



*The Parent Leadership  
Training Institute*

*We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled.  
The trick is knowing how to tip ourselves over  
and let the beautiful stuff out.*

*Ray Bradbury*

*The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Graduation  
Of The  
Parent Leadership Training Institute*

*June 25, 2008*



Photo by Robert L. Caroti – Senior PC/LAN Analyst – CGA

## 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. In 1992, focused on prevention and capacity building, the Commission created the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) as a statewide family civics initiative. The mission of PLTI is to enable parents to become leading advocates for children.

## Core Values

The core values of the initiative are respect, validation and a belief that when the tools of democracy are understood, the public will actively engage in civic life.

## Parent Leadership

Parent leadership is the capacity for parents to interact within civic society with purpose and positive outcomes for children.

## Community Projects

Participants practice civic skills by working on an issue of concern in their community. They write a report describing their efforts utilizing democracy skills taught in the PLTI curriculum. These projects become part of the local PLTI's resource library. The alumni, in conjunction with the design team, provide mentoring and support for continual civic leadership. Please join us in Hearing Room 1B to view the Class of '08 community projects.



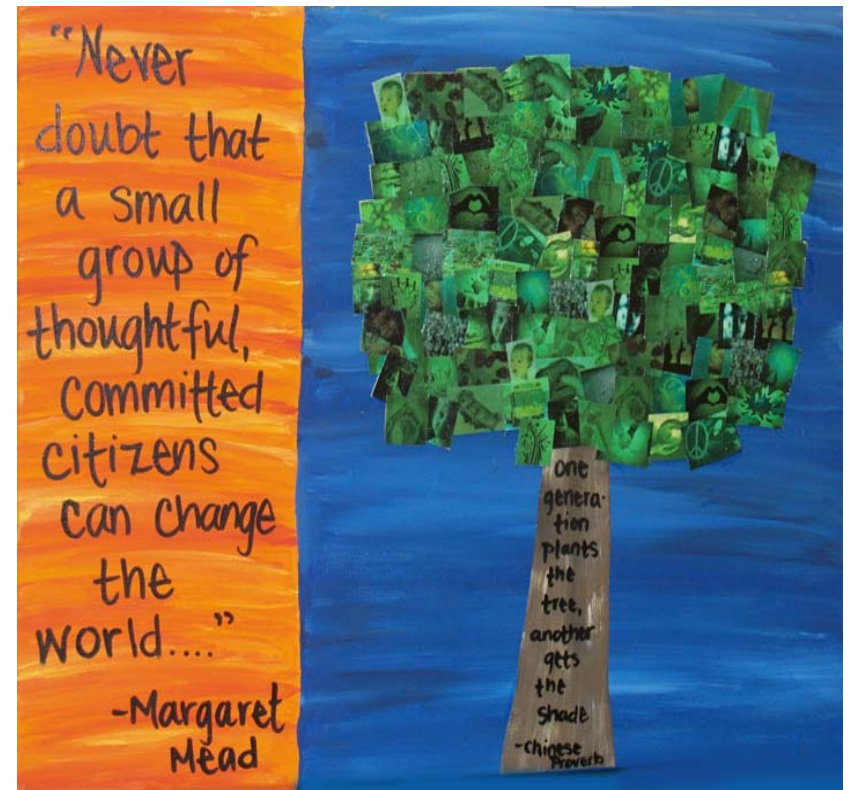
*The 2008 Robert Haller Memorial Award for Outstanding Community Service*

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.

# CONGRATULATIONS

## CLASS OF

# 2008



Designed by Whitney Lane, East Hartford PLTI Class of '08

*Hope is the companion of power and the mother of success.  
For those of us who hope strongest have within us the gift of miracles.  
Sydney Bremer*

### ***Thanks to the 2008 PLTI Facilitators***

Laverne Campbell	Doug Edwards
Rick DeJohn	Hernan Illingworth
Marlene Ho-Yen	Darlene Klase
Patti Keckeisen	Cheryl Kohler
Dawn Homer-Bouthiette	Phil McKain
Dorinda Little	Valerie Payne-Masse
Carmen Nieves	Jackie Santiago
Bruce Pinto	Stacie Silva
Tauna Saunders	Ron Thomas
Tom Soboslai	Juana Villavicencio
Donna Thompson-Bennett	Dawne Westbrook

