

# Neighbors Link

**OUR MISSION:** To strengthen our community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of recent Latino immigrants. **OUR STRATEGY:** To Educate, Empower, Employ

## Clients Working to Better Themselves and Improve Job Skills



With reduced job prospects due to the ailing economy, clients awaiting work at the Neighbors Link hiring site are making the most of their available time. Educational offerings here include a full schedule of English language and job skills classes.

Donated by Kenneth Regan and his daughter Samantha, Neighbors Link's newly installed Rosetta Stone teaching software allows up to five students at once to learn English independently and at their own pace.

"It's phenomenal to watch five computers being used like that," said Program and Volunteer Manager Shirley Buontempo, who is looking for volunteers to assist the learners Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00 to 3:00pm. Neither Spanish nor computer fluency is required.



College students Lake Coreth and Ben Albert assisted with the Rosetta Stone computer class over the summer.



Photos by Tova Snyder

During July, our Summer Links program provided camp with enrichment activities to children of low-income families.

## Array of Programs Supports Families and Enriches Community Pride

**A**s parents find themselves working longer and odder hours to make ends meet, Neighbors Link fills the gap with childcare and social opportunities for families.

Twice monthly "Family Nights" educate and empower Latino parents and children, strengthening marriages and teaching parenting skills.

Our Learning Links and Summer Links programs provide a blend



Through our partnership with ArtsWestchester, Summer Links students enjoyed a special arts program in mural making with Artists in Residence Tova Snyder and Miguel Cossio.



of homework help and enrichment activities in a structured childcare environment.

These and other Neighbors Link support programs help keep immigrant families cohesive and strengthen connections within the community. ■

Photos by Suzanne Grant

# Building Strong Leaders and Strong Families

Photos by Megan Feldman



*New Eco-Cleaning Class teaches green housekeeping.*



*Westchester Community College English classes and small group tutoring sessions attract eager learners virtually every day of the week.*



*Recent ESL graduates*

## Community Events Celebrate Our Shared Cultures

*Sharing a conversation or a meal with new friends can mean so much to a recent immigrant.*

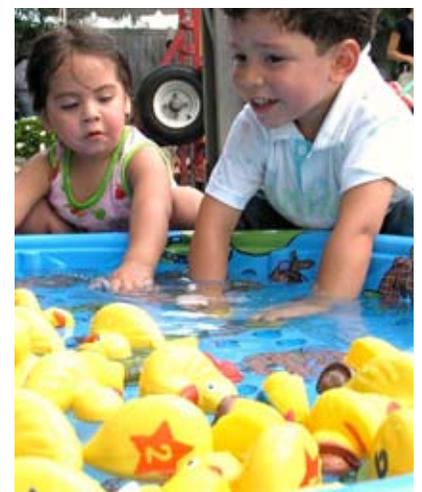


*Pinata-making and Latin dancing brought out smiles at the Grafflin School Family Night.*

Photos by Marilyn Shapiro



*This November many will gather at Neighbors Link to enjoy a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings.*



*For individuals and families new to this country, social events like the recent Neighbors Link Carnival build welcome friendships and community support.*



*This issue features the exceptional photography of our volunteers Marilyn Shapiro, Suzanne Grant, and Megan Feldman.*

## Neighbors Link Student Volunteers Honored



For dedication and accomplishments beyond their years, Caryn Laska and Noah Sheinbaum, pictured above and below with their families, received the annual Outstanding Volunteer Award and the Neighbors Link Agnes Hassell Award.



## “Tour De Trees” Teaches Arbor Appreciation



Summer Links students learned about the importance of trees and had the chance to try out climbing harnesses thanks to the “Tour des Trees” cyclists.

## Programs and Classes at Neighbors Link

With a clear mission to help Educate, Empower, and Employ new immigrants, the following economic development and adult education programs are offered at Neighbors Link.

These programs are in addition to case management for issues impacting personal and family development, including medical and mental health, housing and homelessness, domestic violence, alcohol and drug dependency and other issues critical to the stabilization and development of healthy individuals and families. WestCOP Mount Kisco Head Start preschool is housed at Neighbors Link and is directed by Linda Bremner. Our Learning Links after-school program in partnership with Mount Kisco Elementary School is coordinated by Grace Postigliano and Rebecca Jamo.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ADULT EDUCATION:

#### Job English

Morning classes for day laborers, Monday through Saturday 9am–12noon. Taught by Westchester Community College and Neighbors Link volunteers. By learning “Job English” students increase employment opportunities and often graduate to other ESL classes at Neighbors Link.

