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COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED OPENS NEW RESPITE HOME

The Community Access Unlimited (CAU) has opened a new Respite Home in Union Township that provides short-term safe and nurturing care to people with disabilities and respite to their families and caregivers so they can travel, undergo medical procedures, have home repair work done or take time away from care giving for any other reason.

"Caring for loved ones with disabilities can be a full-time job, and at times a very demanding one," said Sheila McDowell, assistant executive director of disability services at CAU. "It is only natural and even healthy that they receive respite from their responsibilities at times."

"At the same time they do not want to feel guilty about leaving their loved one and want the peace of mind knowing they are staying someplace where they receive the same care and attention by trained personnel as they receive at home. That is why they chose Community Access Unlimited. We have been providing comprehensive care to people with disabilities for 36 years."

CAU is a statewide nonprofit providing support programs and services to more than 6,000 adults with disabilities as well as youth served under the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enable them to live independently in the community, in areas including vocational and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation and in-home services.

The home, called Knollwood, is the new home of the CAU Respite program. It is a ranch-style home that is wheelchair-accessible and houses up to four visitors in private rooms for one to 30 days. While there the visitors participate in recreation, attend day programs and enjoy their own personal activities. Trained staff are with them 24/7 and take them for medical appointments, social engagements or errands.

Families and caregivers are referred to CAU Respite through the Family Support Unit of the state Department of Developmental Disabilities.

"We've had some families bringing their loved ones to CAU Respite for 18 months or longer," McDowell said. "They're so pleased with the care and attention they are given that we've earned their trust."

Kim Sharpe is one of these parents. She has been bringing her son, Dwight, to CAU Respite for nearly two years and his next visit will be later this month.

"He likes it there," she said. "My son is a social butterfly. He gets along with all participants very well. The love and care that someone shows to their child is very important to a parent. Once we have this bond between us, between Community Access and myself, it became very easy. They



(above) Fanny Sacca (left) and Margaret Rector help assistant program director David Orwochi raise the open house banner at Knollwood, the newly opened Respite Home of Community Access Unlimited.

are someone I can trust with my son.

"They are very responsive to any concerns I have. It's not about collecting a paycheck for them. You have to have that will to care for a person with a disability. It means the world to me."

David Orwochi is the assistant program director at Knollwood.

"Kim has been using our service anytime she needs to travel or has a conflict," he said. "She took Dwight someplace else once and said she would never do it again."

"We had another parent who was very skeptical because her daughter has high needs. I told her, 'Ma'am, this is what we do. We take care of our visitors, give them whatever care they need.' She ended up extending her daughter's stay. She said, 'My daughter is very happy while she's there.'"

Margaret Rector and Fanny Sacca are two visitors currently staying at Knollwood. While at the home Rector attends a day program in Springfield, enjoys her private room, which she keeps clean, and watches television. Staff take her shopping and help her select what clothes to buy.

"I like it here," she said. "The staff is very nice. They care about you."

Sacca attends day program at CAU's Day Habilitation Services program. She likes to sew or go shopping or to the Dunkin Donuts with staff and enjoys getting fresh air and seeing what's going on in the neighborhood.

"I like it here," she said. "They're very respectful people. I would like to come back."

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at 7:30 at Biertuempfel Park followed by

a Fireworks Spectacular at dusk.

In the event of rain, the Soap Box Derby will be cancelled and the concert and Fireworks will be held on Sunday, July 5th at Biertuempfel Park starting at 7:30 PM. In the event of rain July 5th, the concert will be held indoors at Hannah Caldwell School Auditorium, 1120 Commerce Avenue at 7:30 PM. For inquiries about any this or any of our programs please call Recreation Department at 908-686-4200.



