



DIAL/SELF

Strengthening Communities through
Positive Youth Development and
Civic Engagement Since 1977

From the Board President—10th Annual Badminton Bash

I have been a member of the Board of Directors for more than twenty years, have served as the Secretary and currently serve as the President. I was introduced to the agency by a former

neighbor who was a social worker. Knowing how much I love teaching, she thought that I might be interested in helping young people outside the classroom.

After a tour of the residential program in Turners Falls where I met a former student of mine who was a client of DIAL/SELF, I knew that this was an organization with which I wanted to be involved.

For the past ten years, I have been involved in the

planning of our unique annual fundraiser, the Badminton Bash. I have watched the event grow from a small lawn competition to a tournament with three time slots on 8 courts. Every year I have solicited raffle prizes, played on a team and recruited teams of students from Pioneer Valley Regional School where I work. My students love the commemorative t-shirts and sweatshirts, the free food, the trophies that recognize other areas in addition to athletic excellence and most importantly, the opportunity



Starr Pinkos, Board President
(2010 Bash - far right)

to raise money to support youth in our communities. It's a day of friendly matches which my students and I look forward to each year. This year's fundraising goal is \$15,000.

www.dialself.org/events.html
The 10th Annual Bash will take place on March 27, 2011

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AmeriCorps/YouthServe

The **9th Annual Legislative Forum for Youth** will be held from 3:00p.m.-5:00p.m. on Friday, January 28th, 2011 at Greenfield High School.

The event serves as an opportunity for local youth to engage in dialogue with state legislators and local elected officials regarding political issues. All local and state legislators from Franklin County, Northampton, and Amherst have been invited, and many have confirmed that they will attend. In the past, elected officials attending the forum have included

Senators Steve Brewer, Ben Downing, and Stan Rosenberg; Representatives Chris Donelan, Dennis Guyer, and Steve Kulik; the Mayor of Greenfield; members of the Select Boards in Ashfield, Montague, and Orange; as well as representatives of the Greenfield Town Council. This event is popular with legislators and youth alike!

The forum is conducted in a roundtable format-- an individual legislator will be placed at a table with 8-12 youth from his or her district. This enables youth

and legislators to engage in meaningful, and often spirited, conversations. Local YouthServe AmeriCorps members will host trainings for youth, to educate young people about the political process in our state and about the issues currently facing the legislature. This year's AmeriCorps members are conducting targeted outreach and recruitment at individual schools; trainings will take place in each of the Franklin County high schools (during selected classes), as well as at the Brick House Community Resource Center in Turners Falls. All youth are welcome to attend!



2010 Legislative Forum for Youth

ACT Volunteer Center

ACT promoted a number of events throughout the Pioneer Valley in the last 3 months, such as several DIAL/SELF fundraisers and the Make a Difference Day Fall Clean Up event with the Shelburne Senior Center.

The Resource Coordinator was invited to speak about the benefits of volunteering at the University of Massachusetts Alumni Association Non-Profit Careers meeting, as well as at

the John F. Kennedy Middle School's Community Service Day in Northampton. Both talks were very well received.

In the digital realm, ACT has created an ACT Volunteer Center "app" (Application) for Android-based smart phones, with the intent of making volunteerism accessible to mobile users. It is expected to go live this spring.

Last quarter, volunteer numbers were up across the

board. The Volunteer Center averaged 45 volunteer referrals and 243 visitors to the website per month. In addition, 342 volunteers and nonprofit agencies received the ACT monthly digital newsletters, highlighting local events and volunteer opportunities. Want to get ACT newsletters? Go to:

<http://actvolunteercenter.net/newsletter/>



Step Program

This time of year, the Step Program has a large focus on holidays, recognition, and celebration.

The Program planned and held events in celebration of youth and created opportunities for family involvement and positive experiences during an often difficult time in the lives of the youth in the program.

Step held a large Halloween activity as well as a cross-program "Thanksgiving Event"



Youth & Staff enjoying a multi-program Thanksgiving meal at 196 Federal in Greenfield.

supported fully by the local TOPS Club chapter # 0395 with donations of food and funding.

