

Striving Toward Empowered Personal Success



Committed to Empowering the Women & Girls of Our Community

We at S.T.E.P.S. are committed to building the lives of women and girls. We provide opportunities and exposures through mentoring, workshops, skill-building, and interactive activities that will expand their horizons. Teaching and equipping them with tools and skills will assist them in living a healthy, productive and empowered life.

STEPS, Inc. New and Noteworthy

- STEPS welcomed new lead facilitator Erin McDonald for the Bennie Dover program during 2013-2014 school year!
- STEPS also welcomed new Board member Deborah Evans. We appreciate your arrival!
- STEPS is on social media! Follow us on twitter: @stepsgirls and on instagram: stepsgirls
- Jessica Bessette has taken on the role of Lead Facilitator to oversee all programming.

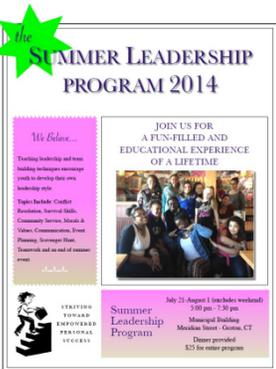
MISSION:

STEPS' mission is to provide women and adolescent girls (ages 12-18) the tools necessary to build lives of integrity and self-sufficiency through the empowerment of positive choice.

2014 DONORS:

- Chamber of Commerce Eastern CT
- Frank Loomis Palmer Fund
- William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund
- Dime Bank Foundation
- Community Foundation of Eastern CT
- Elizabeth Raymond Ambler Trust Fund
- Charter Oak Community Giving
- Pfizer Volunteer Program - (Vivian Harrison)
- Pfizer Volunteer Program - (Martha Neilan-Curiel)
- Pfizer Volunteer Program - (Kathleen Doherty)
- Pfizer Volunteer Program - (Deb Evans)
- Anges M. Jaworski

SUMMER PROGRAM:



QUOTES:

"I love coming to STEPS! I love the whole idea of trying to help girls to be leaders!"

"If STEPS wasn't around to teach me these things, I'm not sure where I would learn them. . . Thank God STEPS is here to teach me."

"This year was amazing thanks to you."

GRATITUDE:

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We need support from people like you to continue to help the women and girls of our community.

Yes! I would like to donate!

Send donations to:
STEPS, Inc.
PO Box 1907
Groton, CT. 06340

Or go to our website at www.stepsct.org and look for our donation button on the top right corner.

Thank you so much for any Contribution!

STEPS Inc.
info@stepsct.org
PO Box 1907
Groton, CT 06340
(860) 941-7949

If you would like to unsubscribe to our newsletter, please send email to info@stepsct.org and put in the subject line "UNSUBSCRIBE"

PROUD TO HIGHLIGHT: OUR STEPS' SENIORS!



graduated with two honor cords.

Shareah Dye graduated from Robert E. Fitch High School and has been with STEPS since she was an 8th grader at West Side Middle School in Groton. She has attended STEPS' afterschool program and summer program every year since. Shareah has accomplished many wonderful achievements during her time with us. These include attaining honors, receiving an achievement award from the National Society of High School Scholars and getting accepted into UCONN! She also



Royal Snyder has been with STEPS for every program, event, and fundraiser since she joined STEPS four years ago. Royal graduated from Ella T. Grasso Technical High School 8th in her class and was the Senior Class Council Secretary. She also attended the National Young Leaders Conference in Washington, DC. Because of her hard work and determination, she will be attending The University of Maryland Baltimore County!

CONGRATULATIONS LADIES — JOB WELL DONE!

PROUD TO HIGHLIGHT: NEW MEMBERS



this organization. I would like to use my financial and business acumen to help STEPS secure the finances it needs to continue its amazing work in our communities.

Deborah Evans - Board Member/Treasurer, In a chance meeting with one of STEPS' Board members, I learned about STEPS. I was impressed by what STEPS was doing - "providing young women and adolescent girls with the tools to live a very full and successful life" - using the tools God had given them to work with. As a mother and a woman, these ideals resonated with me, so I decided to join the Board to be a part of



been a part of it.

Erin McDonald - Facilitator, I worked as the Lead Facilitator for Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School in New London, CT and the Assistant Facilitator for West Side Middle School in Groton, CT. In the short amount of time I have been working for STEPS, I have come to realize just how important this organization is. I have had the honor and privilege to work with these amazing girls in the program and such caring staff over the past school year. I have really come to know and love everyone who has

LEAD FACILITATOR NEWS



STEPS successfully completed our Girls Empowerment Programs for the school year in May. As most of you know, we have a program at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School in New London, West Side Middle School in Groton, and a high school group that meets with girls in various area schools in both Groton and New London. Activities have included yoga to handling sea creatures, painting clay sculptures to a lesson from Bare, Bold and Beautiful. The girls have participated in and enjoyed many outstanding opportunities that have life lessons. These activities were in addition to workshops on anger management, body image, self-esteem, gratitude, healthy relationships, boundaries, self-awareness, resume writing, and interview skills. We are incredibly excited to announce that we are presently servicing more girls than ever before and we hope to continue expanding the number of girls we impact!