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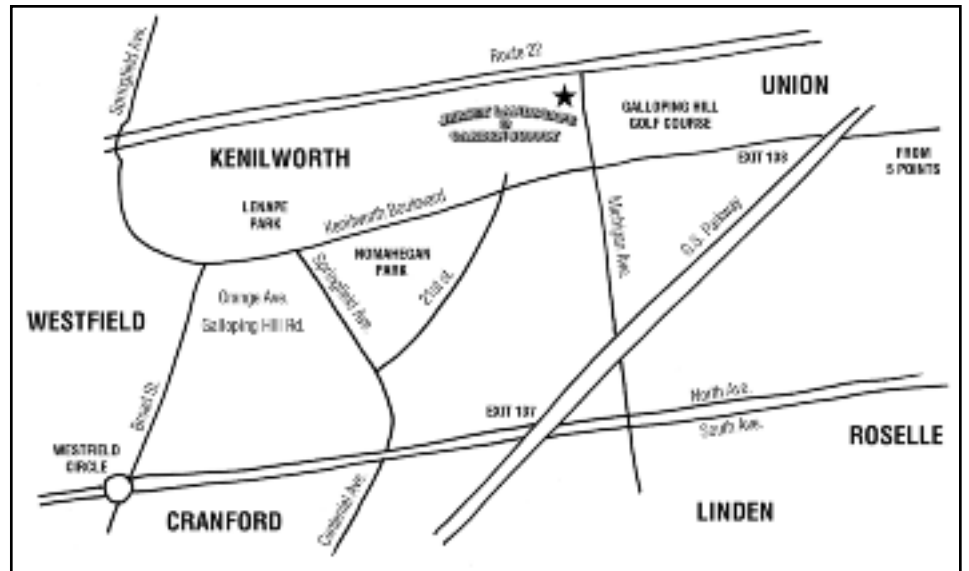
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KEY CLUB HELPS YOUNG GIRL GO TO HIGH SCHOOL

Submitted by: Jessenia Class, Union High School Junior

Education is not always delivered on a silver platter to those who seek to reap its benefits. In the United States, public school may be offered free of charge (save taxes) for the individual, but in other countries, students are not always so serendipitous. They have to work hard to pay for their education, and without the money allocated towards this goal, they may fall short of the advantages of learning and may be forced to work physically laboring jobs which may be dangerous to their overall health.

In efforts to prevent this, the Union High School Key Club partnered with a nonprofit organization called Yuda Bands for its last service project of the year. Yuda Bands is an organization based in Guatemala focused on helping young impoverished children finish their education, since free public education ends at 6th grade in the country. The organization helps fundraise the costs by selling bracelets handmade by the participants in Guatemala and using the revenue from the sales to help these children get an education – deriving their name from their sole purpose, Yuda being the abbreviated form of ayuda, the Spanish word for help.

In their first endeavors to sponsor a budding student without bias, the officers of Key Club randomly chose Astrid Quiroa to support on her journey to finish high school. As a sixteen-year-old girl without a father and with younger siblings for her mother to support, Astrid faced dropping out of school to help the family monetarily if she could not receive help from Yuda Bands – and this is where Key Club stepped in to help out.

With about 175 bands at \$7 each, it took only

two days for the bracelets to sell out and for Astrid's goal to be reached. By the purchases of the bands and donations from students and staff alike, Astrid Quiroa could finish high school without fear of having to drop out because of a lack of funds.

The UHS Key Club would like to thank everyone who donated to the cause or who purchased a bracelet for making Astrid's dreams a reality, and hope in the upcoming service year that they, through the participation of the student body and staff, can continue to make these wishes come true for more aspiring students through Yuda Bands.



Astrid Quiroa

My name is Astrid Vanessa Quiroa Medina. I'm 16 years old, I'm in 10th grade. I live with my mother and 1 sister in San Martin Jilotepeque. My mother is a saleswoman.

I like to study but it's hard for me because my mother has to work so hard. I have no father so I need support to continue in the school. My favorite class is English. My goal is study hard and finish high school and to study college and help my mother in the future.

Biography translated by Griselda Argueta, Yuda Bands staff, Guatemala

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UNION TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Doc Burkhardt, as Rev. James Caldwell, welcomed visitors to the Caldwell Parsonage, 909 Caldwell Avenue, Union, on Hannah Caldwell Day (June 7), which commemorates the killing of the minister's wife by a British soldiers during the American Revolution. He was assisted by Dorothea Krihak, Lore Ullrich, and Anita Centeno--members of the Union Township Historical Society.



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UNION POLICE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES INITIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

Spirit of UNION • Page 7 • July 2015

The Township of Union Police Department has received its initial law enforcement accreditation and is now an "Accredited Agency", after a more than two-year process. Administered by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, the accreditation program requires agencies to comply with best practice standards in five basic areas: the administrative function, the personnel function, the operations function, the investigative function, and the arrestee/detainee function.

The department must comply with more than 100 standards in order to achieve accredited status. Accreditation results in greater accountability within the agency, reduced risk and liability exposure, stronger defense against civil lawsuits, increased community advocacy, and more confidence in the agency's ability to operate efficiently and respond to community needs. Verification by the team that the Township of Union Police Department meets the Commission's "best practice" standards is part of a voluntary process to achieve accreditation, a highly prized recognition of law enforcement professional excellence.

