Monsignor Linder Scholar Graduates As Valedictorian Of Saint Vincent Academy

At times, Monsignor William J. Linder Scholar Chioma Onwunaka felt like the day would never arrive.

But four years of rigorous college preparatory education at Saint Vincent Academy finally did culminate, and for Onwunaka, the valedictorian of SVA’s Class of 2015, graduation felt like a dream come true.

“My fellow graduates, the time that we have been dreaming about and stressing over for these last four years has finally come,” Onwunaka said in her valedictory address at commencement on June 7 in Newark. “We must now move on and take what we have learned from SVA and bring it to the rest of the world.”

Onwunaka, 18, is the daughter of Veronica Onwunaka, director of nursing at New Community Environmental Services Director Wayne Gravesande, far left.

Continued on page 4

Our Best Days Are Ahead

Editorial
By Monsignor William J. Linder

On a balmy June day, I visited an institution in Newark as familiar as an old friend to bear witness to a coming of age ritual: high school graduation.

Graduation is a joyous occasion where tears of happiness are shed, childhood friends make pacts to stay in touch and the door to the future swings open for those who are ready to leap forward.

As I attended the commencement exercises at Saint Vincent Academy, I saw rows filled with family members eagerly waiting for their daughters to cross the stage and receive their hard earned diplomas from an academically rigorous private, college preparatory high school for young women in Newark.

The scholarship fund that I established many years ago has financially supported many young people through their high school careers at top flight prep schools such as SVA. I was especially proud this year to applaud for Chioma Onwunaka, SVA Class of 2015 valedictorian and a Monsignor William J. Linder Scholar, as she took to the stage to deliver remarks before her classmates, school administration and family.

Chioma is the 18-year-old daughter of New Community Director of Nursing Veronica Onwunaka. It’s evident that the teen takes after her mother, who is ambitious, smart and strong-willed. As a single parent, Veronica has raised four outstanding children (her son, the eldest, is in college, and her two younger daughters will be a senior and junior at SVA in the fall). Meanwhile, Veronica completed a master’s degree while balancing her role as a parent and overseeing the NCC Extended Care Facility, which serves seniors and disabled adults in Newark.

A few days before commencement, Chioma gave me a letter that expressed her gratitude for being a recipient of the scholarship fund. I already knew that Chioma was raised well by her mother and had grown into an articulate and capable young woman, but the letter drove it home. The composition was beautiful. Her thoughts were very mature.

As I sat and listened to her valedictory address, I could easily picture Chioma achieving her goals of entering the medical field. To me, she represents a generation of young people who know what they want in life and boldly pursue it—while remaining firmly rooted in family and hungry for knowledge.

When I think of the many graduates of SVA and other private schools who were scholarship recipients, it overwhelms me. Veronica and her daughter make me glad that I did what I did with my life. Indeed, the future is looking very bright.

NCC’s Partners, Supporters Golf For A Cause

Three members of team Ferry Carpet were joined by New Community Environmental Services Director Wayne Gravesande, far left.

It was a beautiful day to golf for a cause. New Community’s 21st Annual Golf Outing brought together committed business partners and community members for a daylong charity event at the Montclair Golf Club in West Orange.

More than 85 golfers participated in the fundraiser, which was co-chaired by Michael Kasian, senior vice president at Tishman Construction, Robert Shawah, senior account manager vice president at Wells Fargo Insurance Services, and Michael Pintabone, partner at WithumSmith+Brown.

The golf outing benefited NCC’s youth and education programs, the Monsignor William J. Linder Scholarship Fund, which financially supports needy students so that they can attend premier prep schools in the region, and New Community’s transitional housing facility for the homeless called Harmony House.

“I hope you enjoyed the beautiful weather and some friendly competition,” Richard Rohrman, CEO of New Community, said to the golfers during his remarks at the dinner reception.

Aze Williams, a 14-year-old resident of Harmony House, shared with the golfers about her family’s experience coming to NCC’s...
The New Community Clarion

The New Community Clarion is published as a community service. The editor reserves the right to withhold articles and photographs once they are submitted. Opinions expressed in columns are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the view of the newspaper.

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OUR MISSION
To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.

New Community is recognized as:
• The largest and most comprehensive community development organization in the United States
• A large-scale deliverer of comprehensive programs and services
• A leader in affordable housing and economic development
• A model among non-profit, social entrepreneurship, and CDC communities
• Having beneficial partnerships on the local, national, and global level.

