

# SICM NEWS

Year 43, Number 2, Summer 2011

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## 2010/11 Annual Report



We Moved! After calling 930 Albany Street home for 15+ years, the SICM Offices have a new home. We are pleased to now call Union Presbyterian Church “home!” The church is located between Union Street and Union Avenue, and between Park Avenue and Wendell Avenue. Our offices are accessed through the door off the parking lot on Wendell Avenue, and our new address is 1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, NY, 12308. Our telephone and fax numbers remain the same.

### SICM Day of Service A Great Success



Eager volunteers from many congregations made the April 9<sup>th</sup> “SICM Day of Service” a resounding success! Over 160 volunteers came from various SICM member churches and from 3 colleges – Union, Siena and SCCC. Volunteers worked at various SICM sites: cleaning and painting at the SICM Food Pantry, spring cleaning at the SICM Damien Center, preparing a garden site at Wallingford Park for the SICM/Roots and Wisdom Edible Playgrounds Program, writing advocacy letters on hunger issues, preparing Easter baskets for pantry distribution, cleaning out at Koinonia Christian Ministries and more. Congregations and the Niskayuna Food Co-op did a great job collecting items for the Easter baskets for the kids, which were distributed through the Food Pantry; 2 Youth Groups assembled 150 baskets from the items! It was also fun to see several families who brought their children with them to gain volunteer experience.

Other volunteers worked on projects with non-profits who partner with SICM, including yard work and spring cleaning at the Lighthouse (Bethesda House), the Hamilton Hill Arts Center, Better Neighborhoods, the Community Land Trust, and Home Furnishings. These non-profits were happy for the volunteer help, and many of our volunteers learned about other needs and issues in the community this way. The projects ended with a delicious lunch (also prepared by volunteers) at First United Methodist Church.

The number of volunteers from various churches ranged from 2 to 19, and the ages ranged from 3 years old to mid-80's. Participants came from the following congregations: Altamont Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Bethel AME, Immaculate Conception (Glenville), Eastern Parkway UMC, Emmanuel Friedens, First Reformed (Schenectady), First Reformed (Scotia), First Unitarian Society, First UMC, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Koinonia Christian Ministries, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Grace, St. Helen's RC, St. John the Evangelist RC, St. Paul the Apostle RC, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Scotia UMC, Trinity Presbyterian, and Union Presbyterian. This was a wonderful event overall, and SICM was grateful for all the help from our congregations and partners.



## Schenectady Damien Center



Another busy year at the Schenectady Damien Center!

During 2010, the Schenectady Damien Center (SDC) hosted more than 220 individuals infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, with staff and volunteers serving over 2250 meals. Adding Friday lunch to our regular program week, we now have open program hours five days each week, totaling 224 days for the year.

In addition to meals, SDC guests have enjoyed on-site programs that included:

Nutrition discussions with Cornell Cooperative Extension;  
Emotional support groups with the AIDS Council of Northeastern New York;  
Fitness groups with Spiritually Sound, Physically Fit;  
Health talks with Ellis Hospital staff;  
Life Coaching by volunteer Barb Norton;  
Empowerment programs with the AIDS Mastery Workshop;  
HIV testing with Whitney Young Health Center.

Trips to Moreau State Park, SPAC, Great Escape, and Schenectady Civic Players were among our major off-site programs! Staff and guests also stepped up outreach efforts during 2010, speaking or tabling at many churches, schools, and events throughout the Capital District.

2010 also marked our first year in our new home at 615 Nott St! Opening the building on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, the new site has provided new program options and a much-needed sense of stability for guests. Not that we haven't had our hiccups! The electrical fire that occurred the week of Thanksgiving forced us to find a temporary location for December, but thanks to the generous donation of space by Emmanuel-Friedens Church, we were able to continue our program with little disruption.

One of our major projects in 2010 was to form a Community Task Force to help with outreach, fundraising and strategic planning. Made up of clergy, social service professionals, community volunteers, and Damien Center guests, the Task Force has been gathering information to help our program to continue to grow!

Thank you to all our volunteers and advocates who have participated in SDC programs during 2010! We look forward to seeing you in 2011!



More Programs in Review on page 4!

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## SICM Staff Changes

Farewell to Dan Butterworth, Damien Center Program Manager

After spending more than 3 years at SICM as the Program Manager of the Schenectady Damien Center, Dan has moved on to the next chapter of his life. He is returning to graduate school this fall to pursue a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Dan was instrumental in initiating and maintaining new programming at Damien, as well as increasing attendance and participation in Center activities. He was an integral part of the SICM staff, and will be missed greatly.