*With Gratitude to our Special Guests and Supporters*

Douglas Edwards – Master of Ceremonies

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal – Speaker

Moses Price – Videography

Next Generation – Catering

Connecticut Television Network (CT-N) – TV Broadcast

The Board and Staff  
of the  
Connecticut Commission on Children

### ***Graduate Processional***

#### ***Call to Order***

Doug Edwards, PLTI '06

#### ***Alumni Greetings***

Jacqueline Caron, PLTI '96

#### ***Invocation***

Reverend Bonita Grubbs

#### ***National Anthem***

Karen Gilbert, PLTI '06

#### ***Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance***

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal

#### ***Greetings from the Commission on Children***

Dr. Alex Geertsma, Board Chair

#### ***The 2008 Robert Haller Memorial Award for Outstanding Community Service***

David Nee, Presenter

Elizabeth Morgan, Honoree  
Middlesex Coalition for Children

#### ***Presentation of Citations***

#### ***Closing***

**Bridgeport Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Hernan Illingworth  
Parent Leader Address – Dorcas Blue**

**Johnette Bennett** – Bridgeport Bustles

**Dorcas Blue** – Parent Action Network (PAN)

**Jaidine DeJesus** – Sex Offender Community  
Notification Program

**Marilyn Feliciano** – Power Notebooks Make Powerful  
Parents

**Aline Lacerda** – Family Health Matters

**Laura Maranon** – The Magic Power of Reading and  
Writing

**Arlene Santos** – Lost Children, Wondering Parents

**Melissa Santos-Jefferies** – Tools for School: Education  
Never Ends

**Maria Valentin** – Teaching Local Communities about  
Global Warming

**Jennifer Wieland** – Triple S (Support School Sports)

**John Wilkins** – Veterans Memorial Park Bicycle Project

**Tracey Wilkins** – Literacy Leaders

**The Children’s Leadership Training Institute  
2008 Graduates**

**Bridgeport - Established 2000**

**Jace Darby  
Krystal Darby  
JoAnna Darby  
Luis Figueroa  
Bianka Figueroa  
Jayson Flores  
Jonothan Flores  
Edwin Hernandez  
E’mory Santos-Jefferies  
Brianna Mejia  
Jonathan Phillips**

**Stephen Phillips  
Britany Raye  
Akiam Raye II  
Bernard Schuler  
Ana Laura Tiahuextl  
Sandra Tiahuextl  
Karla Maria Tiahuextl  
Jaiden Torres  
Destiny Torres  
Miles Wilkins  
Hannah Wilkins**

**Middlesex County - Established 2003**

**DaHeim Bourne**

**Alex Clark**

**Daniel Clark**

**Laura Clark**

**Caitlin Hebert**

**Timothy Hebert**

**Steven Rios**

**Rajeev Salwan**

**Rakesh Salwan**

**Waterbury Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Trish Spofford  
Parent Leader Address – Miguel DaRocha**

