

# Director's Report



## 1st Quarter 2006

*"Promoting Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families can live with dignity and respect."*

### **CITIZENS COUNCIL ENTERS YEAR 5**

The Citizens Council, still in its infancy, is entering its 5<sup>th</sup> year of operation. While this is a major milestone for Belknap County it represents a farewell to some of our founding Council members. The bad news is that we said goodbye to five outstanding members who began our move toward Community Justice back when the Belknap Juvenile Justice Initiative preceded the Citizens Council. At its Annual Meeting on January 24, 2006, the Council said a sincere thank you to retiring Council members [Gil Schohan](#), [Alida Millham](#), [Jim Carroll](#), [Leo Sanfacon](#) and [Andre Paquette](#). Each was presented with a glass engraving with a quote selected to best represent their individual contributions to the Council. They each also received a Citation signed by Governor John Lynch for their commitment to children and families. The good news is that these retiring members have all agreed to continue to serve as Council Associates which allows the Council to continue to benefit from their active involvement in several key initiative areas. This incredible dedication is only one of the many ways that citizens continue to give of themselves for the betterment of others. We couldn't be more pleased.

This year also marks the last year of funding from the [Annette P. Schmitt Fund](#). This means that next year the Citizens Council will be entirely County funded ending one of the most unique public/private partnerships in the history of the County. Since the Community Justice initiative began in 1999, the Annette Schmitt Fund, through the leadership of the [Honorable Judge Willard Martin](#), has contributed over **\$980,000** to supporting the emergence of a Balanced and Restorative Juvenile Justice System and the Citizens Council on Children and Families. To date, no other county, nor the state, has made such a commitment. We recognize and thank Judge Martin for his insight, vision, and unfailing commitment to youth and families throughout Belknap County and extend our deepest appreciation to the Annette Schmitt Fund for its generous contributions.

### **MICHELENE ROY JOINS THE COUNCIL**

As we continue to fill the vacancies left by retiring members, we welcome [Micheline Roy](#) to our Council. Micheline resides in Laconia and brings extensive expertise in the areas of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, fields in which she has spent many years serving as a nurse. We welcome Micheline and look forward to the many contributions she will bring to our efforts.

We are still recruiting others to the Council and we will have complete application packets on an additional four members within the next few weeks. If anyone is interested in becoming a Council member, please call the Council office at 528-3185 or visit our website [www.bccj.org](http://www.bccj.org).

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The *3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convocation on Children and Families* was held at the Winnepesaukee Expo on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Featuring the [Honorable Edwin Kelly](#) as keynote speaker, the event hosted over 250 people and over 60 exhibitors. Special features of this year's convocation included wonderful youth involvement from across the county including a [Show Chorus](#) from [Winnisquam Middle School](#), decorations from the [Lakes Region Child Care Center](#) and the creation of soup bowls from [school art classes](#). Student creations and youth leaders serving as emcees for the second year in a row, brought the value of our youth into clear focus. Our deepest thanks go out to all who participated in this year's planning and execution of this event. It was spectacular! (To view Judge Kelly's keynote address, please visit the Citizens Council's website at [www.bccj.org](http://www.bccj.org). [Reports and Minutes/Other Reports/Keynote Presentations-Judge Edwin Kelly].

Several citizens were acknowledged for their outstanding commitment to civic engagement. This year's Annette Schmitt honoree was [David Tryon](#) of Tilton. Dave's nomination contained a litany of incredible contributions he has made to youth throughout the Winnisquam School District. He epitomizes the characteristics of the *Annette Schmitt Unsung Hero Award*. Congratulations Dave. Well deserved!

Additionally, several citizens were recognized as *Community Champions* because of their years of contributions to their communities. We were proud to recognize the following individuals for their outstanding leadership, compassion and contributions in making Belknap County a safe and healthy community where children and families can live with dignity and respect. They are [Karen Thurston](#), [Peggy Selig](#), [Armand Maheux](#), [Carol Pierce](#), [Rasim](#) and [Umija Gusinac](#), [Bob Selig](#), [Jim](#) and [Arlene Fortier](#), [Joan Cormier](#), and [Barbara Belmont](#).

