



## On the WEB

Check out the OCFS Effective and Promising Practices web page on the NYS Office of Children and Family Services Internet website. This new resource is designed for professionals and stakeholders interested in advancing programs and practices to achieve positive outcomes for children, families and communities in New York State. Information and links to other websites will be found in each of the following areas at:  
[http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/spd/eff\\_practices/](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/spd/eff_practices/)

- How to Develop Outcomes
- Effective Programs and Practices
- Outcome Measures
- Implementation Issues
- Funding Considerations

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## Empire State Games

The Games feature nearly 40 different events for up to 6,000 athletes, ages 13 to 75, who will compete at a variety of venues throughout the county. More than 15,000 spectators are expected to come to Westchester for the games, bringing in added business for restaurants, hotels, retail stores and entertainment and recreational venues.

You can be part of this historic event and help make the games here in Westchester the best ever by becoming a volunteer. More than 1,000 volunteers are needed to work at the 12 different facilities that include colleges and county parks. Whether it's keeping score, data entry or medical support, there are plenty of opportunities for you to be a representative or a welcome ambassador for Westchester County. Volunteers should be at least 18 years of age; younger teens can sign up with an accompanying parent for assistance.

While some funding for the games will come from the state, other private fundraising support is needed as well. Sponsorship opportunities for the games are available at a variety of levels.



**The Empire State Games are coming July 25-29. For more information about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities and for up-to-the-minute news about the Empire State Games, log on to [www.empirestategameswestchester.com](http://www.empirestategameswestchester.com). To receive information by mail, call Westchester County Parks at (914) 864-7149.**

## Do You Know about...Tu Voz My Venture?

**Grants of up to \$1,000 available for youth who help other youth stay in school**

Youth Venture, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and MTV Tr3s Voces, will select teams of two or more youth, ages 13 – 20, every week through June 29, who submit great ideas for encouraging their peers to graduate from high school and college. Tu Voz My Venture winners will receive grants of up to \$1,000 to create

their ventures – an organization, business or club to help young Latinos stay in school and prepare for college and careers. Maybe you want to start a tutoring club to help students improve their language and math skills, or a club that helps students prepare for the SATS, improve school conditions, help build student's self-esteem, or teach students about their college options and financial aid. Got an idea? Send it in and win some guap to make it a reality! Read Tu Voz My Venture contest Rules. For more information go to <http://www.youthventure.org/index.php?tg=articles&topics=388>

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## A Message From County Executive Andy Spano



With summer here, Westchester County once again has many terrific events lined up for families: Playland, our series of movies under the stars, summer camps, Bicycle & Skate Sundays — to name just a few.

This summer we have something extra special going on in Westchester.

From July 25 to July 29, we are hosting the 2007 Empire State Games. Some of the finest amateur athletes in the state will compete in nearly 40 different events all over the county. I invite you to come watch the events, or if you chose, volunteer to help. To find out more, read the article about the games in this newsletter or go to [www.empirestategameswestchester.com](http://www.empirestategameswestchester.com).

Summer fun is important, but making sure that our kids are safe is even more important. With prom season here, we are continuing our efforts to deter underage drinking. Parents and teens

need to understand the dangers. Inevitably each year, our police end up taking some teens to emergency rooms due to alcohol poisoning. If you would like further information, read our brochure "What Every Parent Should Know About Prom Night...And After," available on our website at [westchestergov.com/stopdwi](http://westchestergov.com/stopdwi) or from the county's Office of Drug Prevention STOP-DWI at (914) 995-4115.

For our part, county police will have increased patrols on prom nights and will be inspecting limousines for signs of alcohol use.



## Empire State Games Come to Westchester this Summer!

Westchester is gearing up for a spectacular event right in our own backyard. For the first time ever, the prestigious Empire State Games, the largest amateur sports competition second only to the Olympics, is coming from Wednesday, July 25 through Sunday, July 29. Now in its 30th year, the Empire State Games is a program of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and is run in conjunction with the local community in which they are held. (Continued on page six)



The Westchester Scholars at the Haden Planetarium

## Westchester Scholars

The Westchester Scholars is a program which provides computers and educational enrichment to promising students, grades 7 – 11 from low-income families. The program, a public / private partnership between Westchester County and the Generoso-Pope foundation, is administered by the Westchester County Youth Bureau with additional funding from the Westchester County Department of Social Services.