NCC Awarded $25K Grant From Bank Of America

New Community recently accepted a $25,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation to go towards workforce development and education. Jossué Bonilla, vice president, financial center manager at Bank of America, recently visited NCC’s Automotive Training Center, where the official check presentation took place amidst the busyess of an automotive class in session. Bonilla, holding the check on left, presented the grant to New Community CEO Richard Rohrman, holding the check on right, as well as Director of Workforce Development Rodney Brutton and Philanthropy Officer Tracey Battles. Students and staff from the Automotive Technician Employment and Training Program took a break from their class to applaud Bonilla and capture the moment.

Thread The Needle, Learn To Sew

The New Community Family Resource Success Center offers sewing classes for beginners or those who want to brush up on their advanced sewing skills. Held on the first and third Thursdays of each month from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., the class allows sewers to bring in their own projects and receive one-on-one help from instructor Barbara Alston and center volunteer Denise Swiney. The sewing class is free however participants are asked to bring their own sewing machines, fabric and decorative additions. The Family Resource Success Center is located inside the Pathmark Shopping Center at 131-185 Bergen St. in Newark. For more information, call 973-565-9500.

Sign Up With Team NCC For Breast Cancer Walk 2015

New Community is participating in the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk in Newark on Sunday, Oct. 18, 2015. The 5K walk (approximately 3.1 miles) begins at the Prudential Center in Newark and New Community’s goal is to raise $1,000 together as a team to fight breast cancer. Registration opens on October 18 at 7:30 a.m. (or register online) and the walk begins at 10 a.m. Wear pink, get healthy and raise awareness about breast cancer (walk is open to all). To join the New Community Corporation team, email Jasminee Sawh-Ramroop, care coordinator for NCC Health and Social Services, at jsawah@newcommunity.org. For more event details, visit www.makingstrideswalk.org/newarknj.

Correction

In an article titled, “Happy Feet: Podiatrist Provides Easy Going, Attentive Care At NCC,” which was published in the June issue of the Clarion, the story incorrectly states where podiatrist Dr. Robert Kosofsky grew up. He is from New York City and not Long Island.

NCC Seniors In Jersey City Out On Shopping Trip

Seniors living at New Community Hudson Senior in Jersey City headed out to the Walmart Supercenter in Secaucus on a recent Friday. Organized by the Department of Health and Social Services, trips and outings allow seniors at New Community to engage in an active and healthy lifestyle, as well as get practical errands done such as shopping. To contact Social Services, see your building’s care coordinator, visit the Health and Social Services office at 220 Bruce St. in Newark or call 973-623-6114.
Muobo Enaohwo (Newkirk) has been part of New Community’s Property Management Department since 1989. It’s been more than 25 years since Muobo E. Enaohwo (Newkirk) arrived at New Community’s Property Management Department.

Currently the senior property manager at New Community Commons Senior, Newkirk (who legally changed her surname to Enaohwo last year but is still known to many as Newkirk) has steadily climbed the ranks to her present role, (who legally changed her surname to Enaohwo) Newkirk, now known as Newkirk) who oversaw 221 senior units at 140 South Orange Ave. in Newark and 154 family units, known as Commons Family, at scattered sites nearby. The journey, however, hasn’t always been easy.

Upon arriving at Commons Senior in 2006, Newkirk said she set about cleaning house and evicted residents who failed to pay rent, sent cease notices to individuals living there who were not named on the lease and cracked down on drug activity.

“She is competent in the position which she holds,” Property Management Director Fonda Porter said of Newkirk.

Born in Benin City in southern Nigeria, Newkirk is the fifth of nine children. She attended the Anglican Girls Grammar School where she adopted a regimented lifestyle that started each morning with a ringing bell for the wake-up call. Making one’s bed was not optional where she adopted a regimented lifestyle and attended the Anglican Girls Grammar School which Newkirk attended for five years. She went on to earn her bachelor’s degree at University of Benin. She arrived in the U.S in 1987, first landing in Houston, Texas, and later moved to New York. She is married and has three grown children and four grandchildren.

Newkirk started at New Community as an administrative assistant at Property Management in 1989. In 1996, she became assistant property manager and later property manager of both New Community Manor Senior and Manor Family, which she oversaw until 2006.

Even now, Newkirk acknowledges that challenges and clashing personalities still exist in her building, but she tries to keep an open mind. “At times, it’s still difficult,” she said. However, her refrain remains the same: “Feel free to talk about it. Let’s discuss.”
Monsignor Linder Scholar Graduates As Valedictorian

Continued from page 1

Community Extended Care Facility. In the teen’s speech, she first thanked her mother for keeping her on track academically and for being a role model. Onwunaka recalled watching her mother “balance her own schoolwork, job and family. Seeing how motivated she is motivated me to worked harder in school,” she said. Onwunaka earned a 4.25 GPA and will begin classes at the College of New Jersey on July 6.