Welcome to Allison Williams, Summer Lunch Program Manager

This summer SICM extended a warm welcome to Allison Williams, the new face behind the Summer Lunch Program. Allison took over the reins from Crys Hamelink, who had coordinated the program for the past 5 years. Allison brings with her a varied and extensive background in working with children, including as a classroom teacher, a coordinator of after school programs, and YMCA site supervisor. Welcome, Allison!



## Summer Lunch Program

Nearly 75 % of Schenectady's kids qualify for free or reduced rate lunches in school, and many do not have regular meals when school is not in session. That's where SICM stepped in, offering free and healthy lunches at 13 locations in 2010, including city parks (Central, Jerry Burrell, Hillhurst, Quackenbush, Wallingford, Carrie Street), 2 municipal housing complexes (Yates and Steinmetz), and several church fellowship halls (Friendship House, Faith United Methodist, Trinity Lutheran, Mount Olivet, and New Creation in Christ). In our 15<sup>th</sup> year of serving free lunches, last summer we served nearly 28,000 meals to hungry kids. We partnered with other groups that offered educational and recreational activities at certain sites while SICM provided the meals. Some of these partners included the Boys and Girls Club at Quackenbush Park, the YMCA at Jerry Burrell Park, and city and county programs at some pools and Central Park.



Most people spend their lunch break, well, eating lunch. But last summer, 650 wonderful volunteers served lunch, instead. These volunteers—from 66 teams in all—fed hungry children across Schenectady. The groups came from 35 area congregations, GE, ARC, and several other non-profit and business groups. SICM provided the food through a government grant from the USDA and the NY State Education Department. Volunteers packed the meals, fed and entertained the kids. Some volunteer teams brought boxes of donated books, and smiling children rapidly grabbed them. One young boy, with 5 books in tow, said these would be his first books to have at home. Some teams made paper airplanes with the kids at their sites, while others brought games and craft/ school supplies.



Parents, grandparents and caregivers thank us repeatedly for the food for their families. The kids just smile and say that lunch is good!

## Summer Interns

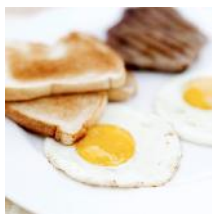
In 2010, SICM was fortunate to have 13 summer interns on staff. These high school and college students were integral “cogs in the wheel” of successful summer programming for SICM! In addition to working in all SICM program areas, the interns met on a regular basis with Janet Mattis, Intern Coordinator, to reflect on their experiences and to learn about and discuss some of the unique challenges of the inner-city population of Schenectady. They were supported by Albany Street/Stanford UMC, First Reformed of Schenectady, Lynwood Reformed, and Union Presbyterian Churches. The interns represented Guilderland, Niskayuna, Schenectady and Scotia-Glenville High Schools, and several colleges: Gordon College, College of St. Rose, Union College, SUNY-ESF, and the University of Pittsburgh. Many



Back row: Sam Wengrovius, Adam Sloan, Josh Mason, Morgan Schmitt, Amity Higgins, Megan Ports, Sam Brooks, Debbie Forester (Edible Playgrounds Coordinator); Front row: Janet Mattis (SICM Intern Coordinator, JJ Moran, Alex Restina, Becky Rose, Julianna Cogswell, Rachael Cox. Missing: Abby Foster

thanks to all the supporting congregations, and to all the student interns without whom we would not be able to accomplish all that we do in the summer!

## Community Breakfast Program



Feeling the community need, members and friends of the First United Methodist Church in Schenectady instituted the Community Breakfast Program to provide a free community breakfast to all in need. The program operates in partnerships with SICM. The breakfast typically serves 150+ individuals on any Sunday (8 to 9 AM). There is no longer a breakfast at the Salvation Army on Sunday morning. Guests receive an excellent breakfast coordinated by James McFarland and volunteers. Other resources, such as bread, are also distributed. The program receives support from the NYS HPNAP Program and the Regional Food Bank. The Troy Conference Health Ministry supported the work in 2010, affording the purchase of a freezer and other equipment. Elaine Troy serves as liaison to SICM for this program.



## Collaborations

SICM continued to partner and provide leadership in several community collaborations, or partnerships. The Community Crisis Network (CCN) provided direct assistance to individuals in need. Located at the Schenectady Community Action Program at 913 Albany Street, the partnership interviewed individuals, made referrals, and provided direct assistance as needed. Some of the primary expenses were for transportation and medicines. Other partners included Catholic Charities of Schenectady County, City Mission of Schenectady, Bethesda House, and the Jewish Community. CCN in the year focused on the changes in the health care system and provided a linkage to Ellis Hospital, and it sought to implement many changes, including the Medical Home model at the former St. Clare's campus. The staff of CCN are supported by a grant from the United Way of the Greater Capital Region.

