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Interfaith Housing Association (IHA)

Working to end homelessness in our community.

“Stand Up For Homes With Hope” Starring Lewis Black Raises \$150,000 for IHA

On Saturday, January 26th, 2008 over 700 supporters packed Fairfield University’s Quick Center for “Stand Up For Homes With Hope” starring Grammy Award-winning comedian and political commentator Lewis Black. The night included a rare Fairfield County appearance by Black, exciting live and silent auctions, and a cocktail reception featuring delectable hors d’oeuvres.



event. Additional sponsors were the DelBello Family, Lydian Asset Management, LP, UBS, Kingsley Reporting, the Randel Family, Dia-geo, The Inn at National Hall, and the Hour, which served as media sponsor. Powell noted that the event could not have succeeded without the outstanding volunteer efforts by Treva Cooke, an executive producer and partner at Blue Flame, LLC, who produced the event, Amelie Babkie, who provided graphic design and board member Jeff Scanlan chair of the fundraising committee and his very active committee.

“We intend for ‘Stand Up for Homes With Hope’ to be the first of many signature events to raise awareness of the organization and help fund its critically important work,” said president Peter Powell. “Since we are primarily dependent upon private donations to carry out our mission, we are particularly grateful for the generosity of tonight’s sponsors and supporters, as well as the work of our outstanding committee and staff. All contributed to a wonderfully successful evening.”



Deutsche Bank and Thomson Financial were the lead sponsors and underwriters of the

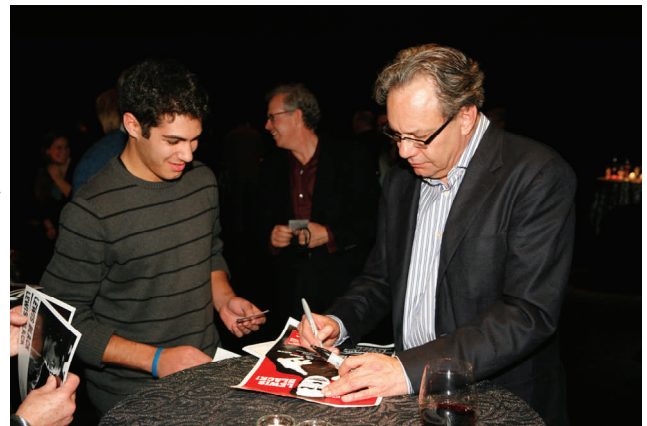
Volume 17, April 2008

Newsletter At A Glance

- “Stand Up For Homes With Hope” a smashing success!
- WIN Program looking for volunteers
- IHA participates in Feinstein Challenge
- 10 West End Avenue; Moving Ahead
- IHA gears up for 7th annual “Castles In the Sand”
- PRIDE & Jumpstart updates
- Bandfest returns!

Why Not Join the Mailing List?!

Email petepowell@ihawestport.com to sign up!



WIN Mentoring Program Is Seeking Women!



The WIN mentoring program, a program of the Interfaith Housing Association, offers friendship and support to adult women who are experiencing difficulties in their everyday lives. Mentoring partners commit to meet with each other one hour a week for a year. Mentors should be good listeners, have compassion for people in difficult circumstances, and relate comfortably to people from diverse backgrounds. No experience is necessary. Mentors receive training and support from Program Director, Wendy Epstein. LCSW.

Did You Know?

On Christmas Eve 1984, the Westport Men’s Shelter opened in the Vigilant Firehouse in Westport.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, or if you would like to have a mentor, please contact Wendy at wendyepstein@ihawestport.com, or call 222-9260.

Questions or comments? Want to get involved? Email us at petepowell@ihawestport.com or call (203) 226-3426.

IHA Participates in 11th Annual Feinstein Challenge

IHA is again participating in the annual "Feinstein Challenge". For the eleventh straight year, Alan Shawn Feinstein will divide \$1 million among agencies nationwide using it to help them raise funds during March and April, 2008. For every donation to IHA received, the donation amount will be matched by the Feinstein Foundation. Although donations are greatly appreciated at any time, if you have not donated in a while, **now is the time to contribute to make your donation really count!**

Feinstein's past \$1 million challenges have raised a record \$760 million for agencies nationwide. Founded in 1991 by Alan Shawn Feinstein, the Feinstein Foundation is dedicated to

the alleviation of hunger, the importance of community service in education and the values of caring, compassion and brotherhood.



Volume 17, March 2008

IHA Mini-Calendar:

5/10 Castles in the Sand

5/16 Bandfest!!!

4/21 The next PRIDE session Commences

Did You Know?

The Bacharach Community is located in a former military base in Westport. It opened in September 1993.