Students who are accepted into the program receive a personal computer, printer and software; and have the opportunity to participate in academic enrichment activities and field trips. The scholars have participated in numerous events including the "Why We Read" project (a literacy program); a visit to the Haden Planetarium, and most recently a rock climbing trip to "The Cliffs" at Valhalla. Future outings include a visit to The Sony Wonder Lab in New York City and the annual year end BBQ at Playland Park.

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### A Message From the Executive Director

I am pleased to share some good news on the youth services front!

The New York State Budget for 2007 / 2008 shows an increase of \$1 million for Youth Development Delinquency Prevention funding and \$500,000 for Runaway and Homeless Youth. In addition, Gov. Eliot Spitzer has announced the establishment of a Children's Cabinet, to bring youth serving agencies in state government together to look at budget priorities for children.

As County Executive Andy Spano said in his message, here in Westchester we are continuing our efforts to reduce and prevent youth violence. These are some of the projects we are planning:

- The offices of the County Executive, District Attorney and Youth Bureau will once again join forces to facilitate the 2nd Annual Reducing Youth Violence Summit to be held at the County Center this fall.
- We are bringing the "Power of Peace" program to Mount Vernon this summer. This exceptional program, which currently serves teens in New Rochelle, Port Chester and White Plains, helps to empower young people to revitalize their lives and communities by practicing non-violence.
- To help parents and kids learn more about how to reduce youth violence we have asked Kids X-Press to work with middle school children to publish a magazine focusing on this issue. The magazine, which will be created by kids, for kids, will be distributed to all middle schools in the county, youth centers and libraries.
- Finally, we are publishing an updated, comprehensive booklet titled, "Gangs – A Guide for the Community." This publication is designed not only to educate parents and school personnel, but also to help them prevent young people from joining gangs.

As we move into summer, let's celebrate the accomplishments of our young people, continue to provide programs that enrich their lives and enjoy the many activities Westchester has to offer.

Marlene E. Furtick

## Westchester County Youth Council Hosted the Youth Action Convention



Members of the Westchester County Senior Youth Council

The Westchester County Youth Council, a program of Family Services of Westchester, hosted the Youth Action Convention on March 22 at Pace University in Pleasantville.

The event, which brought together over 150 teens from across Westchester, focused on "Social Change / Engaging our Generation." The members of the Westchester County Youth Council believe that the best way to bring about change is to start with yourself. To help showcase some of the more poignant issues facing teens in Westchester, peer-led workshops addressed a number of topics, including educational rights, anti-bullying, healthy relationships, gang violence prevention, self-injury and anti-tobacco.

For more information about the Westchester County Youth Council, contact James Duffy at (914) 872-5225.

## SAVE THE DATES!

**OCTOBER 17 - 19**

**The Association of New York State Youth Bureaus  
37th Annual Conference  
Marriott  
Brooklyn, New York**

For: Youth Bureau staff, youth development workers, youth program funders, administrators of youth services, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, business representatives, youth advocates and more. For information about the conference, contact michelle@nfsc-nyc.org or shaskell@dycd.nyc.gov For information about the ANYSYB go to: [www.anysyb.org](http://www.anysyb.org)

**OCTOBER 25**

**Westchester County Youth Board  
13th Annual Youth Recognition Awards Dinner  
Davenport Club, New Rochelle**

**Come Celebrate the Achievements of Westchester's Outstanding Youth!**

The Westchester County Youth Board will honor outstanding young men and women who actively work to make a significant difference to improve their schools, local communities and / or Westchester County.

**To nominate a youth (must be a current junior in high school) who you believe deserves this honor, please fill out a nomination form, which you will find, along with the criteria for nominations, on the youth bureau website: [www.westchestergov.com/youth](http://www.westchestergov.com/youth) Nomination forms are due by June 15.**

For additional information contact: Jean Anderson at JCA817@aol.com or Jim San Marco at tttfox@optonline.net



## Strategies for Safe Internet Use

More than 80 percent of young people use the Internet and nearly half log on daily. Myspace.com, Facebook.com and other so-called "social networking" websites are used by millions of teens and pre-teens, who use them to share personal information, photos and stories. In most cases it is harmless fun. But kids – and their parents – need to understand that there are real risks in these sites that attract strangers, some of whom are predators.

