



Available Services

Westchester Enterprise Fund Helps Business

What do a bakery owner from Paraguay, a seamstress from Peru and an architect from Mexico have in common? They have all received a loan from or are participating in programs of the Westchester-based Enterprise Fund.

The Enterprise Fund, a division of Community Capital Resources, provides loans and technical assistance for small and emerging businesses that cannot initially access a commercial bank loan.

In 2005 the fund received an Empire State Development Corporation grant that provides funds exclusively for women- and minority-owned businesses. Additional money is available through grants from county, state and commercial banks. The Fund loans up to \$10,000 for businesses.

Support for Families Dealing with Mental Illness

Assistance is available to families dealing with major depression, panic disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, addictive disorder and suicidal behavior. The 12-session educational program taught by trained personnel from the National Association of Mental Illness is free.

The course offers information about mental illness, medications and coping skills.

For more information or to register please call (914) 613-4028 or (914) 409-2442.

Helping Fathers Become Better Parents

“Fathers Count” is a voluntary 12-week program conducted by Family Services of Westchester. The program is free to men ages 18 to 30 who want to become better fathers and who are on probation, about to be released from the county Department of Correction, or recently released. The program includes parenting skills workshops, as well as financial literacy. For more info call (914) 964-6767 ext. 14.

Yonkers Center Offers Free Careers Training

The Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) of Westchester, located in downtown Yonkers, provides tuition-free academic and vocational skills training, counseling, job placement and post-employment assistance to eligible adults. Administered by Westchester Community College and sponsored by the State University of New York, University Center for Academic and Workforce Development, EOC prepares students for employment and career advancement.

Programs include English instruction, a college preparation academy, GED preparation, and training for careers as a certified nurses aide, home health aide, emergency medical technician or medical coder and biller.

EOC also offers employment skills assessment, resume prepa-

ration, skill-building workshops, job placement assistance, computerized instruction, financial literacy training internships, academic and career counseling and advocacy services.

For more information, call (914) 606-7621 or stop by at 26 South Broadway in Yonkers.

Housing Services in Northern Westchester

Did you know that home buyers and current homeowners can receive one-on-one home ownership counseling, attend home ownership and maintenance workshops, or receive loans and grants for purchasing and maintaining their homes through The Preservation Company, Inc.?

Recognizing that language barriers can often be a problem, Westchester Community Foundation recently funded an initiative helping the non-profit Preservation Company translate materials into Spanish. Workshops, in both Spanish and English, address the following topics: What is credit? What is a mortgage? What do I need to purchase a home? Counseling and workshops are free and available to all. Grants and loans may have geographic and income restrictions.

For information in Spanish, call (914) 606-7621 or stop by at 26 South Broadway in Yonkers.



Getting Tough on Home Contractors

Due to an increase in complaints about abuses by home improvement contractors, Westchester County is clamping down on licensing regulations and proposing new ones.

All home improvement contractors, including roofers, landscapers, tile setters, sweeps, fence installers, painters, and persons who install or repair siding, decks, windows and swimming pools, must be licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection.



To make sure more contractors follow the law, a new proposal would allow the seizure of vehicles and equipment used in connection with unlicensed contracting. The bill would also increase the fines for unlicensed contractors who continue to violate the law. The initial penalty would remain at \$1,000, but would increase to \$5,000 for a second violation and \$10,000 for all subsequent violations.

Licenses protect homeowners by ensuring that persons working on their homes are financially

responsible, properly insured, and do not have serious criminal records or numerous of unresolved complaints.

The county recently arrested 16 unlicensed contractors during a sting operation at a Yorktown house. Anyone looking to hire a contractor should check out the Consumer Protection Department's website that lists both licensed contractors as well as ones who have a history of complaints.

For more information or to obtain a license application, go to www.westchestergov.com/consumer.

My Sisters' Place Opens Mount Vernon Office

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELP

My Sisters' Place has opened an office in Mount Vernon in collaboration with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and the Westchester Hispanic Coalition. The new location at 100 E. 1st St., Suite 810, serves Mount Vernon, New Rochelle and Pelham residents.

My Sisters' Place is a not-for-profit organization that has grown from a grassroots task force and drop-in center formalized in 1978 into a cutting-edge leader and resource in the field of domestic violence programming, advocacy, shelter, and legal services. The organization has two emergency shelters and a 24-hour hotline: (1-800) 298-SAFE (7233).

The agency offers legal counseling for domestic violence issues, ranging from custody, orders of protection, child support, spousal support, divorce, separation and immigration matters. Clients also benefit from individual crisis intervention, supportive counseling, advocacy for social support, a substance abuse program, and legal advice, counsel and representation.

The Mount Vernon location is upstairs from the Department of Social Services and the Office of Child Support Enforcement. People can see an attorney on a walk-in basis or make an appointment at (914)813-6883.

SAVE THE DATE

Westchester County's 2nd Annual Hispanic Health Summit/Conference

POSTPONED

October 20
9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Westchester County Center

Join us for a unique one-day event. The conference will address various topics of interest to the Hispanic population, including health concerns.

Hear from doctors, check your cholesterol, and pick up information about different clinics and services in Westchester County.