For the December holidays Step had an unbelievable dinner and gift exchange.

The youth in the Step Program were amazed by the outpouring of attention from thoughtful and individualized presents under the tree, and were so thankful for all the community members' efforts to make the holidays special. The participants even created their own gift exchange event where youth and staff each brought a gift for someone in the Step house or Team.

While the holidays are not all about gifts, receiving gifts and recognition contributes to self esteem, sense of belonging, and



Step Program Staff & Participants gathered during December in Turners Falls.

willingness to move forward towards goals.

Participants and staff send their thanks to the Advisory Council, Board members and local businesses who contributed gift certificates (Dunkin Donuts, Second Street Bakery, and Berkshire East Ski Resort).

Additional thanks go to the Program Director's family, who contributed overflowing stockings full of trinkets and goodies for current and aftercare youth, and to a local "Pathways" group who baked cookies for the participants.

TeenLine



DIAL/SELF drop in center

	16 Miles Street
	Greenfield
	TeenLine Hours
Monday	11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday	11 a.m. to 12 p.m. 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Wednesday	11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Thursday	11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday	11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The drop-in center on Miles Street is thriving! Staff are meeting many new youth and have been focusing their energy on creating new opportunities and activities for youth who drop by.

For several months, TeenLine has offered a weekly craft group on Friday afternoons, during which youth are free to stop by and create work based upon their interests. There have been young people knitting, painting, sculpting, crocheting, drawing, beading, and writing.

In addition to the craft group, a weekly life skills class was started in November with the goal

of not only passing along valuable information to youth, but also encouraging an environment in which youth can learn from each other by sharing personal experiences and knowledge. After each class a meal is offered and all drop-in participants are encouraged to stop by, learn, and socialize. Topics thus far have included: job hunting, apartment hunting and the tenant/ landlord relationship, anger management, and raising awareness about youth homelessness.

In December, participants were encouraged to volunteer in some capacity at the drop-in, and staff have seen a tremendous response to this. The Drop

-in now has participants who help keep the space clean and organized, help create posters, flyers and other promotional materials, who help create activities to offer at the drop-in, and who reach out to their peers, letting them know about the services DIAL/SELF provides. It is very exciting to see this level of investment from youth in the program!

Those interested in learning more can feel free to stop by in person. The drop-in center is located at 16 Miles Street in Greenfield.

North Quabbin

Young Adult Spotlight from the North Quabbin

Charnara began working with DIAL/SELF in January 2010. Her goals included (but were not limited to) obtaining stable housing, health insurance, food, and support around a variety of health and dental issues. While working in case coordination with staff, she soon proved herself to be a very focused and self-

directed young woman. During the past year with DIAL/SELF, Charnara was accepted into the transitional living program, which guided her into successfully completing her goals. She also obtained several WIA (Workforce Investment ACT) internships, volunteered full-time for a local non-profit, completed a college course in welding, and

located a master welder under whom to apprentice. She has been an active member of the NQ Young Leaders Council and the Diversity Club. Charnara added, "I used to take one step forward and two steps back. It now feels great moving in a positive direction."



Charnara



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Check us out on Facebook

DIAL/SELF's mission is to create opportunities, services, and programs that promote the health and positive development of youth, and the communities in which they live. We believe that youth are more likely to make the journey to adulthood successfully when they are surrounded by a caring community of adults actively serving as guides, providing safe havens, and fostering self awareness, self worth, self-discipline and self-motivation.

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RISE



Community Resource Liaisons serving the 5 RISE schools in Amherst, Northampton, and Montague have had a very busy fall!

Through volunteer recruitment, program development, and direct service, RISE is providing thousands of middle and high school students with academic support, after-school activities, and cultural enrichment.

In the last few months, RISE members have coordinated a new college drop-in center, local college visits, and a peer tutoring program. They have also offered an after-school basketball club, in-school performances by local talent, and in- and after-school academic support programs.

Additionally, RISE recently completed and distributed the *Advice Artist* project, a publication in which community members shared

career and college advice with high school students. Interested in volunteering to be a part of RISE's work with local students?

Visit RISE volunteer listings at www.actvolunteercenter.org, keyword: RISE.