As a recipient of the Monsignor William J. Linder Scholarship, Onwunaka joins the ranks of many young people who have received support from New Community’s founder and board chairman over the years. Scholars who receive financial support to attend prep schools have advanced to college and launched successful careers in a variety of fields, ranging from law and business to medicine and nonprofit work. All 69 graduating seniors at SVA were accepted into college and planned to attend, the school said.

For Monsignor Linder, Onwunaka represents a generation of young people who are ambitious and bold. Onwunaka said she plans to pursue nursing and then become a plastic surgeon who helps children in Africa that are born with cleft palate.

“They really know what they want in life,” Monsignor said a few days after the ceremony. “I feel like I’m part of a new era, which I frankly like. I think it’s a better era,” he added.

The second oldest of four siblings, Onwunaka has two younger sisters at SVA and an older brother in college. She and her siblings grew up attending Catholic schools, which cemented their value in education.

NCC’s Partners, Supporters Golf For A Cause

Continued from page 1

transitional housing facility last September.

“In a couple of weeks, I felt right at home. The Harmony House staff cares for every child. I know this because they always make sure that everything is all right at home and in school,” Williams said.

The evening program included a cocktail hour, dinner, testimonials from Williams as well as fellow Harmony House residents Khalilah Boyd and Monique Sessoms, a silent auction and contest prizes. Jim Decker of WithumSmith+Brown won the 50/50 cash raffle.

Earlier in the day, golfers arrived and received complimentary warm-up and stretching exercises courtesy of Kessler Rehabilitation Center physical therapist Tony Lin.

Golfers enjoyed a buffet luncheon on the patio in the company of Harmony House Early Learning Center students and NCC staff, and then hit the golf course.

For Boyd, 34, Harmony House played a key role in stabilizing the living situation for herself and two of her sons so that she could secure a job as a preschool teacher and administrative assistant and search for permanent housing.

“I’m here to attest that the Harmony House was and has been a great help,” she said.

Monique Sessoms, who was homeless for nearly two years before she found refuge at Harmony House, said that becoming homeless took a toll on her self confidence. “There’s such a stigma attached” to being homeless, she said. But staying at Harmony House has “been the best thing that’s happened,” Sessoms said, and has helped the 29-year-old single mother during the crucial years of raising a toddler daughter and infant son.

For Tracey Battles, NCC philanthropy officer who headed the golf committee, hearing the personal stories shared is what makes the golf outing so impactful.

“The golfers want to know who it is they are supporting and this allows them to hear, but also understand and feel, what difference their donations make in a person’s life,” she said.

“Father Linder helped us stay in that setting,” Onwunaka said of attending SVA as a Monsignor Linder Scholar. “We’re receiving a good education,” she added.

Veronica Onwunaka noted, “I pushed hard on her...because whatever she did, her sisters (would) follow suit.”

At SVA, Onwunaka was vice president of the Student Forum, co-captain of the varsity volleyball team, served on the prom committee and participated in the African dance club.

Sister Margaret Killough, financial director at SVA, mentored Onwunaka during her sophomore year. “Chioma is a bright, extremely motivated student; I was so proud to see her graduate as valedictorian of her class. In addition, Chioma is a warm, friendly, outgoing young woman who has much to offer our world,” Sister Margaret said.

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Two Auto Grads Land Jobs With Volkswagen
After Training At NCC

Kennard Irving, a graduate of New Community’s automotive program, said he hopes to work his way up at Gensinger Volkswagen.

Reginald Norris, center, with Brian Pleva, left, parts and service director, and technician Gledis Fraholli.

Reginald Norris and Kennard Irving are swimming in a sea of Volkswagens.

Their work days are filled with a steady stream of VWs pulling in and out of the service department at Gensinger Volkswagen, a dealership in Clifton, where the two graduates of New Community’s Automotive Technician Employment and Training Program both recently landed full time jobs.

For Norris and Irving, securing jobs at Gensinger Volkswagen opens up a world of possibilities in the automotive industry.

Both men were trained at NCC’s auto program, held at the state-of-the-art Automotive Training Center on West Bigelow Street in Newark, which Brian Pleva said allowed both men to start working on cars immediately upon being hired.

“They basically were able to start working alongside other technicians,” said Pleva, parts and service director at Gensinger Volkswagen.

