



Left to right: Bob and Susie Danziger, Festival de Primavera Co-Chair Nancy Strong and Roger Strong.



Left to right: Gerald Hassell and Neighbors Link Board Member and Friends of Neighbors Link Co-Chair Agnes Hassell, with their children Alyssa and Jared Hassell.



Left to right: Sabin Streeter, David Swope, Andy Bracco and Neighbors Link Executive Director Carola Bracco.



Board Chair Barbara Bruce Jackson receives a proclamation from Westchester County Legislator Peter Harckham, honoring the 10th Anniversary of Neighbors Link.



Friend of Neighbors Link Elsa Rubenstein and Bob Rubenstein enjoy the music at the 10th Anniversary Festival de Primavera.

## 2011 Volunteer Awards



**KENDRA BURPEE – AGNES HASSELL YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD.** Kendra (right) is shown here with Neighbors Link Program Director Luisa Granda-Rodriguez.

Kendra Burpee was chosen for the 2011 Agnes Hassell Youth Leadership Award because of her dedication to serving the children in the "Learning Links" after-school program. A graduate of Somers High School, Kendra volunteered at Neighbors Link for several years, including as an ESL tutor. Kendra has made numerous cross-cultural service trips, including to Nicaragua and Guatemala. She also travelled to Panama on an AFS Scholarship for six months.

**AUSTIN BLUMENFELD – STUDENT VOLUNTEER AWARD.** Austin (center), shown with his family and Luisa Granda-Rodriguez of Neighbors Link (to his left).



Austin Blumenfeld, a graduate of Horace Greeley High School, volunteered at Neighbors Link for four years and served as an Executive for Greeley's SHARE Casa de Lengua Tuesday evening ESL tutoring program. Austin also served as the President of Greeley's SHARE (Students Have A Responsibility Everywhere) Club. This year he was also a Volunteer Coordinator for our "Summer Links" program for K-5 children.

### FIONA WOODS – OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARD

As Family Services Coordinator, Fiona Woods helps Neighbors Link clients address some of the medical, legal and personal issues that arise on an urgent basis, and assists them in navigating the services available to them in times of crisis. Fiona's work is the link between the critical needs of our clients and the solutions and services that help them to stabilize their lives and achieve self-sufficiency. Fiona is extremely dedicated, caring and passionate about helping immigrant families in our community and time and again has championed their needs and made a difference in their lives.



### KATHY ROTHSCILD – MARY WEISS VOLUNTEER SPIRIT AWARD

Kathy Rothschild began volunteering at Neighbors Link in 2002. In 2003, she created our first donor database system, and in 2005, spearheaded the transition of all Neighbors Link donor data into the advanced donor software program we use today. For the past eight years, Kathy has prioritized the meticulous recording and acknowledgement of all Neighbors Link donations. We depend on Kathy for her professional skills and commitment to these important development efforts. Her work is the unseen link between the daily needs of our clients and the generous people who support our mission – a vital link that makes the work we do possible.



## Neighbors Link Workers Help Build Community Garden from the Ground Up

Photos by Rebecca Lee



Laborers from Neighbors Link were among the many helping hands that worked together to create the Community Garden at Mount Kisco Elementary School, dedicated in June. Transforming an aging, unused tennis court into a suitable garden site involved removing dense weeds, battling poison ivy, and building raised beds for planting.

Neighbors Link workers donated a portion of their time and were invaluable to the effort. Said Susan Ostrofsky, Principal of Mount Kisco Elementary School, "The workers from Neighbors Link made the hard work of clearing the site and building the beds possible, so that we could achieve the dream of a true community-supported garden."



Thank You for Making the Neighbors Link Dream a Reality  
To make a donation, please go to [www.neighborslink.org](http://www.neighborslink.org)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE EXCITING NEIGHBORS LINK EVENTS!

**A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS FESTIVAL & Columbus Day Celebration**  
**Sunday, October 9**  
11:00 to 6:00pm  
Downtown Mount Kisco  
(behind Town Hall)  
**A Multicultural Celebration**  
Ethnic Food • Music • Dance • Arts & Crafts • Fun Activities • And More!  
**FREE ADMISSION**

**CELEBRATING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS**  
**FILM, PANEL & RECEPTION**  
**Tuesday, Oct. 25**  
6:00 PM  
**SCREENING OF "ABUSED: THE POSTVILLE RAID"**  
Followed by a panel discussion with the film's director, Luis Argueta.  
Donor pre-film supper reception, film and dessert reception.

