

Dear Friends,

We have been working hard over the last several months to make the dream of bringing Girls Inc. to Westchester a reality. We are delighted to share some of our accomplishments with you in this, the first Girls Inc. Westchester newsletter. 2006 has been a year of research, outreach and plan-

ning, as we lay the foundation for a new Girls Inc. affiliate in Westchester that can begin serving girls in 2007. With a Steering Committee of over 20 dedicated, passionate, and hard-working women, we have made some considerable strides. We are excited about what we have accomplished thus far,

and look forward to 2007, when we can begin delivering the programs and offering the opportunities that will inspire Westchester girls to be strong, smart and bold. Thank you for your continued interest in Girls Inc., and your support of our efforts to bring Girls Inc. to Westchester.

## What We've Accomplished

Girls Inc. of Westchester County:

- Becomes incorporated in New York State - October, 2005
- Is an official Provisional Member of Girls Inc., with authorization to use the name Girls Inc. and Girls Inc. programs - October, 2005
- Received a \$5,000 grant from NY Life Foundation to conduct a Needs Assessment of girls in Westchester County - April, 2006
- Serves on the Steering Committee for the Title IX Symposium 2006: Math, Science, Technology and Athletics at the Performing Arts Center, Purchase College, May 2006.
- Produces its first brochure, designed by our talented PR/Marketing committee, and 5,000 beautiful glossy copies are printed, at no cost, thanks to Bowne & Co. - May, 2006
- Completes Needs Assessment, highlighting the unmet needs of girls in Westchester County, and forming the basis for its service delivery plan - July, 2006
- Files its application for its 501c3 - October, 2006
- Launches its website - November, 2006
- Transitions from a Steering Committee to a Founding Board - December, 2006



## Study Confirms Need for Girls Inc. in Westchester

To identify the needs of girls in Westchester, and determine the extent to which Girls Inc. programming could address those needs, we reviewed existing data and interviewed over 40 people, including funders, youth service providers, educators, and community leaders. Here's what we learned:

- Despite the perception of Westchester as affluent, there is considerable poverty concentrated in a number of communities throughout the county. In nine communities, more than 1 in 5 households have incomes less than \$25,000. These include: Mt. Vernon, Yonkers, Port Chester, Peekskill, New Rochelle, Sleepy Hollow, Ossining, White Plains and Mt. Kisco.

*continued on page 2*

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- There is a need for comprehensive sexuality education programs for girls before they reach high school.
- Disadvantaged girls lack experiences beyond their community and exposure to opportunities, careers, and experiences that will enable them to break the cycle of poverty.
- Latinas as a group are particularly underserved and need targeted approaches for outreach and program delivery.
- While some girls-only programming exists in Westchester, funders and community leaders indicate a need for high quality, consistent girls-only programming that shows results and complements what already exists.
- There is considerable interest on the part of a number of community based organizations to bring Girls Inc. programs to the girls they serve.



## Getting on Board

- In September, 2006, Volunteer Consulting Group (VCG) began working with Girls Inc. of Westchester County on Board development, thanks to a grant from the Charles Hayden Foundation.
- We are still looking for additional Board members. Please contact Sally Baker at [sbaker@girlsincwestchester.org](mailto:sbaker@girlsincwestchester.org) if you are interested in learning more about our Board.

### ■ Broadening our Circle of Friends

*We have begun hosting a series of Get to Know Girls Inc. house parties throughout the County to introduce Girls Inc., our plans for Westchester, and expand our circle of friends, supporters and volunteers. Since August we have held 4 house parties – in Katonah, Peekskill and Scarsdale, and made over 40 new “friends.” We are looking to spread the word in additional communities, so please contact Sally Baker at [sbaker@girlsincwestchester.org](mailto:sbaker@girlsincwestchester.org) if you’re interested in hosting a similar event for your friends or colleagues.*

## Gearing Up for Programming

- Maureen Maguire — a Girls Inc. Westchester Steering Committee member and an Economist — traveled to Atlanta this summer for a week-long Girls Inc. training of trainers in the entire (4-part) Economic Literacy<sup>®</sup> program. Maureen came back completely enamored of the program, and ready to start teaching Westchester girls how to make planning for a secure financial future fun, exciting, and manageable.
- Tyhesha Elmore, a PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania who recently moved to Peekskill, attended a Girls Inc. training in NYC in September in three Girls Inc. programs: Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy<sup>®</sup>, Media Literacy<sup>®</sup>, and Economic Literacy<sup>®</sup>. Tyhesha is looking forward to helping to deliver Girls Inc. programs in Westchester in 2007, and will be working with community leaders and educators in Peekskill to coordinate efforts to bring Girls Inc. programs to Peekskill.
- Sally Baker attended the Girls Inc. Regional Conference in Worcester, MA in September, and got trained in Money Talks – the new family financial literacy program that can be run as a half-day Saturday workshop for girls and their parents.



### Corporate Friends Provide In-kind Support

We are extremely grateful for the invaluable support provided by our corporate friends, which has saved us thousands of dollars during our start-up year.

- Bowne & Co. printed our brochure and continues to provide pro bono printing
- Carter, Ledyard and Milburn is providing pro bono legal services, including necessary filings for our Incorporation and our 501c3 tax exempt status
- Ernst & Young has provided meeting support, including refreshments and conference calling

If your company would also like to provide in-kind support – with donated equipment, meeting support, materials development, etc. please contact us to discuss the possibilities.

## Girls Inc. Westchester Goes to Washington

Sally Baker and Pam Meisel attended the Girls Inc. National Conference in D.C. in April, and met with colleagues from Girls Inc. affiliates throughout the country and in Canada. The highlight was a trip to Capitol Hill, where Sally met with Representative Nita Lowey, and Senator Clinton hosted a reception for Girls Inc. where she pledged her continued support for Girls Inc. and shared her excitement about the new Westchester affiliate.



## A special thanks to our supporters

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