"We, on the Township Committee, are extremely proud of the work our police officers and their leadership do on a daily basis" stated Mayor Manuel Figueiredo, "This accreditation is validation of the respectful and diligent job performed by the men and women on our force for many years." Police Commissioner Clifton People was proud that "under the supervision

and direction of Director Zieser the Police Department has become extraordinarily proficient as witnessed at the May 26th Township Committee Meeting where they received the assessment award."

A team of assessors from the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) examined all aspects of the department, its policies and procedures, management, operations, and support services, during an on site inspection in the fall of 2014. The assessment team is composed of law enforcement practitioners from similar New Jersey law enforcement agencies. The assessors reviewed written materials, interviewed agency members, and visited offices and other places where compliance with the standards were observed. Once the Commission's assessors completed their review of the agency, they reported to the full Commission, which then decided to grant accredited status on March 19, 2015.

Accreditation is valid for a three-year period during which time the agency must submit annual reports attesting to their continued compliance with those standards under which it was initially accredited.

The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police through its New Jersey Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission is the legitimate authority and accreditation agency in the state of New Jersey. The Accreditation Program Manager for the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police is Mr. Harry J. Delgado.

UNION HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1972 LET'S GET TOGETHER FOR A BBQ!!

Saturday

SEPTEMBER 19, 2015

4:00 – 10:00 pm

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LADY DRAGONS FINALIST IN THE US YOUTH SOCCER PRESIDENTS CUP

Congratulations to the Union Lady Dragons Under 16 Girls soccer team for being the Finalist in the US Youth Soccer 2015 Regional I Presidents Cup tournament that was held in Pittsburg PA over Memorial Day weekend. The Presidents Cup takes in teams that won their State championship in which Union Lady Dragons won it last season. In order to advance to the final game, the Lady Dragons defeated PFC Predators (PA), Loudon Freedom (NH),

Fusion Pyxis (NY), and VA Rush FC (VA). But unfortunately they came up short against a highly ranked team in the nation (Deep Run Valley of PA). Coach Tony Lobo said "What makes this team so unique is that these girls have stuck together for so many years and have demonstrated their ability to compete with the highly ranked academy teams."

Players in alphabetic order: Chynna Adorno,

Gina Alfano, Lauren Buchanan, Brittany Correia, Kayla Cunha, Tiffany Depaiva, Barbara Ferreira, Tamia Henry, Lora Karisse, Cassandra Lamadieu, Brianna Lobo, Elizabeth Palma, Nicole Pereira, Celeste Ramos, Isabel Santiago, Andrea Santiago, Amanada Scheidemann, and Melissa Sousa. Head Coach Tony Lobo, Assistant Coaches, Pedro Sousa, Oscar Correia, and Herb Ramos.



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RED NOSE DAY

Connecticut Farms students participated in Red Nose Day on May 21st and collected \$418.25 to donate to the fund. The whole school wore red noses on that day (staff included) and

the PTA treated the school to red Italian ices at the end of the day.

The money raised during Red Nose Day is split between domestic and international

charities, and will be used to fund programs that address the immediate needs of children and young people living in poverty in the U.S. and in Africa, Asia and Latin America.





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Looking for something fun to do this summer? Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County has an entire summer of fun and exciting events planned! Programs are available for youth ages 5-18 in our Union, Plainfield, and Elizabeth Clubs. Summer programming will run daily 8:00 am – 5:30 pm. Early is available for an additional cost.

Summer Fun Club for children ages 5-11. Members will enjoy an exciting mix of both outdoor and indoor activities. Outdoor activities include basketball, soccer, football, double-dutch and other games along with teambuilding activities and scavenger hunts. Indoor activities include digital arts, arts & crafts, movies, swimming, sports, games room and more! Our 3 Clubs will participate in the Unity Day event and an End-of-Summer cookout! Members also have the opportunity to participate in weekly field trip adventures for an additional cost.

Teen Leadership Camp for teens ages 12-16. Teens will have the opportunity to learn the importance and advantages of working together as a part of a successful team while participating in exciting activities.