Moving Forward at 10 West End Avenue



The work on the Westport Rotary Centennial House at 10 West End Avenue in Westport is chugging forward. Funding from the Connecticut

Housing Finance Authority's Next Steps Initiative for the Westport Rotary Centennial House, our current permanent affordable supportive housing project in Westport, should close in April with construction starting directly afterward. We have also received \$428,489 from CL&P for their purchase of tax credits awarded IHA's through the Housing Tax Credit Contribution program, which will be used to support construction of the facility.

We are also in the early stages of our next permanent supportive housing project that will be located at 655 Post Road East in Westport. We have received \$50,000 in pre-development funding from the

Corporation for Supportive Housing to get the Town approval process underway. We have selected an architect and a certified zoning compliance specialist to work with us on this first phase. The goal of this project is to construct 8-12 units of new permanent supportive housing.

We are also working with the Westport Housing Authority (WHA) on their project located at Hales Court in Westport. This re-development project will ultimately consist of 78 units of affordable housing, 10 of which will be supportive units with IHA providing the supportive services. The WHA has just selected a co-developer who will bring to the project the architect, engineer and general contractor. A funding application for 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) will be submitted by April 1st.

Gearing Up For "Castles In The Sand"



Luau Pig: One of last year's fabulous creations

As the weather outside warms up, we here at IHA HQ are dusting off our trowels and practicing our molding skills on small mountains of spent coffee grounds in anticipation of **Interfaith Housing's 7th Annual Castles in the**

Sand Fundraiser, to be held at Compo Beach in Westport on Saturday, May 10th, from Noon to 4:00pm. And really - who wouldn't be excited to go frolic in the sun with a bunch of friends, eat ice cream, and unleash one's inner Rodin onto a giant heap of wet sand?

Plastic buckets are provided, but don't forget to bring your own building tools; shovels, trowels, and even kitchen utensils can all be useful in creating your team's masterpiece. A wooden board can serve as a handy straight edge, and any decorative ornamentation you might want to use can add extra creative flair.

"Celebrate an afternoon of family, fun, friends and community while raising funds to support the homeless and other neighbors in need. The Interfaith Housing Association is sponsoring the Sixth Annual **Castles in the**

Sand sandcastle build-a-thon at Compo Beach in Westport on Saturday, May 10, between 12:00 and 4:00 pm. At the time of printing, confirmed sponsors include Gault, Kowalsky, Lydian Asset Management, Merrill Lynch, Cox Radio, the Walsh Family, and Joey's By the Shore.

Big Lots (10' X 10') are \$100 and can accommodate up to four sand sculptors. Really Big Lots (20' X 20') are \$300. Register anytime from now until May 6 and receive two free **Castles in the Sand** t-shirts with a Big Lot and four free shirts for every Really Big Lot. Additional t-shirts will be available for purchase the day of the event. Each participant will receive complimentary water and ice cream from Joey's By the Shore."

PRIDE Program Report

We are pleased to report that the January/February PRIDE program, lead by the one and only Nancy Selikoff, was a great success. There were thirteen individuals who began the program, and eleven of those individuals went on to graduate from the complete three week course on February 15th, 2008.

One of the unique things about this group was that all of the participants were from IHA. This proved to be a common bond that enabled them to feel more comfortable in a group where the issue of homelessness applied to everyone.

For this particular group, being "mandated" to attend PRIDE resulted in positive responses for clients who initially did not think they could "get anything out of this program." They were "pleasantly surprised" that they learned something and enjoyed the program as well.

One client obtained 2 job offers prior to the end of the PRIDE program; another client obtained a job as a full-time limo

dispatcher. Others were networking and using newly obtained resources; working part-time, volunteering, and becoming more involved with psychosocial rehabilitation programs.

Being that all of the group members were IHA shelter clients, most of them had addressed homelessness and were looking for a stable place to live. This proved to be a very stressful issue which had interfered with their ability to maintain employment. The clients in this PRIDE group had all experienced difficult challenges due to psychiatric disabilities, substance abuse, domestic abuse and dysfunctional family lives. All the group members struggled with very low self esteem/self image.

The clients in this session had varied work histories/experiences. One client had a high level of education and business experience, but had stopped working due to substance abuse and psychiatric issues. Another had a consistent work history and was looking to make a career change; another was struggling with mental health history. Two were

seeking part-time jobs while addressing psychiatric/substance abuse issues, both with limited job seeking skills.

The feedback from the group was positive, and the growth of the clients is visible. The clients were pleased to have an opportunity to address the job-search process in a "fresh and positive way". One participant specifically expressed that many of the class members had developed extremely negative views of work and the workplace, and the PRIDE program was helpful in ad-



dressing those attitudes. The positivity and encouragement had a needed impact on their overall motivation and persistence.