**Holbrook Cottage presents**  
**FESTIVE STROLL of homes**  
November 18 & 19  
**2 0 1 1**  
to support the new Family Learning Center at Neighbors Link  
**HOLIDAY HOME TOURS**  
Fri. & Sat., November 18 & 19  
10am-12pm and 2:30-4:30pm  
**LUNCHEON at THE IRON HORSE GRILL**  
Pleasantville NY 10570  
Fri. & Sat., November 18 & 19  
12:30-2:00pm  
TKTS & INFO: HOLBROOK COTTAGE (914) 944-0734

**INFORMATION and TICKETS: (914) 666-3410 x 14 • [info@neighborslink.org](mailto:info@neighborslink.org) • [www.neighborslink.org](http://www.neighborslink.org)**

Looking for help around your home or yard? Call Rodrigo Fuenzalida at 914-666-3410 X17 to learn more about using our hiring site or job bank.



27 Columbus Avenue  
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**OUR MISSION:** To strengthen the whole community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of recent immigrants. **OUR STRATEGY:** Educate, Empower, Employ

## Graduate's Words of Inspiration *Palabras de graduados inspiran*

2011 Fox Lane Graduate María José Aveiga Varela is the recipient of a full scholarship to Manhattan College, where she begins this fall. Maria plans to study International Relations and in the future become a diplomat, working to address issues of poverty in the United States, in her native country of Ecuador, and in other countries around the world. Following are excerpts from her bilingual graduation speech on June 22nd. Maria is a Neighbors Link volunteer with PACT (Police and Community Together).

I am honored to be standing here tonight. Graduation is a significant moment in our lives, a time to reflect on where you've been, where you are now, and where you are going.

Booker T. Washington once said, "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed."

When I first came to this school from Ecuador, I was skeptical. I was pulled out of my comfort zone and pushed into a completely new world, with new rules, new teachers, new friends, but most of all into a zone of a completely different language.

Statistics show that for every five Latino high school students, only one will graduate. All of us who stand here today defy this statistic.

*Las estadísticas muestran que de cada cinco latinos, solo uno llega a graduarse del colegio. Todos nosotros que estamos aquí hoy vencimos esta estadística.*

Today I'm on stage giving a graduation speech but at one point I had to share a little bunk bed with five of my family members. There was a time in my life when I hardly got any sleep because we only had one little bunk bed for all of my family.



*Hoy día estoy en el escenario dando un discurso, pero hubo un tiempo en mi vida donde apenas pude dormir, ya que compartía una pequeña cama litera con los cinco miembros de mi familia.*

I wanted to share this so all of you can understand that is possible to overcome things that seem impossible.

This is for my mother:

I wouldn't have come this far without her help. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her. She has always told me: *Nunca te rindas, recuerda que no se necesita ser muy inteligente y rico para salir adelante y triunfar en la vida. En esta vida hay tropiezos, caídas y resbalones. Pero lo importante de todo esto es levantarse, seguir avanzando hacia delante, porque el camino es largo y no puedes*

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Neighbors Link workers assisted in numerous cleanup and repair projects around our area in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.



# New Neighbors Link Stamford Affiliate Opens

Perhaps the most exciting news of our 10th anniversary year is the opening of our first affiliate, Neighbors Link Stamford. The ribbon cutting for the new center took place in June, attracting over 250 active Stamford stakeholders. Neighbors Link Stamford will be independently funded, governed and managed by the people of Stamford and will benefit from Neighbors Link's active implementation of best practices, innovative strategies and tactics. We are thrilled to link with the people of Stamford because through their efforts our mission is furthered – as we continue to build a better world together.

Excerpted from July 6, 2011 Stamford Advocate. Article by Staff Writer Kate King.

STAMFORD -- There are three words painted in blue on the concrete walls of the newly opened immigration center in Waterside – educate, empower, employ.

It's the mission statement of Neighbors Link Stamford, a nonprofit dedicated to providing resources for local immigrants. The program has been years in the making, and Executive Director Catalina Samper Horak said she still can't believe it's finally come to fruition.

"There's so many people who feel a sense of ownership of this center," she said one morning last week. "We made it. We finally got it."

Horak said the nonprofit is intended to be a "point of entry" for Stamford's immigrant population. The program is modeled after the Neighbors Link center in Mount Kisco, N.Y., which has provided adult education, tutoring, computer training and employment development to the town's immigrant community for the past 10 years. Horak served on the Mount Kisco center's board of directors for seven years.

Neighbors Link Stamford celebrated its grand opening June 12, after initial resistance from some. Rick Allen, a member of the Waterside Coalition, a neighborhood group on the West Side, said he was at first skeptical of the new organization, but is now a full supporter.

*Neighbors Link works to empower immigrants*

"We had kind of started out on a negative note because no one knew what the center was about," Allen said. "But over the last

few weeks, members of the coalition have come down to visit the center and it is awesome. They need our support and we need their support, so we're all working on this together."

Neighbors Link provides free daily English lessons to local immigrants on a walk-in basis, Horak said. The classes are led by volunteer ESL certified instructors. On-site babysitting is also available for parents while they participate in classes.

Neighbors Link Stamford is run by volunteers and funded entirely through private donations from individuals, foundations and religious organizations, Horak said. The center works with other local nonprofits to ensure services are enhanced, rather than duplicated. Immigrants looking for help with mental health, mortgage or citizenship questions will be directed to the proper resources, Horak said.



