracy-
Working with adult learners.

Maria D. Blanco – Recognition
Ceremony for Minorities for
Getting into College – the Partner
Project.

Deborah Harris - Writer's
Workshop.

Karine Henriquez – Dare to
Believe - Dare to Achieve.

Gabriela Hernandez – Family
Budget and Money Management.

Arundhati Kulkarni –
Extracurricular Activities for Kids.

Patricia Ann Lavalle – TEN9EIGHT
–Shoot for the Moon: Organization
of a local presentation.

Edwin A. Martinez – Management
Development in the Family
Environment.

Miriam E. Matos – Recognition
Ceremony for Minorities for
Getting into College (Partner
Project).

Danette Melchionne – Opening
Lines of Communication - to
increase parental engagement.

Marco Palacios-Noriega –
www.GiveMeYourBestLink.com

Maria F. Robinson – Spending
Quality Time with Our Children
Today.

Giselly Saenz – Knowledge is
Priceless & Valuable – It can lead
an individual to enjoy living a
better life.

Gedna Jean-Pierre Sime – Strong
Women, Against Breast Cancer.

Kattia Solis-Albir – Stamford
Playgroup for Kids with Down
Syndrome.

Karen Ulloa - The CAP 1 Project –
Children at Play.

*We may affirm absolutely nothing
great in the world has been
accomplished without passion.*

Hegel

Waterbury Graduates and Community Projects

PLTI Coordinator – Trish Spofford

Community Sponsor – Waterbury Hospital

Parent Leader Address – Andrea Santos

Veronica Coty – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: An Elementary Event
Getting Driggs Elementary School to start an everyday recycling program.

Jennifer Downey – Pick up the Park: Gathering a group of local citizens to clean up garbage left by visitors to Black Rock State Park.

Charissa Frappier – Bullying in Your Community: Setting up a video on the psychological effects of bullying.

Clara Green – They Fell Through the Cracks and Now They are All Alone: Finding support and programs to assist incarcerated men, women and children with undiagnosed mental disorders while in the system.

Valerie Griffin – Light Your Way: A foundation that is designed to help others, especially young “vulnerable” people reach their potential through goal setting skills.

Laura Hadder – A Special World for Special Children: Having a safe environment for special needs adolescents and young adults to socialize and learn people skills to use in the outside world.

Heather Hill – Safety First: to provide a safe ride to outer district schools for children ages 4 and 5 by having the busses equipped with car seats.

Michelle Jannetty – A Safe Ride: A program that will mandate bus drivers to report and punish the offenders.

Paula Lantieri – Step Up: Program to teach how to interview, make a resume and what to say, do and wear to an interview.

Sara Marrero – Autism, You Are Not Alone: A forum on Autism subjects including eating habits, psychologists, etc.

Andrea Santos – The Center of Fine Arts: Public awareness of the benefit of music therapy and the arts

Michelle Tournas – Let’s Bring Beauty Back to Waterbury: Play equipment replaced at Chase Park House.

*If your actions inspire others to dream more,
learn more, do more and become more,
you are a leader.*

John Quincy Adams

Congratulatory Remarks

Andrew Lachman, Connecticut Center for School Change

Parents SEE - Greenwich Graduates

PSEE Coordinator - MaryAnn Murray

Community Sponsor - Greenwich Public Schools

Parent Leader Address - Angela Valentine

Angela Arenas

Luz Avila-Pabon

Cynthia Bowser

Carolyn Hahn-Re

Yalitza Hall

Melissa Harris

Lilliana Herrera

Susan Leeann Hinkle

Saidy Moncada

Carla Negrone

Eileen O'Connor

Natalie Queen

Janette Rincon

Maria Santillana

Tonya Stancil

Dawn Turner

Angela Valentine

Gretel Wolfe

Parents SEE Middletown Graduates

PSEE Coordinator – Keisha Williams

Community Sponsor – Middletown Public Schools

Parent Leader Address – Kimberly Salama

Stephanie Alderman

Njie Barka

Stacey Barka

Melinda Brainerd

Ann Brown

Enid Butts

Evelyn Elam

Theodore Freeman, Jr.

Kristin Hebert

Emily Olshefski

Kristine Pierce

Wendy Roy

Kimberly Salama

Barbara Slone

Eleanor Taylor Maille

*What we have before us are
some breathtaking opportunities
disguised as unsolvable problems.*

John W. Gardner

With Special Thanks to the Facilitators

Parent Leadership Training Institute

Alecia Andrews

Doug Edwards

Rhonda Evans

Sal Hanaif

Dawn Homer-Bouthiette

Hernan Illingworth

Darleen Klase

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Carmen Nieves

Christine O'Grady

Valerie Payne-Masse

Bruce Pinto

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Parents Supporting Education Excellence

Christy Counts

Sheila Sherwood

Gary Brochu

Shirle Moone-Childs



The Parent Leadership Training Institute



**PARENTS SUPPORTING
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Many thanks to our statewide graduation sponsors:

Bridgeport PLTI

Waterbury PLTI

Beacon Falls-Prospect PLTI