SICM partnered in Schenectady County Embraces Diversity. Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year, SCED is a partnership of the YWCA, SICM, the County's Human Rights Commission and others. SCED offers "study circles" in high school and middle school settings on the issues of race, diversity, and related issues. The program continued with strong support from the county's school systems. All students who took part participated in developing action plans for their schools.

SICM provided leadership for the Committee for Social Justice, which hosted a press conference to support Larry Bratton in his efforts to secure greater affirmative action in hiring. The Committee supported a press conference hosted by the regional NAACP on affirmative action issues, and welcomed the new leadership of the Schenectady NAACP, which was reorganized due to a lack of membership. The new President is the Rev. Ted Ward, who also serves as SICM Secretary. Committee members continued to press for improvements in the Civilian Police Review Board, to update membership and improve operations.

SICM was also invited to participate as a member in the city's school system Turn Around Team. The team, or TAT, was put in place with the receipt of a major Department of Labor grant to address the challenges in the high school. The primary foci of the TAT strategy was the development of mentoring, a separate team approach in the freshman year, greater case management, and more job opportunities for students both in the summer and during the school year.

## HPRP – Homeless Rehousing



SICM partnered in 2010 and 2011 to provide security deposits for families participating in the HPRP program. The lead agency for this was SCAP (Schenectady Community Action Program), with the YWCA and Bethesda House. HPRP was a part of the federal stimulus program that provided for additional assistance to families and individuals who were homeless and then got into more permanent housing. SICM provided security deposits for 10 families each year. The funding ended in 2011. SICM continued our regular security deposit program in conjunction with the County's Human Right Commission. This program, supported by the City's Community Development Block Grant Program, provides for a security loan of up to \$500 to assist homeless families transition into permanent housing.



# Memorial and Honorary Gifts



## In Memory Of

Elaine Lefkowitz  
 Robert D. French  
 Sean Valero  
 Andrew Nicodemi  
 Angeline Spina  
 Ann & Herb Speanburg  
 Art Gauvreau  
 Arthur Salvatore  
 Barbara Fitzwilliam  
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 Stanley Godell  
 Steve Munson  
 Thomas Rourke

Tom Mullen  
 Warren O'Neal  
 Wilton Raney  
 Dr. Gregory Woods  
 Loved ones of the Moldenhauers

## In Honor Of

Elaine Bair  
 Raye MacTiernan  
 Rosemarie Padula-Armstrong (to Damien)  
 Geraldine Piccolo  
 "Mickey's" 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 Al Lowe  
 Angelo DiPietro's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 Betty & Murray Weissman  
 Bob & Pat Obrecht  
 Camillos, Stephens, Tibbetts, Reillys & Reynolds  
 Chester Granato & Members of the Treanor Family  
 Crys Hamelink, "The Dog Sitter"  
 David Myers  
 Donald Weidenfeller's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 Dorothy Harlow  
 Ed & Beverly Andrews  
 Edward & Marie Gannon  
 Family and Friends  
 Gene & Ellie Rowland  
 Gene Kelly  
 Gerald Haines' 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 Jill Becker & Kristen Olochnowicz  
 Jim & Nancy Bedard  
 Jim Gibney's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 John Assini, M.D.  
 John Held  
 Julie Cupp  
 Larry Lewis  
 Lisa Westman & James McDonald  
 Mabel Leon's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
 Madison Schmitt  
 Marilyn Berrigan's Birthday  
 Martha J. Asselin YWCA  
 2011 Woman of Achievement  
 Monica Ann LeGere  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Peace  
 Nancy Bedard  
 Pat & Don Wheeler's 40h Anniversary  
 Phyllis Clas' Birthday  
 Ralph & Clara Lasselle  
 Ralph Lasalle  
 Rev. Louis E. Deimeke  
 Rita and Bill Vullo  
 Robert Van Vranken  
 Shirley Joosten's Birthday  
 Reverends William and Lois Dodge's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary  
 Emmanuel Friedens Church Staff

Hamil Family  
 Tunny Family  
 Tom Rourke  
 Trisha Cassady  
 Vera Lynn Yap  
 West Charlton United Presbyterian Church  
 Zachary Felten's 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday

## In Appreciation Of

Service of Albany Advisors Group

## Other

Bequest to Schenectady Damien Center  
 From Estate of Jordan Hess

*Many thanks to all  
 for your kind acts  
 of generosity. SICM  
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