The training at NCC showed Pleva that the two men not only wanted jobs but already possessed a certain level of knowledge and skills. “We don’t hire people who just say, ‘I want to become a mechanic,’” Pleva said.

Irving said he services eight to 10 cars a day under the watchful eye of his mentor, John Tagerian, a master technician. He seeks guidance from Tagerian, who has worked at the dealership for 15 years, but also relies on what he learned in class and on the shop floor of NCC’s Automotive Training Center.

“All the basic knowledge from there, I applied here,” said Irving, 36, of East Orange, who gave credit to NCC’s instructor John Zaccheus and mechanic Julio Arroyabe. “Tools and patience—that’s the two main things (you need) working with cars,” he added.

“New Community has a longstanding partnership with Gensinger Volkswagen and we appreciate their willingness to hire graduates of our automotive program,” NCC Director of Workforce Rodney Brutton said.

“We are very proud of Reggie and Kennard, not only in their ability to be good technicians but they were ready to work,” Brutton added, noting their preparation included possessing a valid driver’s license, high school diploma and interview skills, which were encompassed in the training course.

Norris, 23, of Newark, acknowledged that when he first started the auto course at NCC, he wasn’t optimistic about his future job prospects. “I didn’t think I’d get a job to be honest,” he said. “But when I got a job, it was a big deal.”

From NCC instructors, Norris said he learned the importance of a solid work ethic. “They gave me the idea to do it the right way,” he said.

“You can’t not put in a screw or a bolt because you don’t feel like it,” Norris said. “It’s something I can apply to my life.”

Norris said he bounced around different jobs and previously worked at a supermarket and Amazon distribution center. “It’s probably one of the best things that’s happened to me in a long time,” Norris said of his current job. “At a job like this, you never get bored.

A single father, Irving said he wants to work his way up at Gensinger Volkswagen in order to provide for himself and his 2-year-old daughter, Kenna.

“This is the type of job and type of environment that I needed for that to happen,” Irving said.

NCC Awarded $20K Grant At ShopRite LPGA Classic

New Community Workforce Development Center received a $20,000 grant from Wakefern Food Corporation, which has partnered with NCC to provide job training in anticipation of a new ShopRite slated to open this year in Newark that will seek to hire hundreds of store associates.

Rodney Brutton, New Community director of workforce development, represented NCC at the 2015 ShopRite LPGA Classic on May 29, where officials presented Brutton with a $20,000 check at a luncheon held for grant recipients at the Stockton Seaview Hotel in Galloway. Following the luncheon, all guests were invited to the ShopRite Pavilion overlooking the 18th green at Seaview to watch the LPGA Tournament.

NCC’s Workforce Development Center provides hands-on training at a miniature ShopRite supermarket that’s furnished with shelves of groceries, fully operational registers and checkout lanes and computer-based training modules.

Wakefern’s Joseph Colalillo, chairman and CEO, and Joseph Sheridan, president and COO, commended the Workforce Development Center for its commitment to job training.

“Please know that we appreciate the work you do to improve the quality of life for so many,” the executives said in a letter. “We trust that these funds will help you continue to fulfill your mission and wish you continued success in all of your endeavors!”
Social Security News
Frequently Asked Questions

By Amym Plummer
Social Security District Manager
Springfield Avenue, Newark NJ

Q: I’m 17 and eager to start my first summer job, but my mother misplaced my Social Security card. How can I get another?
A: If you know your Social Security number, you may not need to obtain a replacement card to obtain employment. However, if a prospective employer requests it, in most cases you only need to provide your Social Security number, and you don’t actually need a replacement card. But if you do need the card, you can get a replacement Social Security card by following the steps below.

There is no charge for a Social Security card, but you are limited to three per calendar year and 10 replacement cards during your lifetime. You will need to:

• Show the required documents. We need to see different documents depending on your citizenship and the type of card you are requesting. Go to www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber to find out what documents you will have to show.

• Fill out and print an Application for a Social Security Card; and

• Take or mail your application and original or certified copies of the original documents to your local Social Security office.

For more information, read our pamphlet, Your Social Security Number and Card at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Q: If I get married, will it affect my Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment?
A: If you marry, your spouse’s income and resources may change your SSI payment. If you and your spouse both get SSI, your payment amount will change from an individual to a couple’s rate. For more information, see the publication What You Need To Know When You Get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. If you receive SSI payments, it’s very important to immediately notify SSA about any changes in your income or resources to avoid a potential overpayment or additional penalty.

