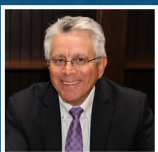


Portraits of Hope



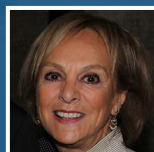
ONWARD AND UPWARD

Read about the changes coming to our 330 Delaware Avenue building - including a new elevator!



President's Column: A Message from Francisco Vasquez, Ph.D.

Page 2



Board Member Linda Kahn Discusses What Makes a Community

Page 2



Update on the Onward and Upward Project

Page 3



A Stanley G. Falk School Student's Record-Setting Career

Page 3



Child and Family Services

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



I wake up to the quiet solitude of an early morning rising, birds waking and chattering in unison, bare branches shivering in dawn's frost, the imperturbable levitation of the sun in no hurry to light the day. I gaze at the neighboring homes, twinkling lights adorn their faces, as if heralding the true meaning of this past Holiday Season long unheeded, joyful and triumphant, but alas falling short. I take in my surroundings and marvel at all of my blessings, the love of family and friends, reflections of bountifulness, of comfort. Ah, yes, life is good, isn't it?

"How many presents did you get?" "I hope they saved the gift receipts." "So, did you get everything you wanted?"

Everything you wanted... everything...

I struck up a conversation with a young man on my way to a meeting today. Stressed by new parenthood, by homelessness, by unyielding economic hardship, he shared the most profound thought that jarred my senses – "We're struggling, yes, but life is good," he said; "I have everything I need... everything..."

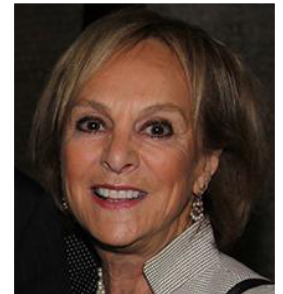
I want to believe that life's challenges are transient, that darkness turns to light in time and that this young man's fate will change for the better. I am grateful to him; he reminded me that the greatest gifts are not in the form of "things," but in caring about one another. May the blessings of the New Year embrace you and your loved ones and may you find everything you need in them.

Francisco M. Vasquez, Ph.D.
President & CEO

A COMMUNITY OF HELPING WITH BOARD MEMBER LINDA KAHN

"I have been very fortunate in my life. And I have always felt that those who are fortunate in life are obligated to give back to others."

Linda Kahn has deep roots in the Buffalo area. She recently retired as the Senior Director of Development at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, and has served on the Child & Family Services Board of Directors since 1990.



When asked how she was first introduced to Child & Family Services, Linda recalled, "I truthfully cannot remember if it was through my neighbor or my mother-in-law, but isn't that a wonderful thing to be unable to remember? That I have had multiple people encouraging me to get involved in helping others speaks volumes about our community. That is something for which I am grateful and hope to pay forward."

Linda does, though, remember the feeling that she felt at the prospect of working with C&FS. "I was so excited to join the Child & Family Services Board of Directors. The relationships between family members are instrumental in shaping a person and the type of life he or she can live. By helping one person, you might be helping everyone in that person's life. That's what a community is."

Now running her own consulting firm, Linda remains very active in the WNY fundraising community. In her free time, she and her husband Ken enjoy traveling - particularly to visit their son, daughter-in-law, and two grandsons in Seattle.

ONWARD AND UPWARD UPDATE



The saying goes that a journey begins with a single step. This encourages proactivity to improve one's self, but the most literal interpretation can be problematic for some clients at our 330 Delaware Avenue counseling center. The need for our clients to

take this step, both literally and figuratively, is the basis of our "Onward and Upward" renovation project.

During Onward and Upward, a new elevator is being constructed for our clients. Other upgrades include installing a new HVAC system to better control the interior temperature, converting bathrooms and widening certain hallways to increase accessibility.

When asked about the renovations, Director of Clinical Services Gretchen Szymanski explained, "We have clients with mobility issues that make going up the stairs extremely difficult or impossible. The stairs have also been a challenge for some families – specifically those with strollers and small children. The elevator will alleviate the challenge of getting these families upstairs to the services that they need."

Changes have been visible throughout the building since September. The green grass has been replaced by mounds of dirt from excavation. Construction of the elevator's foundation is underway. The back of the waiting room is now covered by temporary walls with fliers cautioning clients about the remodeling. The vestibule in the building's rear was removed.



"Our goals are to have the ability to aid anyone who is seeking our assistance and to provide a welcoming environment," Szymanski elaborated. "All of these changes – the elevator, the renovations to the waiting area and the bathrooms, the installation of the HVAC system – will make for a much more comfortable experience for our existing clients and will open the door for future clients."



A RECORD-BREAKING CAREER THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF TEAM SPORTS ON YOUTH



When the Falk Falcons Varsity Soccer team won the opening game of their season 1-0, Byron Evans had a performance that he will never forget. With two minutes remaining in the deadlocked game, Byron scored the deciding tally. Byron's goal broke the Falk record for most career goals, which previously stood at 22. By the end of the season, Byron had raised his school-record goals total to 27.

Asked how participating in sports has impacted his life, Byron said, "Playing sports means a lot to me. It gets me going. It's my passion. I had to work harder and harder every year [to break the record]."

High school athletics are often credited with developing life skills such as discipline, hard work and teamwork. According to a study by the National Federation of State High School Associations, the average GPA for a student athlete is 2.84 compared to an average GPA of 2.68 for a non-athlete.

Prior to the start of the school year, C&FS held a fundraiser to cover the Falk sports programs' transportation costs. By setting attendance and academic requirements, the sports program acts as an incentive that motivates students to perform well.

Colleen Tuzzo, one of Byron's coaches, told us, "We are extremely proud of Byron! He has grown so much as a soccer player over the past few years that we've coached him. With his work ethic, we know he can accomplish whatever he sets out to do."

Byron also plays basketball and runs track. He says that sports have helped him learn skills that translate to his everyday life. "I've learned how to be a leader," Byron said. "Showing leadership on and off the field is important. I can influence other people. They can look at me and think 'If he can do it, I can do it.'"





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CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES FREQUENT PHONE NUMBERS

Child & Family Services

Administrative Office, Suite 300
Counseling Offices, Suite 110
3901 Genesee Street
Cheektowaga, New York 14225
(716) 842-2750

Center for Resolution & Justice

Tri-Main Center
2495 Main Street, Suite 357
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 362-2323

Cheektowaga Counseling

3901 Genesee Street
Cheektowaga, New York 14225
(716) 681-5718

Connors Children's Center

824 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 884-3802



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Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Tri-Main Center
2495 Main Street, Suite 357
Buffalo, New York 14214
(716) 681-4300

Downtown Counseling

330 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 842-2750

Foster Care and Adoption

844 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 882-0555

Haven House

Domestic Violence Hotline
(716) 884-6000

Stanley G. Falk School

848 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209
(716) 882-0090