A *Restorative Justice* training event sponsored by the [Laconia District Office of Juvenile Probation and Parole](#) and the [Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families](#) was led by two trainers from the Vermont Department of Corrections. On January 27, over 40 participants representing juvenile probation and parole, schools, law enforcement, provider organizations and citizen volunteers, attended a day-long training event at the [Meredith Village Savings Bank](#). Special thanks to [Megan Torsey Sheehan](#) and [Jay Apicelli](#) for planning this event.

In affiliation with [Friends of Recovery/New Hampshire](#), the [Citizens Council's Prevention Work Group](#) sponsored a day-long training for twenty individuals interested in developing parent support groups centered on substance abuse. Trainers from the [Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery](#), discussed their processes for conducting parents groups over the past 15 years and shared an abundance of materials which help parents navigate the system of services and resources. As a result of this session, five parents will be going forward to become trained facilitators for establishing local parent support groups. We wish to recognize Council member [Ruth Castonguay](#), Chair of the Prevention Work Group and [Denise Devlin](#) of FOR/NH for their leadership in convening this group. We also acknowledge the [Belknap County UNH Cooperative Extension](#) for the use of their conference room during this training.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Parents As Leaders in Society (PALS)* series concluded on March 18<sup>th</sup> with the graduation of 14 participants. Three sessions were held this quarter including presentations from area providers, a session on mediation and negotiation skills, and ending with sessions on how to influence the legislative process and building community connections. This year's planning and coordination was spearheaded in affiliation with [Upstream, a program of LRUW](#), which served as fiscal agent for the program. Logistical support was very aptly handled by [Kathy Calvin](#), a PALS alum from 2005, and [Judi Taggart](#) of UpStream. Additional on-site support was provided by two other 2005 alumni, [Bernadette Haines](#) and [Umija Gusinac](#). Without their assistance, such an undertaking would not have been possible. Sessions were facilitated by Alan Robichaud of the Citizens Council. Joining the Class of 2006 are the following graduates: [Lisa Lundquist](#) (Ashland), [Teresa Scahill](#) (Barnstead), [Kimberly O'Brien](#) and [Susan Segelstrom](#) (Belmont), [Rasim Gusinac](#) (Gilford), [Nancy Porosky](#) (Gilmanton), [Valerie Hammond](#), [Ulimatu Kamara](#), [Elizabeth Newell](#), [Julicia Ridings](#), [Patricia Weatherbee](#) and [Deb Williams](#) (Laconia), and [Deborah Dickinson](#) and [Greg Egbert](#) (Meredith). Special thanks again to the [NH Children's Trust Fund](#) for their necessary financial sponsorship.

### **Center for Civic Engagement Concludes Underage Drinking Series**

The final two forums on *Underage Drinking* were conducted this quarter. In January, a session on Health Impacts of Underage Drinking was presented at the [Winnisquam Regional High School Cafetorium](#). Over 20 youth and family members braved the icy conditions to listen to our panel comprised of [Gerri Harvey](#), School Nurse of Belmont Middle School and current President of the NH School Nurses Association; [Sue Caldon](#), Director of the Nathan Brody Chemical Dependency Program at LRGHospital; and [Dr. David Mattice](#), Emergency Room Physician in Laconia and Wolfeboro hospitals.

The series concluded with a final panel conducted jointly with the [CoRe Coalition](#) and the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) national Town Hall meeting initiative, on March 28<sup>th</sup> at the

**Gilford Middle School.** We were pleased to present, to the audience of over 40 participants, our esteemed panel of **Dr. Rick Wilson**, Pediatrician with the Laconia Clinic, **Eddie Edwards**, Chief of the Bureau of Investigations, NH Liquor Commission; **Dr. Paul DeMinico**, Superintendent of the Gilford School District, **Renee Rockwell**, Project Director of the CoRe Coalition; and **Tim Porosky**, Gilford graduate of the Class of 2002. The topic addressed potential solutions to the underage drinking problems in Belknap County with interest leading to the formation of parent support groups, further prevention work in conjunction with CoRe and local substance abuse task forces, review and discussions on recent youth risk behavior surveys, and the like. The **CoRe Coalition** is the lead organization in Belknap County to coordinate efforts across the region. This is an “everybody’s issue” and the **Citizens Council** and the **Center for Civic Engagement** will continue to devote attention to promoting healthy practices for children, youth, and families throughout the county. For further information on becoming involved in the underage drinking and other alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention initiatives, contact the CoRe Coalition: Renee Rockwell (271-6162) or Shannon Swett (524-9204).