**Nicole Antrum** – Lysten Up Youth Coalition

**Danny Arsenault** – Makings: Mentoring through Arts and Crafts

**Alex Cambrelen** – Reaching Out – A Community Food Project

**Diane Chainese** – Stop School Violence Program

**Nera Clemente** – Uniform for Me Give Away

**Nancy Cuifalo** – Teen Driving Assembly

**Denise DaRocha** – CMT Test Factories

**Miguel DaRocha** – Parent Mentoring Group

**Shafiela Deen** – Stimulus Program for Educated Minds (SPEM)

**LaShana Grant** – Connecticut Etiquette

**Maria Guzman** – Mother Read/Father Read

**Mary Held** – House of Hope

**Dorothy Blade Johnson** – Raising Our Children (R.O.C.)

**Edward Komarnicki** – Tangled in a Cougar's Web: Updating the Carrington School Website

**Michael Lott** - Neighbors After School Program

**Jill Mahoney** – Learning through Creative Partnerships: The Outdoor Classroom

**Deirdre McCall** – Special Needs Connection

**Aurea Nichols** – Looking Good, Feeling Better

**Jennifer Prescod** – E-ck Week: Boundless Educational Opportunities

**Pamela Stewart** – Grandparents Raising Children

**Danbury Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Lauren Halpin  
Parent Leader Address – Theresa Lassauze**

**Alba Aillon** - How to be a Volunteer in the Danbury Community

**Tanya Callands** – Mentoring Youth in the Community with Anger and Behavior Problems

**Italo Castillo** – Family Sharing Time Together through the Form of Art

**Marilia Chagas** – Red Cross Instructor in Spanish and Portuguese

**Kerri Colombo** – Town of Bethel: Things to Do from Birth to Two

**Marcia Diniz-Austin** – Helping and Facilitating the Community: Health and Money

**Angela Evertz** – Unprisoned Families

**John Greene** – Going My Green

**Rosa Gutierrez** – Safety Driving

**Denise Janey** – Kids Teaching Kids

**Theresa Lassauze** – Majoring the Rest of Your Life: College Knowledge for Students with Special Needs

**Maria Lema Lojano** – What Latino Parents Can Do

**Monika Nagarsheth** – Smart Summer Program

**Patty Sghia** – Helping New Mothers and Children Succeed Through Mentoring

**Ilka Smith** – Parents with Special Needs

**Michelle Stavros-Keenan** – SEPTA: Special Education Parent Teacher Association

**Radha Sud** – Yoga and Meditation

**Katherine Tucker** – All that Energy: Giving Children 6 and Under a Place to Play

**Tina Watterworth** – It's A Small World: Developing a Committee to Bring Learning and Play Together for the Children in Our Community

**East Hartford Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Karen Gilbert  
Parent Leader Address – Elizabeth Jobs**

**Elizabeth Jobs** - A Real Panel on Child Poverty in Connecticut

**Katrina LaChance** - Raising A Reader

**Robin Lane** - Dance, Sing and Create Your Way Into the Future

**Whitney Lane** - Dance, Sing and Create Your Way Into the Future

**Gladys Moreno-Fuentes** – The Puerto Rican Experience in Connecticut: Let's Talk about It

**Dawne Morison** - The Ties That Bind: Strengthening Bonds between Teen Mothers and Their Babies

**Clara Redding** – Saving on Energy

**Minisha Stenson** - Fun-N-Fitness



*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*

**Norwalk Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Josephine Anderson  
Parent Leader Address –Aimee Hwang Russo**

**Maritza Bonilla** – Gifted Kids with Learning Disabilities: Ways to Help

**Natasha Bryan** – Surviving High School Challenges

**Stanley Bullock** – Live Right with Healthy Eating

**Louise Clark** – Intergenerational Communications/Workshops

**Jennifer Covello** – Your Attention...Please: Raising Awareness and Providing Resources for Children with AD/HD

**Kim Folston** – Rebuilding our Community through Education

**Maria Garcia** – CMT's – Workshops for Parents

**Lisa Gonzalez** – Fire Safety at Home

**Kim Littell** – Healthy Eating for Families: A Nutritional Guide

**Elliott Morales** – Methods to Benefit from Current Foreclosure Home Sales

**Maritza Ortiz** – How to be Prepared for an Emergency or Disaster

**Nayuribe Perez-Brown** – Comenzando Bien

**Aimee Hwang Russo** – [www.norwalkplti.org](http://www.norwalkplti.org)

**Kattia Salazar** – Bilingual Story Hour

**Sandra Patricia Samayoa** – Let's Learn Together/Aprendamos Juntos

**Marjorie Swanke** – Raising the Alarm on Unwelcome Guests – Bed Bugs and Public Health

**Olga Tovar** – Spring – Clean Norwalk

**Grace Elisabeth Williams** – From a Child's Mind: A Book of Spring Poems

**Jie Yu Peggy Zhu** – Strengthen PTO by Parent Involvement

**Milford Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Lesley Darling  
Parent Leader Address – Denise DiFederico**