PROJECT 4 SUCCESS/READY FOR THE WORLD-HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM



Program Year 2013-2014

As most of our girls moved on from middle school into high school, we had a much larger group than usual for our high school program. We were thrilled to have such a wonderful group of girls decide to allow STEPS to continue assisting them.

The high school girls had such an eventful year. We started with topics such as Goal Setting, Resume Writing, Choosing the Right Career and College. This intense start to the year set the stage for the many opportunities they encountered during the school year.

After this rigorous start, we moved on to more introspective topics to help the girls develop emotionally in their personal lives. Topics included Gratitude, Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem, Anger Management and Personal Goals. This was a wonderful time in the year, helping the girls to attain these life skills that are so often overlooked. Without these skills, the girls would be less likely to succeed in other areas of their lives.

We also covered topics that were informational to keep the girls learning and growing as members of our community. These included Cyber Safety and Interviewing Skills. In addition, we experienced some activities that help the girls to develop and expand their horizons. These included The Clay Room in Groton and New England Science and Sailing in Stonington.

We thank all the girls that attended all year!

EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM-WEST SIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Program Year 2013-2014

We had wonderful conversations, with poignant comments from this smart collection of girls. Throughout the year, we discussed topics such as Self-Awareness, Personal Body Image and Body Image in the Media, Social Perception, Stereotypes, Boundaries, Healthy Relationships, Anger Management and Respect.

The girls were thoughtful, open-minded and willing to share their experiences and hear one another's without judgment. The girls were wonderfully respectful toward one another. These can be difficult topics to discuss and can evoke strong opinions and feelings. However, the girls maintained excellent behavior, enabling us to really dig into the topic at hand.

The girls also did a multitude of activities, such as presenting to the group about how to create a positive body image and analyzing magazine ads. They put on skits about anger management and how to handle situations. They also experienced a presentation from Bare, Bold, and Beautiful learning about natural beauty. Thank you to all of the girls who attended. We look forward to seeing you join the high school program next year!

EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM-BENNIE DOVER JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL



Program Year 2013-2014

Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School had a wonderful year, filled with incredible experiences and lessons thanks to the newest member of our facilitating team Erin McDonald. The girls took to Erin instantly and they were able to have a solid rapport. This allowed healthy discussions on workshops that included Perception, Self-Esteem, Body Image, Eating Disorders, Health and Fitness, and Healthy Relationships. The girls also were able to experience a variety of extracurricular activities, such as yoga and a presentation by Bare, Bold, and Beautiful, where they learned to let their natural beauty shine through instead of depending on makeup!

The year was a complete success with more girls than ever before attending weekly. We were so lucky to have such an amazing group of girls, and we are looking forward to the 6th and 7th graders returning to us this fall!

THE VARIETY SHOW AND OTHER FUNDRAISERS



STEPS had quite a momentous year of fundraising! From pies, to car washes, to debit cards, a pancake breakfast at Applebees, to a ballet at the Garde Arts Theatre, we continuously look for innovative ways to increase revenue for the organization.

The most exciting fundraiser we held this year was our first Annual Variety Show. It was held at Conn College in the Palmer Auditorium, over 150 guests came to observe this spectacular event. It included a Fashion Show where the girls highlighted both casual and formal wear. Outfits were supplied by the Gap and the Loft at the Crystal Mall in Waterford. Evening gowns were also donated from Michele's Bridal in Westbrook, CT.

The Variety Show also included a Talent Show. The girls displayed their various talents through singing, dancing, stepping, and even break dancing! A Silent Auction was held with themed baskets and other items donated by individuals, community businesses, and groups.

The event was a huge success thanks to the hard work of the girls, the STEPS Board, facilitators, and members of our community!

THANK YOU ALL!

EVENTS ATTENDED



STEPS, Inc. was proud to attend the Shiloh Baptist Church Community Prison Awareness and Prevention Gathering last October. Connections were made and the speakers were inspiring and insightful. It was an honor to attend and be a part of such a powerful, important mission. Thank you!

STEPS had the pleasure of attending the Second Annual Girl Symposium in Trumbull, CT. This was an incredibly amazing day filled with workshops geared toward helping STEPS learn more about the population we serve. The keynote speaker, Rachel Simmons, gave a heartfelt speech about helping girls to become emotionally intelligent beings. Everyone received her book entitled "The Curse of the Good Girl," which is so helpful in our work with teen girls.

STEPS worked with Ledge Light Health District and the GASP Coalition in a suicide prevention initiative that began in September 2013. This is a privilege to help an important cause and to implement it in our programs. Thanks for including us!

WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE



Thank you to our funders, supporters, volunteers and the community.

A special thanks to the following organizations for providing our girls with opportunities and positive life skills.

NESS (NEW ENGLAND SCIENCE AND SAILING) for introducing the girls to local sea creatures through touch tanks and high-tech microscopes.

Bare, Bold, and Beautiful for teaching the girls how to accept their beauty and not cover it up with makeup!

The Clay Room for allowing the girls to express themselves through painting ceramic pieces

Yoga Heals Us/Karen O'Donnell Clarke (owner) for teaching the girls relaxing poses to strengthen their bodies and relieve stress.