For more information on the PRIDE program, contact Nancy Selikoff at nancyselikoff@ihawestport.com

Did You Know?

74% of IHA's operating budget is dependent on the generosity of individuals, foundations, businesses, service clubs and places of worship. We couldn't do it without you! **THANKS!**

"Jumpstart" Starts the Year off Right!

Our February Jumpstart event was a big success! Ellen Carter, an Outreach Advocate from the Connecticut Association for Human Services spoke about the Earned Income Tax Credit, VITA sites, the IDA program, and the economic stimulus payment. She was able to answer many relevant and important tax and financial questions. Then the focus switched to summer plans.

Kevin White, from Continuing Ed. discussed the many options available to kids through the Westport school system. Patty Haberstroh, from the Department of Human Services pitched many options such as summer camps, including sleep-away camps that are affordable and available to low income clients. She explained the many ways that DHS could help families finance summer plans. Lisa Marriott spoke about some volunteer



opportunities. Kitty Lyons from the Westport Library also came with many books relevant to the topics. We had childcare help from the Westport Y and the Staples Key Club.

Jumpstart is a dinner/speaker series designed to offer resources and information to local lower-income residents. It is a program of Interfaith Housing Association and the Westport Department of Human Services in collaboration with the Westport Library and the Westport/Weston Family Y. We provide dinner and childcare and offer speakers on a variety of topics relevant to our clients. Past topics have included: Career Planning, Money Management, Parenting Issues and Self-Esteem Building. The program meets four or five times a year: once in the fall and then three or four times during the winter/spring.

The program began in January of

2002 and continues to draw a wide range of newcomers and regular attendees.

The next Jumpstart meeting will take place on Thursday, March 27th. Susan Raphael from Positive Directions will be speaking on Parenting Issues. She will focus on the difficulties of raising children in a wealthy community. As usual, the meeting will be from 6:00 to 8:00 at the Parish Hall of Christ and Holy Trinity Church. Pizza dinner and childcare/homework help are provided.



Contact wendyepstein@ihawestport.com for more information.

Extra! Extra!

Westport Country Playhouse Spreads Holiday Cheer to WIN participants!

Participants of the WIN Mentoring Program and their children enjoyed a festive holiday luncheon before seeing "A Christmas Carol" at the Westport Country Playhouse in December. The donation was made possible by the Theatre Access Fund and provided a fabulous opportunity for all WIN participants to share a special afternoon together. Heartfelt thanks to Playhouse employee and WIN Mentor Jenn Bond who suggested the idea and facilitated the event. Memories of the magical and meaningful afternoon continue to be long lasting!



IHA Seeks Development Director

IHA seeks a dynamic, passionate leader to spearhead our fundraising efforts as we increase our operating budget and move the agency ahead financially.

IHA's mission to create 50 new units of permanent supportive housing requires a bigger budget with funding coming from a wide variety of donors. We welcome ideas, creativity and new pathways to help our agency achieve its goals. Key areas of responsibility are fundraising, marketing/public relations, and planning and budgeting. This senior level position reports to the VP/COO.

Please send cover letter, resume and salary requirements to:

Audrey Sparre
Interfaith Housing Association
49 Richmondville Avenue, Suite 112
Westport, CT 06880
audreysparre@ihawestport.com

BANDFEST 2008!

Bandfest is put on by the youth board of IHA to build awareness and involve teenagers in the Association's mission. This is the fifth annual and it will take place on May 16th at Toquet Hall in

downtown Westport. There will be 3 to 5 youth bands (who have donated their time) and many sponsors. The audience will be able to vote for the best band and the winner will take home donated prizes. Come and support local talent and IHA!



Role Call

Pete Powell

President/CEO
petepowell@ihawestport.com

Audrey Sparre

Vice President/
Chief of Operations
audreysparre@ihawestport.com

Karen Mahar

Director of Resource
Development
karenmahar@ihawestport.com

Tom Reech

Comptroller
tomreech@ihawestport.com

Alexandra Jones

Community Relations
Coordinator
alexjones@ihawestport.com

Paris Looney

Program Director,
Bacharach Community;
Service Coordinator,
Homes With Hope
parislooney@ihawestport.com

Wendy Epstein

Program Director,
Women's Interfaith Network
wendyepstein@ihawestport.com

David Kelly

Case Manager,
Gillespie Center & Hoskins'
Place
davidkelly@ihawestport.com

Maryellen Estrada

Program Director,
Gillespie Center & Hoskins'
Place
maryellenestrada@ihawestport.com



Interfaith Housing Association
49 Richmondville Avenue
Suite 112
Westport, CT 06880
Phone: 203-226-3426
Fax: 203-226-2557
E-mail:
petepowell@ihawestport.com