Q: Is it true 10,000 people a day are retiring? What’s the easiest way to avoid the crowds?
A: Yes. As the baby boomers reach their retirement years, Social Security is handling about 10,000 claims each day. You can avoid the crowds by filing online. You can complete your retirement application in as little as 15 minutes. It’s safe, convenient, and secure. You can apply from the comfort of your home at a time that is most convenient for you. There’s no need to drive to a local Social Security office or wait for an appointment with a Social Security representative. There are no forms to sign and usually no documentation is required. Social Security will process your application and contact you if any further information is needed. Just go to www.socialsecurity.gov.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Rosa Irick

Rosa Irick, 85, was born in Columbia, S.C., and shares entertaining stories of her childhood to those who listen.

In 1899, Irick’s mother was a cook for a restaurant that produced fried chicken and oysters. Irick was the third of four children. She has been a caregiver throughout her life for family members and neighbors. Her lead through her aunt, who worked at the Coca Cola company, led to Irick’s career. She worked for several years at a dry cleaner and her former Pennsylvania Avenue home, cleaned houses and worked at a cafeteria hall in Columbia. Irick also served in the past as associate matron for the Order of the Eastern Star of New Jersey, a co-ed fraternal organization.

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As temperatures climb high in July and August, cool down by staying hydrated with water-rich foods and fluids that are also packed with nutrition. The Institute of Medicine recommends that we eat 20% of our daily water intake, so this summer, consider your options to fulfill the “eight glasses a day” adage.

Smoothes and Fresh Squeezed Juice
Blend a smoothie with high water content fruits like blueberries, pineapples, and watermelon, using ice cubes as a thickener instead of dairy products. Alternatively, juice your fruits and add water to tone down the sugar.

Crunchy Vegetables
Combine water-logged vegetables like cucumbers and celery, which are nearly 96% water and high in Vitamin K and other minerals with rich salad greens like romaine and spinach.

Succulent Fruits
Strawberries and watermelon, both 92% water, are great for hydration, and because watermelon contains salt, calcium and magnesium, it’s key for rehydration.

Coconut Water
The vitamins and minerals in coconut water restore fluid balance, namely electrolytes. If you’re dehydrated, turning to sugar-free coconut water, found in most grocery stores, is a great way to rehydrate the body.

Summertime Soups
Light soups in the mid-morning or afternoon can boost you water intake and energy levels when using water heavy vegetables like tomato, zucchini, iceberg lettuce, celery and cucumbers. By keeping your hydration level in check this summer, you will avoid fatigue, headache, nausea and dizziness associated with dehydration. Hint: If you’re not running to the bathroom every hour, chances are you’re not consuming enough water.

For more information about VNA Health Group services & programs, please call 800.862.3330 or visit www.vnahg.org.

For more information about sources of hydration, visit dailyburn.com or naturallysavvy.com.
Congratulations, You’re Moving On!

Community Hills Early Learning Center

HHELC students, from left, Stephen Coker, Andrew Jones Jr., Jaidyn Tucker and Destiny Maldonado welcome their families to the Moving-On Ceremony for classrooms 2, 4 and 6. Students and their families gathered for cupcakes. Classroom 6 enjoyed a special birthday celebration also.

Family worker Elaine Hoze shows off the names of all the graduates displayed on the bulletin board at CHELC.

It’s been real: Classroom 3 brought the audience to their feet with a rap about their preschool experience and heading off to kindergarten.

CHELC students, from left, Stephen Coker, Andrew Jones Jr., Jaidyn Tucker and Destiny Maldonado welcome their families to the Moving-On Ceremony for classrooms 5 and 7.

Family worker Elaine Hoze shows off the names of all the graduates displayed on the bulletin board at CHELC.

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University Hospital’s Miracle Maker

Onajovwe Fofah, MD, a neonatologist at University Hospital (UH) in Newark, NJ, was named a 2014 “Miracle Maker” by the Women in Support of United Way of Essex and West Hudson. He was recently honored at a “Night of Miracles” celebration.

Dr. Fofah works tirelessly, 24/7, to save the lives of the hospital’s most vulnerable and fragile patients: premature infants born with complex, life-threatening conditions. Under his guidance, miracles happen often in the Fetal Intensive Care Unit (FICU). The FICU at University Hospital has a 95 percent survival rate for premature babies who weigh three pounds or less. Many babies who suffer complications of premature birth not only survive, but thrive because of Dr. Fofah’s expertise, experience and deep dedication to helping high-risk infants.

Dr. Fofah is also known for his compassionate care. He comforts and provides solace to the infants’ families, during what is often the most difficult time in their lives. He understands that sometimes words are inadequate, but that holding a distraught mother’s hand or giving a worried father a smile can make all the difference.