For the last two years, Westchester County has been a nationwide leader in efforts to keep kids safe from Internet predators and from cyberbullying – when kids or teens harass, tease or spread harmful or illegal statements about others via the Internet. County Executive Andy Spano has teamed up with the District Attorney's Office to inform parents and teens about these very real concerns and teach them safety strategies. The county has hosted educational summits about cyberspace safety and has featured this issue on Westchester County TV on Cablevision channel 504. (You can also see this video on [westchestergov.com](http://westchestergov.com)).

Here are some common sense tips for parents and kids:

- Parents, do you know what your child or teen is doing online? Make a habit of talking to your kids regularly about how they are using the Internet. Discuss Internet risks and safety. Talk to them about cyberbullying to make sure that they are not the victims of cyberbullying – or the cyberbully.
- Parents, do you know whether your child posts on Myspace, Facebook., etc.? Yes, your older child may be entitled to some privacy, but discuss with him or her what is appropriate and safe – and what is not – to post on these websites. A good strategy for

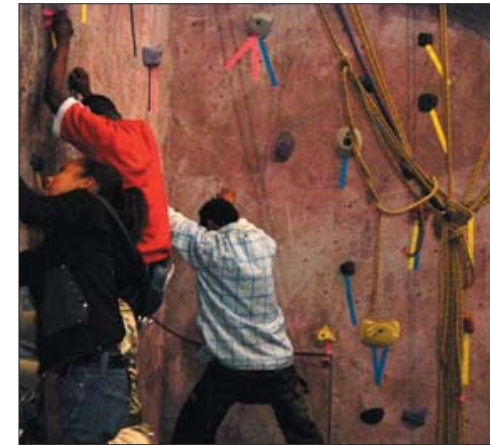
parents is to occasionally "Google" your child's name to see what might be out there in cyberspace.

- Kids, your parents or the important adults in your life are there to help and protect you. If you are having a problem, talk to them. Also, remember to be careful with the personal information you share on the Internet.

There is lots of information available to help parents and school officials protect young people and to help kids safeguard themselves. Two great sources for more information are: [www.westchestergov.com/cybernet](http://www.westchestergov.com/cybernet) and [www.wiredkids.org](http://www.wiredkids.org).

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## Westchester Scholars



Members of the Westchester Scholars rock climbing at the "Cliffs" at Valhalla

Fifty five new students have been chosen as Westchester Scholars for the upcoming 2007 / 2008 program year. The new students will be participating in a week-long computer camp this summer, held at Westchester Community College, Pace University, Monroe College and the Westchester County Information and Technology Center. They will participate in a variety of enrichment activities throughout the school year, as well.

Since the program's inception, more than 400 students have become Westchester Scholars and many have gone on to receive college scholarships. For more information about the Westchester Scholar's Program contact Tiffany Lattimer at (914) 995-8608.

## YOUTH EXPRESSIONS

### Spring Is Here

I take off my fluffy white winter coat  
And put on my purple spring jacket  
Spring is here  
And winter is out  
The flowers are blooming  
And I have no doubt  
They are purple, yellow, pink and red  
Those are the colors I run through  
When I run through my flowerbed  
The spring is welcoming me  
And the winter is saying goodbye  
Out comes the bee, "Ouch!"  
And the beautiful butterfly  
I take off my thick boots  
And put on my spring flip-flops  
The spring is warm and I can go to  
the beach  
And on the deck is where I hear my  
flip-flops go clip, clop  
Spring-cleaning is here  
The winter clothes are out  
I buy brand new spring gear  
Like capris with flowers  
April is for showers

The spring is when the bright sun  
shines  
When the cool breeze comes out  
And blows on your spine  
It's not too hot  
And not too cold  
But it is perfect  
For the old  
Summer is just racing ahead  
Green is for St. Patrick's Day  
So put on your bathing suits and  
head for the pool  
Before the break is over  
And we have to go back to school.

### Thema Frangias

Age: 13  
Westchester Scholars Program