**Taslina Akhtar-Ahmed** – Introducing Non-English Speaking Families to Preschool

**Brenda Algarin** – Communities Against Substance Abuse (C.A.S.A.)

**Tina Carrigan** – Reading Encourages Awesome Development (R.E.A.D)

**Anna Chamberlin** – Growing a Community at Read’s Artspace

**Marisol Cummings** – Mother-to-Mother Food Bank Drive

**Denise DiFederico** – PrepMe: Preschool Parents’ Manual of Evaluations

**Darcy Ellis** – Kids Walk to Cure Diabetes

**Sheri Flanagan** – Leading Parents in Leading Children

**Patti Gambori** – PLTI Alumni of Milford: The Small City with a Big Heart Leads

**Victoria Gaughan** – St. Agnes Action Angels

**Ryan James** – Parents Seeking Answers

**Diane Kruger** – Good People Doing Good Things

**Astrid Novo** – Kids: Stop and Think

**Karen O’Neil** – Community Guide to the Milford School Budget

**Jeanette Patton** – Promoting United Way Awareness Month

**Melissa Pikul** – Hands-On Science Volunteering

**Sheila Pugliese** – Special Education Manual for Parents in Catholic Schools

**Nimmy Thangavel** – Foreign Children in School: Socialization and Communication

**Christine Trujillo** – Family Reading Night at the Public Library

**Greenwich Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – MaryAnn Murray  
Parent Leader Address – Karen Martin**

**Yalitza Andrade** – Flag Football/Lean on Me

**Luz Avila-Pabon** - Flag Football/Lean on Me

**Cynthia Bowser** – Our Common Humanity (OUCH)

**Janet Colin** – Parent Network/Padres Unidos

**Carla Garay** – Compartir Y Facilitar Informacion

**Mary Raphael George** – Playdate Pluses

**Liliana Herrera** – Parent Network/Padres Unidos

**Debra Klein** – Glenville School Relocation Options

**Karen Martin** – Greenwich Chat

**Astrid Ortiz** – School Improvement Team (SIT)

**Natalie Queen** – We Count Too!

**Margaret Queen** – We Count Too!

**Scott Salisbury** – Brake for Children

**Mary Schacter** – Warm Up Greenwich

**Tonya Stancil** – Helping Hands: Recruiting Volunteers

**Dawn Turner** – From Abandonment to Manhood

**Angela Valentine** – Greenwich Youth Mentoring Program

**Sharon Waxman** – Ticks Steal Play Time from Kids: Increasing Awareness of Lyme Disease

**Meriden Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Noemi Gonzalez  
Parent Leader Address – Floresia Allen**

**Floresia Allen** – Learning the African American Culture & History: Then and Now

**Lynn Alston** – Parenting the Second Time Around

**Carisa Bicknell** – Family Oriented Programs

**Evelyn Gerena** – Christian Community Library

**Elisa Hundley** – Transportation for All

**Daisy Olivo** – New Opportunities CoEd Team Leadership Program

**Susan Pollard** – How Money Works!

**Lee Ann Rousseau** – Let the Silver City Sparkle!

**Maria Serrano** – Dress for Success

**Cindy Walsh** – My Plans for Success

**Monica Zavala** – Reading to Others

*Nothing has a stronger influence on children  
than the lives of their parents.*

*Carl Jung*

**Middlesex County Graduates  
and their Community Projects  
PLTI Coordinator – Christine O’Grady  
Parent Leader Address – Kimberly Salama**

**Eileen Alvarado** - Becoming a Sparkplug for Connecticut Juvenile Justice

**Tawana Bourne** – Healthy Home, Healthy Child

**Terri Clark** – The Royal Kingdom of Precious Treasures

**Annette DiMauro** – A Way to Succeed: A Public Service Announcement for School Readiness

**Marilyn Dunkley** – No Girls Allowed, Fatherhood Initiative

**Morad Haouchine** – Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

**Kristin Hebert** - Reading Revolution

**Crystal Hintz** – Doggy Doo It: So Pick It Up!

**Julie Ksiazkowski** – Forty Assets for Foster Youth

**Larry Owens** - Amending the Family Leave Act to Meet the Mandate for NCLB

**Kelly Parcesepe** – Education Budget View

**Jennifer Persaud** – “Opportunity Knocks” Out a Lot of Data

**Diann Pertillar** – Rainbows, Bears and Butterflies

**Kimberly Salama** – Missionary Baskets to Africa: From Middletown to Mozambique

**Pooja Salwan** – Summer Lunch Program for End Hunger CT

**Kelly Veneziano** – A Way to Succeed: A Public Service Announcement for School Readiness

**Judith White** – Slow Your Roll: Stop Sign at Navadon Parkway

**Keisha Williams** – “This Just In” News Magazine