He himself experienced the anguish of having a premature infant, when his daughter was born at only 27 weeks and weighed barely two pounds. She is now a healthy, 14-year-old young lady; however, Dr. Fofah has never forgotten the toll such an experience takes and how significant and meaningful a small gesture can be.

When he is not making miracles in the FICU, Dr. Fofah teaches New Jersey’s medical students, who have honored him several times for his outstanding ability to teach, and he has received numerous awards outside of the hospital. When he is not at University Hospital, he serves on the boards of several organizations that enhance the lives of his patients and their families.

The term “miracle” is derived from the Latin word miraculum, meaning “something wonderful.” Dr. Fofah is exactly that and much more.

Healthy Heart Program

University Hospital Heart Program offers Help for Heart Failure

If you are one of the six million Americans who have congestive heart failure, University Hospital’s Healthy Heart Program can help you monitor your symptoms and improve your quality of life.

You will be cared for by University Hospital’s renowned cardiologists and have access to a team of healthcare professionals who will help you manage your care at home. The program also includes individualized and group educational sessions.

For more information on the Healthy Heart Program, call 973-972-1182.

If you or someone you know has heart problems and needs a physician, you can call University Hospital’s Cardiology Department at 973-972-7400.

UH Nurse is a Star

Marie Saint Phar, R.N., a nurse at UH for 22 years, was featured in a recent issue of the magazine “Nurse.com.” The article looks at Daisy Award winners across the U.S. Ms. Saint Phar was a 2015 award recipient for her outstanding contributions to the field of nursing. Read the story at: http://news.nurse.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2015150508003#.VVOdounbLrd
The stories have become all too familiar. A contractor demands cash only for home repairs and refuses to put anything in writing. A relative moves in with a senior and slowly siphons money from the older adult’s bank account. A cold caller asks you for personal information and promises to wire you a sum of money.

These increasingly common tales, Larry Williams said, are all examples of the same thing: Financial exploitation.

“Financial exploitation is just a fancy word for stealing,” said Williams, an implementation specialist at Williams Training Consultants based in Rahway, who recently gave a presentation at New Community Commons Senior on financial exploitation targeting older adults. The presentation is part of an initiative headed by the Rutgers School of Social Work, Office of Continuing Education, which is hosting educational workshops around the state through September, and is funded under the federal Superstorm Sandy Social Services Block Grant administered by the New Jersey Department of Human Services.

Resident Sandra Roach said that her friend became a victim of financial exploitation during a kitchen renovation project five years ago. Attempting to be cautious, Roach said her friend accompanied the contractors to Home Depot to purchase new cabinets, a stove and other kitchen fixtures. When they pulled in front of her home, the con artists sped off with the newly purchased items and left Roach’s friend standing in front of a home with a gutted kitchen.

“They drove off with her whole kitchen,” Roach, 61, said. “Her kitchen is still not done today. She can’t afford it.” Williams advised seniors on how to protect themselves in the following ways:

- Don’t rush to repair damages to your home after a disaster: Your hurry to return to a normal life may cost you more money and aggravation.
- Be discreet and cautious about money matters: Proceed cautiously if someone offers to manage your finances during a difficult time.
- Think of the telephone as a ‘one-way street’: Only give personal information to people you call, not to anyone who telephones you.
- Treat unfamiliar emails and websites as ‘read only’: Never provide your personal or financial information and avoid downloading or opening attachments.
- Stay connected to people you know and trust.
- Don’t let your desire to help yourself or others cloud your judgement.
- Seek help if you suspect that you are a victim of financial exploitation.

Tragically, some victims stay silent due to embarrassment or fear of reprisal from the perpetrator. “They get close to you. They try to win your confidence,” Williams said of con artists.

But he urged seniors to report scammers, because otherwise they will continue to defraud others. “If someone is taking advantage of you, don’t just roll over and quietly go into the night,” Williams said.

Why Are Seniors More Vulnerable?

- Reliance on medication
- Diminished physical mobility
- Loss of vision and hearing
- Memory changes
- Dependence on others

Seniors Beware: Financial Exploitation Talk Exposes Risks, Offers Tips

NCC Joins Hands With Popular Shoe, Apparel Retailer For Youth Internship

A successful summer internship program that originated in Philadelphia is coming to Newark in July. New Community Workforce Development Center has partnered with popular retailer Kicks USA to offer Newark residents between the ages of 16 and 21 a paid internship where participants will earn a summer income while gaining experience working in a fast-paced retail environment.