A primary focus of the new Neighbors Link Stamford is to meet the need for English language instruction.



Children enjoy the festivities at a recent Neighbors Link Family Night, above and left. The monthly gatherings offer immigrant families the opportunity to share information and make important community connections.



Right, Family Night participants enjoy a beautiful day trip to Lake Welch in Harriman State Park in Rockland County.

Below, families show their team spirit before traveling to Citi Field to see the Mets play.



## A Decade of Building Community



## Graduate's Words of Inspiration

(Continued from page 1)



Graduation speaker Maria Varela and fellow 2011 Fox Lane classmates

*perder el tiempo."*

In other words, "Never give up, remember you do not need to be the smartest or the richest to get ahead and succeed in life. In this life there are trips, slips and falls. But the most important thing about this is to keep moving forward, because the road is long and you cannot waste time."

My wish for each of my fellow graduates is a gift that my mom gave me and is that today and everyday you have:

- A love of learning
- A burning for knowledge
- A passion for discovery
- A will for character
- A heart for sharing
- A zest for life
- A sense of gratitude
- A feeling of confidence
- A familiarity with perseverance

You must always be proud of who you are, your heritage, and continue to grow and learn from life's experiences both challenging and triumphant.

*Nada de esto seria posible sin todo su amor y apoyo.*

Congratulations class of 2011! This is our time to shine. ■



A recent half-day OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) training session at Neighbors Link educated workers on how to prevent work-related injuries, illnesses and occupational accidents by adhering to safety standards. OSHA is an agency of the United States Department of Labor.

## A Trio of Cultural Events for the Fall

### A Nation of Immigrants Festival

October 9th

"A Nation of Immigrants" Festival will celebrate the diverse cultures of Northern Westchester, including Mount Kisco and the surrounding communities, by showcasing a broad range of traditions and folk arts including music, dance, visual arts, food and crafts.



### Latin Links Film & Discussion

October 25th

This year's Latin Links film event will celebrate the 10th anniversaries of both Neighbors Link and the Jacob Burns Film Center with the theme "Celebrating a decade each of linking community, culture and service."

The centerpiece of Latin Links 2011 will be a screening of the documentary "Abused: The Postville Raid" followed by a conversation with filmmaker Luis Argueta, Steve Apkon, Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center, and Carola Otero Bracco, Executive Director of Neighbors Link.

The film looks at the human fallout in a small Iowa town after 900 immigration agents shackled and removed 389 undocumented workers from the largest kosher meat-packing plant in the country. By weaving the personal stories of the families and the traumatic events that left the rural midwestern town devastated, the film presents the human face of the immigration reform issue.

A light supper reception will precede the film at 6:00pm. Port, dessert and coffee will be served afterwards. Tickets may be purchased online at neighbors-link.org or by calling 914-666-3410 X14.

Photo Courtesy of Ayazamán



Ayazamán: Ecuadorian Dance Group will perform at "A Nation of Immigrants" festival in downtown Mount Kisco on Sunday, October 9.

## Inaugurada la nueva filial de Neighbors Link en Stamford

STAMFORD – Hay tres palabras escritas en azul en las paredes de hormigón del recién abierto centro de inmigración en Waterside – educare, empoderar, emplear (educar, capacitar, emplear).

Se trata de la declaración de principios de Neighbors Link Stamford, una organización sin fines de lucro dedicada a proporcionar recursos para los inmigrantes de la zona. El proyecto lleva años preparándose, y la directora ejecutiva Catalina Samper Horak aún no puede creer que por fin se haya hecho realidad.

"Hay tantas personas con la sensación de que este centro es suyo," nos dijo la semana pasada. "Lo logramos. Finalmente lo conseguimos."

Horak explicó que la organización quiere ser "un punto de entrada" para la población inmigrante de Stamford. El programa se ha modelado siguiendo el ejemplo del centro de Neighbors Link en Mount Kisco, NY, que proporciona educación para adultos, tutorías, clases de computación y desarrollo de empleo para la

comunidad inmigrante de la ciudad desde hace 10 años. Horak participó en la Junta Directiva del centro de Mount Kisco durante siete años.

Neighbors Link Stamford celebró su inauguración el día 12 de junio tras la resistencia inicial de algunos. Rick Allen, miembro de la Waterside Coalition, un grupo vecinal del West Side, dijo que al principio se mostró escéptico con la nueva organización, pero ahora la apoya por completo.

*Neighbors Link trabaja para capacitar a los inmigrantes*

"Al principio hubo una actitud algo negativa, porque nadie sabía en qué consistiría el centro," dijo Allen. "Pero en las últimas semanas, miembros de la coalición vinieron a visitar el centro y es fantástico. Necesitan nuestro apoyo y nosotros el suyo, así que estamos trabajando en ello juntos."