### **RECLAIMING FUTURES MAKING NATIONAL IMPACT**

As many of our readers may know, the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** has been conducting a national pilot project in ten sites across the country. **Reclaiming Futures** as it is referred to, is attempting to change the way juvenile justice systems intervene with adolescents who are engaged in the court system and experience substance abuse issues. Belknap County has been a partner in the Reclaiming Futures project since its inception and participates in the Judicial and Community Fellowships (through Judge Bud Martin and Alan Robichaud, respectively) with our perspective counterparts across the country. This experience has given us the opportunity to share ideas and practices that are setting the stage for national change in the juvenile justice and substance abuse arenas. To best understand the dynamics of change that is occurring in the movement, we encourage our readers to visit the web cast conducted when a contingent of Reclaiming Futures and Robert Wood Johnson partners recently presented to a Congressional forum in Washington, DC. The link to the web cast is <http://www.rwjf.org/newsroom/activitydetail.jsp?id=10163&type=3>, and it is well worth the short time that it takes to view the presentation. This may be viewed in either Real Player or Windows Media Player formats.

While Reclaiming Futures still has over a year to go in its five year project, we wish to recognize the incredible leadership of the following people that have made our participation and access to resources possible: **Laura Nissen**, National Project Director of the Reclaiming Futures Project, and all of her fine cadre of competent staff and associated consultants; **Judge Edwin Kelly**, Administrative Office of the Courts for securing and leading the New Hampshire effort; **Maria Gagnon** and **Ray Goodman** for their leadership and coordination skills in implementing the state’s participation in the this monumental shift in the way we think about juvenile justice and substance abuse issues; and to **Kate Craft**, **Kristin Schubert**, and **Cyndy Kiely** of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for their belief that not only is such change possible but is necessary and...inevitable. Thank you all!

### **SPREADING THE MESSAGE**

The Citizens Council continues to respond to requests for information about Community Justice and how we go about our work. This past quarter, several additional presentations have been made to parents, individuals and organizations. Included were introductory sessions to four perspective Council members, board orientation to the **Child Advocacy Center**, **Belmont Middle School PTO**, **Carroll County District Court Judge Pamela Albee** (with Judge Martin), **Chief Justice John Broderick** (with Judges Martin and Bamberger), the **Children and Family Law Committee, NH House of Representatives** (with Council Associate Alida Millham). Additionally, the Council was invited to participate on a community panel for the **Prospect Mountain High School’s** nomination for the **School of Excellence Award**. We conducted informational sessions with the **Laconia Head Start** program, the **Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health**, and have begun coordination with others in anticipation of eventual planning for **Strategic Prevention Frameworks** as mandated by the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

(SAMHSA) and the [New Hampshire Division of Public Health, Bureau of Prevention Services](#). This planning will be a requirement in determining how future prevention funding will flow to communities from the federal and state governments.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Be watching for and plan to attend upcoming community forums. We remind you that all of the Citizens Council's meetings, activities, and events are opened to the public. As Gandhi said: "Be part of the change you wish to see in the world." Participate in the following events and call the Council (528-3185) for ongoing information on how to become involved in your community.

#### **April 13- Drug Awareness Community Forum**

The Pines Community Center, Northfield, New Hampshire  
5:30 PM to 8:30 PM (Pizza and soft drinks provided at 5:30)

#### **April 15 – How to Ask the Right Questions**

Meredith Village Savings Bank Laconia Branch Office  
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

#### **April 19 – Endowment for Health Listening Session**

Meredith Village Savings Bank Laconia Branch Office, Laconia, New Hampshire  
9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

#### **April 23 through April 29 – Observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week**

A week-long series of events sponsored by a multi-agency coalition concerned with victims' rights  
Contact Judy Buswell at the Citizens Council for more information.

#### **May 9 – Behavior Tool Kit**

Genesis Behavioral Health, 771 North Main Street  
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

#### **May 19 – Strategic Prevention Frameworks planning session with substance abuse coalitions from Belknap and Carroll Counties.**

11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Location TBD  
Contact Alan Robichaud (528-3185) or Susan Laverack (528-6945) for further information.

### **WORDS TO PONDER**

*"The greatest threat to our national security and future comes from no external enemy but from the enemy within – in our loss of strong, moral, family, and community values and support."*

Marian Wright Edelman  
[The Measure of Our Success](#)

Respectfully,  
*Alan Robichaud*  
Executive Director