The internship, called the Greater Opportunities Summer Program 2015, will feature weekly workshops led by New Community staff that discuss career development, money management and other topics related to the retail sector. Interns will work at least 20 hours a week at a local Kicks USA store providing customer service, tracking inventory, stocking merchandise and handling sales transactions. Kicks USA currently has 41 locations in New Jersey and Philadelphia and plans to open a second store on Broad Street in Newark in August. The City of Newark is providing grant funding for the summer program.

Kicks USA and its parent company, Jako Enterprises, Ltd., launched the Greater Opportunities Summer Program in collaboration with a Philadelphia-based arts organization called The Village of Arts and Humanities in 2012. Since then, 34 of 44 successful interns have been hired by Kicks USA.

“New Community is excited about our collaboration with The Village, Jako (Kicks USA) and the City of Newark,” said Rodney Brutton, director of workforce at New Community. “This partnership is a continuation of the Workforce Development Center’s commitment to serving older youth, between the ages of 16 and 21, through quality life skills programming and employment,” he said.

Newark Mayor Ras Baraka also expressed enthusiasm for the internship launching in Newark.

“The most exciting aspect is that these young workers will be exposed to opportunities which may lead to permanent employment. This is good for our youth, great for our communities and even better for the City of Newark,” Baraka said in a statement.
Jessica Simpson Fashion Executive Urges Young Women To Pursue Their Dreams

For fashion executive Peggy Merck, being your best self requires four things: communication, community, creativity and confidence.

Merck, a New Jersey native, is the director of public relations for the Jessica Simpson Collection and gave a keynote address to more than 200 young women at the 2015 Celebration of Womanhood: Fabulous Me Conference.

For a dose of instant self-confidence, Merck advised the teen girls to try a “power pose.” Merck drew from the popular TED Talk by Amy Cuddy on power poses, where physical changes to a person’s body (confident posture, wide stance, etc.) have been proven in studies to immediately trigger more powerful or confident behavior in a person.

“We should all feel empowered to be our best selves,” Merck, who grew up in Vernon Township, said during her speech. “You can be a small-town girl…to living in New York City and achieving your dreams.”

Hosted by the Family Service Bureau of Newark, an affiliate agency of New Community, the fourth annual Fabulous Me Conference focused on the theme of leadership or, in social media parlance, #QueenMode, which was the hashtag used to tweet and capture images from the day. The conference featured workshops with topics focusing on safe social media use, girl on girl violence, healthy relationships and academic preparedness.

Rael McFadden, 15, said that the workshops reinforced Merck’s message.

“You should always pursue your dreams,” said McFadden, who attends Saint Vincent Academy in Newark.

Arti Kakkar, executive director of the Family Service Bureau, said that gathering participants from different regions provided many with a rare opportunity to interact with students of different ethnicities and backgrounds. It’s important to have “the girls recognize that they can bond with each other because they’re girls,” she said.

Young women ages 12 to 17 from around New Jersey attended the conference, which was co-sponsored by SHU’s Marriage and Family Therapy Program. The conference was made possible through a grant from the New Jersey Governor’s Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission, administered by the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission.

“This is the prime age where they’re learning about who they are, what they believe,” said Ben Beiten, SHU associate professor of marriage and family therapy.

Aloha! Father’s Day BBQ, Luau Celebrates Men At NCC

New Community Health and Social Services organized a Father’s Day barbecue and luau on the back patio of NCC Douglas Homes at 15 Hill St. in Newark. A professional hula dancer provided the entertainment.

Ladies from New Community Manor Senior marked Mother’s Day with a festive gathering. Photo courtesy of Sister Mary Prisca.

Sister Mary Prisca served watermelon during the barbecue, which included grilled hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken kabobs, macaroni salad, soda, chips and cake.

Manor Senior residents enjoyed each other’s company at a luncheon celebrating mothers. Photo courtesy of Sister Mary Prisca.

Residents of Orange Senior learned how to avoid becoming victims of financial exploitation, especially after natural disasters or other emergencies. Photo courtesy of Sister Pauline Echebiri. (See page 9 to read an article on the financial exploitation presentation.)

Malcolm Hayman, a former employee of Social Services, volunteered to man the grill.

What Are NCC’s Seniors Up To?

Sister Mary Prisca

What Are NCC’s Seniors Up To?

Sister Pauline Echebiri and Social Services staff served residents lunch.