The Union Club will also offer youth swim

lessons for youths ages 5-18. This fun series of courses teaches water safety and swimming skills! Lessons will be offered four days a week for two weeks – morning and afternoon sessions are available. Stroke Development Swim Camp is offered as full day or half day sessions. This program is for competitive swimmers already on a swim team or for someone looking to join a swim team. The focus is to provide stroke development, conditioning and preparation for the upcoming season. Members will improve their skills with stroke clinics, instructional videos, stretching and conditioning techniques, and nutrition information. Program components include: freestyle, starts, backstroke, breast-stroke, butterfly, turns, and individual medley. For more information please visit our website: www.bgcucaquatics.org or call 908-687-2697 ext. 0.

For more information on Summer Fun Club/Teen Leadership Camp please visit our website: www.bgcuc.org or call your local club: Union: 908-687-2697 ext. 0 Elizabeth: 908-351-3344 ext. 0 Plainfield: 908-822-8672 ext. 0. Registration has already begun, don't wait – register now!



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TONY AWARD WINNING ACTRESS LAURA BENANTI VISITS UNION HIGH SCHOOL

Tony Award winning Broadway actress Laura Benanti visited the students of the Union High School Performing Arts Company to offer them advice on pursuing a career on Broadway, and to see some of their work. This comes on the heels of their recent win of nine Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Awards at the 20th annual event celebrating excellence in musical theatre in the state of New Jersey. At the Rising Star Awards, Ms. Benanti presented director of theatre James Mosser with the award for Outstanding Direction of a Musical for their spring production of *Sophisticated Ladies*.

Ms. Benanti began the day by telling the students about her career and how she got her start. She then allowed the students to ask questions about everything from acting technique, to what it's like to work on Broadway. The day was finished off with the students performing solos for her, ending with Ms. Benanti performing "A Quiet Thing" from *Flora the Red Menace*.

"We are extremely fortunate to have Ms. Benanti come in to spend time with our students. She is at the top of the game on Broadway, and offers them an insight into what it takes to have a career in entertainment. She took the time to

speak to each individual student about their aspiration, and even gave them the opportunity to perform a song for her." said Director of Theatre James Mosser.

On Broadway Ms. Benanti earned the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Featured Actress in a Musical, a Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Award for her revelatory portrayal of Gypsy Rose Lee in *Gypsy* opposite Patti LuPone and directed by Arthur Laurents. In recent years she has taken to the small screen in the season 3 cast of ABC's hit series "Nashville" guest-starring as songbird Sadie Stone. Next season she will star in the Roundabout Theatre Company's production of *She Loves Me* on Broadway costarring Josh Radnor.

Sophomore theatre student Leanne Laurino commented "Meeting Laura Benanti, a Tony Award Winning Actress, was a truly enriching experience! She is extremely personable, and has an admirable sense of humor! Getting a chance to discuss her career and everything she has accomplished served as a powerful message for young actors. Nothing substitutes hard work. Meeting Laura was a pleasure and privilege that I am very thankful for."



UHS PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY WINS 9 PAPER MILL RISING STAR AWARDS

What started as a dark and rainy day, turned bright and magical as the Union High School Performing Arts Company walked away with nine, the most awards won in one night, Paper Mill Rising Star Awards including the top prize, Best Musical, for their production of Duke Ellington's *Sophisticated Ladies*.

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Rising Star Awards, the night had that special feeling in the air as the students and staff entered the doors of the Paper Mill. Director James Mosser shared "The entire company is elated. It is wonderful to receive recognition for all the hard work we have put in over the last few months."

Achievements Include:

Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical

Outstanding Performance by an Actor

in a Featured Role - Kristian Adap

Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble

Group- The Sophisticated Gentlemen

Outstanding Performance by an Orchestra

Outstanding Achievement by a Teacher

or Outside Director - James Mosser

Outstanding Achievement in Musical Director -

James Mosser & Laura Muller

Outstanding Achievement

in Choreography/Musical Staging-

Jennifer Williams & James Mosser


Outstanding Lighting Achievement -

Coby Chasman-Beck

Student Achievement Award - Assista

nt Director- Jasmine Durham

Union High School entered the competition as the most nominated school with sixteen nominations. The students also got a chance to perform a medley of songs from their award winning musical include excerpts from "Rug Cutter," "Cotton Tail," and "Don't Mean a Thing." Lead Actor and Actress Nominees Jonathan Duvelson, James Frazier and Bernice Onanuga also performed.



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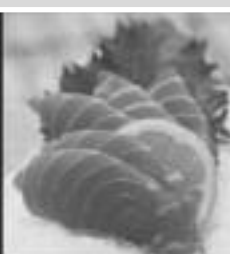
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