

PA Independent Living Project Update

December 2003 -- HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Welcome Angelo

Angelo Santore joins the Independent Living community as the IL State Grant Coordinator. He began his new duties at DPW in early November and comes to the State Grant program after working in the Information and Data Management Unit. Prior to that, Angelo worked for Carbon County CYC for two years.

Welcome Steve

On November 3, Steve Eidson joined the staff at the Independent Living Project and serves as the Western Region IL Specialist. He was the IL Coordinator for McKean County CYC and has been active with the IL Youth Retreat Steering Committee. Steve's background includes extensive experience in college admissions/financial aid.

Transitions

Sylvia Webster, a member of the Mayor's Office staff and a long-time advocate for youth in Philadelphia, has retired. As many of you will recall, Sylvia served for a number of years on the IL Youth Retreat Steering Committee. Please wish her well as she enjoys retirement and travels to see family, friends and new places.

Lenore Moton, IL Project Coordinator, married Trevor Wyant on October 18 in John Wesley AME Church in Chambersburg. Congratulations to the newlyweds!

IL Youth Retreat

The IL Youth Retreat Steering Committee gathered in Lock Haven for its initial planning meeting on the 6th and 7th of November. The site of next year's retreat will be Lock Haven University. Dates for the retreat are Monday, July 26 – Friday, July 30, 2004 and the theme is *Lost in Lock Haven – Find Yourself*.

Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board

The YAB met in Lock Haven on November 6th to discuss issues relating to foster care and Independent Living. The main priority of the group remains ways to educate caseworkers, foster parents and youth in placement about the rights of youth in Independent Living Programs. For more information about YAB activities, contact Bill Motsavage or Tracy Eisenreich at Valley Youth House. Call 610.317.0721 or e-mail: www.independentlivingpa.com.

Focus on College: Staying on Track

Admission to college may be on the minds of your seniors or out of school youth right now. It can be confusing to remember all of the different dates. Here are some that are worth remembering:

- January 1: The first date that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can be filed. The federal government, state grant agencies and most colleges use the FAFSA in awarding grants, loans and college-work study. Use the paper forms or apply on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov
- February, March and April: Schedule dates for follow-up visits to college choices. Arrange to meet faculty, coaches, advisors and financial aid staff. Sit in on classes. If possible, have youth spend the night in a residence hall to better judge their fit.
- May 1: PHEAA (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) deadline to file the FAFSA for state grant consideration.
- May 1: Student Deposit Date. Many colleges ask students to select their college choice by this date. Most require a non-refundable deposit to hold the student's place for fall.

New Money for College

The Office of Children, Youth and Families is pleased to announce the approval of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) program. This exciting opportunity provides nearly \$1.67 million to the state this year to implement educational and training vouchers of up to \$5,000 per youth for post-secondary education and training. We anticipate that this funding will be available for future years and that awards will be renewable.

Individuals that may be eligible to receive vouchers under this program:

- (1) Youth otherwise eligible for services under the State CFCIP program;
- (2) Youth adopted from foster care after attaining age 16; and
- (3) Youth participating in the voucher program on their 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

In order for youth to be involved in the program they must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form available in January 2004. For more information about post-secondary financial aid programs, timelines and other helpful tools, visit the PHEAA website at www.pheaa.org.

University of Pittsburgh IL Project, 2 Market Plaza Way, Suite 102, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717.795.9048

Lenore Wyant, IL Project Coordinator

Ext. 207

E-mail: ldmoton@pitt.edu

Sally Logan, Data Entry Manager

Ext. 231

E-mail: sml20@pitt.edu

Idotress Joseph, IL Specialist, Eastern Region

Ext. 218

E-mail: irj2@pitt.edu

Stephen Eidson, IL Specialist, Western Region

814.887.0917

E-mail: see13@pitt.edu

Angelo Santore, State Grant Coordinator, Phone: 717.772.7012