Malcolm Hayman, a former employee of Social Services, volunteered to man the grill.
**Black History Notes**  
**Richard Overton (born 1906)**  
Researched by James E. Du Bose

The oldest known veteran of the United States at present is Richard Overton, who is 110 years old. Born May 11, 1906, Overton has been verified as the oldest living American World War II veteran. Born in Bastrop County, Texas, he is the son of Gentry Overton and Elizabeth “Lizzie” Franklin. His paternal grandfather was a white man named John Overton Jr.

Overton served in the Pacific Theater from 1942 to 1945 as part of the all-black 1887th Aviation Engineer Battalion. His tour included stops in Hawaii, Guam, Palau and Iwo Jima. He left the Army in October of 1945 as a sergeant.

In a 2013 article published in USA Today, Overton stated that war was nothing to get into. “You don’t want to go into the war if you don’t have to, but I had to go. I enjoyed it after I’d went and come back, but I didn’t enjoy it when I was over there. I had to do things I didn’t want to do.”

After serving as a grand marshal in a parade held in Austin, Texas, Overton returned home and relaxed on the porch of his Texas home, which he had purchased for $4,000. Overton said that the recognition made him feel good and that he appreciated everything they did for him. “I had my name and age on the side of a car, and they couldn’t believe it. I was still walking and talking and riding along and everything,” he said.

Overton starts his days with some whiskey in his coffee and he occasionally adds a teaspoon. “It’s just like medicine,” Overton said. He even smokes cigars daily.

Overton hasn’t slowed down much and still remains sharp. He still drives his old Ford pickup truck and attends church every Sunday, where he is reported to help transport widows to church. He even does his own yard work. When asked what the key to his long life has been, Overton says, “You have to ask God about that.”

When he returned from the war, Overton worked at a furniture store in Austin. At age 65, he decided to retire but kept getting asked to come back and was eventually rehired four times. He finally quit when he got tired at the age of 100, but his boss still wanted him back.

Overton met President Barack Obama in 2013. President Obama spoke about him at an event at Arlington National Cemetery. Overton told CNN that, “I didn’t think there was gonna ever be a black president. But finally it did happen.”

The visit to President Obama was made possible by Honor Flight Austin, a group that brings Texas veterans to Washington. The trip included a stop at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, where Austin wept. The crowd that gathered around him wept also. Obama said that to meet with one of the oldest living veterans of World War II bears witness to a day and to the progress of a nation that he thought might never come.

According to Obama, Overton’s service on the battlefield was not always matched by the respect he deserved at home, but said that as a veteran, Overton held his head high. He carried on and lived his life with honor and dignity.

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**NCC At Newark’s Inaugural Recycling Summit**

New Community has implemented recycling initiatives across its roughly 2,000 units of affordable housing and recently participated in the City of Newark’s Inaugural Recycling Summit as a testament to the progress made so far. Frances Teabout, director of mission at NCC, and Samuel Gebreyesus, asset manager for NCC’s property management, presented at the conference, which was held at the Rutgers-Newark Paul Robeson Center and drew advocates of sustainability from across the region. NCC first launched the recycling initiative in its senior and disabled adult buildings and expanded to include family housing complexes. Specifically in the senior buildings, residents who serve as floor captains help remind their neighbors and enforce recycling, said Richard Cammarieri, NCC director of special projects, who also attended the summit.

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**A Fair Fight**  
By Lesley Leslie

Have you ever noticed how often people compare situations that may have occurred in the past during the course of a disagreement or an argument?

In many cases, the comparison happens to illustrate a point that one person may be trying to make. In other cases, it occurs when one person tries to deflect the blame that has been laid at his or her feet.

One person may say something to the effect of, “This is just like the time when you did such and such!” The response to that comment might be, “What does that have to do with anything? This is totally different and the situation is not the same.”

“You are comparing apples to oranges!” The saying is a way to point out that there are too many differences between the two items for a fair comparison to actually occur.

In the end, no one can win the argument, no one can win the fight. Each person leaves the situation feeling whatever way they did prior to the discourse and you are right back where you started.
Black And White Party At Orange Senior

New Community Orange Senior residents Gloria Forde, left, and Pearl Nickerson enjoyed appetizers including crackers, cheese, olives, vegetables and fruit.

Residents and staff followed suit with the party’s theme and donned black and white outfits at a gathering sponsored by the Orange Senior Tenant Association.

Summertime: Grilling At Gardens Senior

New Community Gardens Senior hosted a backyard barbecue at 265 Morris Ave. in Newark. Resident John Aytch, far left, puts his paintings on display.

The laid-back afternoon gathering featured all the fixings: burgers, dogs, kabobs, sodas, chips, watermelon and an array of potluck items prepared by residents and staff.