#### ESL Classes

Monday through Friday evenings. Taught by Westchester Community College and Neighbors Link volunteers. ESL students are typically employed and possess 3-6 years prior schooling, with varying levels of English proficiency. Note: *Children’s Program offered during ESL classes.*

#### Worker Center

Day workers assemble at 7am for jobs, using a lottery system for fairness created by the day workers themselves. Homeowners and Contractors may also choose workers without using the lottery system, based on need for special skills and/or English abilities, etc. Over 6,000 jobs negotiated annually. Note: *Workers may attend morning English classes while waiting to be hired.*

#### Job Bank

A referral service typically conducted by telephone, connecting homeowners and business owners to housekeepers, restaurant employees, masons, carpenters, painters, etc.

#### Management Apprenticeships

A participatory training program which teaches business management procedures applicable to local establishments such as restaurants, warehouse distributors, landscape nurseries, etc. Training includes cash receipts and disbursements, inventory management, and bank deposit preparation.

#### Learning Links Children’s After-School Program

This after-school enrichment program provides homework and tutorial help to low-income children in grades K-5. Located at Mount Kisco Elementary School.

#### Computer Classes

Tuesday and Thursday 7-9pm. Evening classes in small group sessions, offering personalized instruction in basic computer skills. Note: *Children’s Program offered during classes.*

#### Latin Sol Workshop

Tuesday and Thursday 7-9pm. Sewing and Craft Workshop offered for students wanting practical experience under professional supervision. Training is also provided to help students track inventory and analyze home business costs. Note: *Children’s Program offered during Workshop.*

#### Community members and friends:

Please call us to find out how our workshop members can give personal attention to your basic alteration jobs.

#### Family Night

Friday night educational program for strengthening marriages and teaching parenting skills. Family Night features pot-luck meals and educational seminars on healthy marriage dynamics, child development, household budgeting, school support, job networking and community building. Focus is marriage and family life. Note: *Children’s Program offered on Family Nights.*

#### Neighbors Link Café

Open 15 hours daily, 365 days a year, the supervised Café provides alcohol free socialization and community building with table games and recreation. With refreshments sold below market prices, the Café produces significant income to help offset the annual operating expenses of Neighbors Link.

Additionally, Neighbors Link offers a free **Legal Clinic** for constituents needing help with unpaid wages and general immigration issues as well as a **Health Care Clinic** offering health screenings.



27 Columbus Avenue, Mount Kisco, NY 10549  
Tel 914-666-3410 Fax 914-666-3430 www.neighborslink.org

NEIGHBORS LINK. LEARNING TOGETHER, LIVING BETTER.



Photos by Marilyn Shapiro

To make a donation, go to [www.neighborslink.org](http://www.neighborslink.org)

# LATIN LINKS

CELEBRATING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

save the dates

**Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2009**

**SCREENING OF "LA AMERICANA"**

Followed by a Conversation with the film's director Nicholas Bruckman and Carola Bracco, Executive Director of Neighbors Link.

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER 6:15 pm  
Pleasantville NY 10570

**Thursday, Oct. 8, 2009**

**SPEAKER CAMILO JOSÉ VERGARA**

Chilean-born, New York-based writer and photographer in conversation with Professor Kenneth T. Jackson.

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH 7:00 pm  
FELLOWSHIP HALL  
Bedford NY 10506

**Friday, Oct. 23, 2009**

**A WINE TASTING AND  
LATIN RHYTHM CONCERT**

Featuring Norberto Goldberg and Amazon. Wine tasting accompanied by Latin food and tapas.

RIPPOWAM CISQUA SCHOOL 7:00 pm  
Bedford NY 10506

Invitation to follow or go to:  
[www.neighborslink.org/events](http://www.neighborslink.org/events)  
to purchase tickets online after August 10.



Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
White Plains  
Permit No. 49456

Looking for help around your home or yard? Call Luisa Granda at 914-666-3419 X11 to learn more about using our hiring site or job bank.



27 Columbus Avenue  
Mount Kisco, NY 10549  
Tel: 914-666-3410  
[www.neighborslink.org](http://www.neighborslink.org)