

STEPS, INC.

NEWSLETTER

September 2013

Issue 2

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Noteworthy

STEPS would like to congratulate our first high school graduate Allison Opol.

Allison has participated in STEPS' programs for three years and has made us proud with her accomplishments.

She was accepted to the UConn Avery Point Campus, where she attended classes this summer.

Allison is studying to receive her bachelor's degree in marine biology.

Congratulations Allison!

A Note from the President



STRIVING
TOWARD
EMPOWERED
PERSONAL
SUCCESS

STEPS Girls,

Thank you so much for your commitment over the last year. You worked really hard and STEPS has noticed!

We have seen you blossom into young ladies and we are here to support you as you take on new challenges and strive to reach your goals.

You have made STEPS proud.

You know life does not come without obstacles, but the choices you make will last a lifetime. So ladies, continue to be diligent and make positive choices that will prosper your every endeavor.

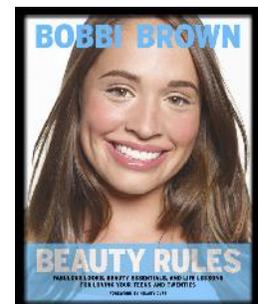
YOU'RE AMAZING!

Love,

Ms. Bea

'11 Inner-Beauty Tips' from Bobbi Brown

1. Be nice! I'm not kidding
2. Tell the truth
3. Take risks
4. Never give up
5. Be on time
6. Be open!!!
7. Care about something
8. Give back
9. Work hard
10. Look people in the eye; it shows confidence
11. Dream big



Project 4 Success (High School Program)

The high school girls have been busy this year. Facilitators Danielle Cohen and Jessica Besette covered a multitude of topics that the girls thought were extremely useful moving forward. They included:

- Basics of the Driving Manual
- Effects of Drugs and Alcohol
- Job Readiness Training

- Goals and Aspirations
 - Healthy Relationships
- The girls went to a Zumba class at Centro de la Comunidad in New London to learn a fun way to maintain physical fitness and relieve stress. Last winter, we gave back to our community by making handmade cookies and cards for the troops and a local homeless shelter. The

girls created a video showcasing skits they performed about basic etiquette. We also celebrated many of the girls' accomplishments. In addition, Royal Snyder of Grasso Tech, made high honors and has qualified to be in the National Honors Society.



“I like that they can always find the answers I need. They also always make time for me and hear me out.”

Striving 4 Positive Life Choices (Middle School Program)

This year, at both West Side Middle School (WSMS-Groton) and Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School (BDJMS-New London), we facilitated an afterschool program. STEPS provided interactive workshops that build confidence, require teamwork, maintain healthy relationships, uphold positive choices and

proper body image, to name a few, in a safe and confidential environment.

We met with approximately forty girls one day a week throughout the school year. We accomplished many things, such as creating Respect Posters that were so amazing they were displayed in the school library at

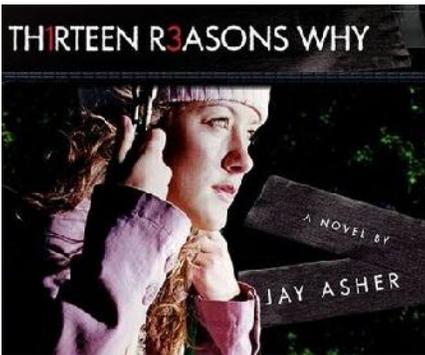
BDJMS. Also, two of our WSMS girls were chosen to attend the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Banquet.

Congratulations to all our girls for their hard work. We will see you in **Project 4 Success!**

Quotes from the Students



- Favorite topic of discussion - “Body Image because it made me believe I’m beautiful.”
- “[The facilitators] are amazing and they understand us more than anyone.”
- “STEPS is the highlight of my week.”
- They [The facilitators] listen to what I have to say and they don't judge me.



Cover to Cover - Summer Book Club

STEPS is thrilled to announce our first annual summer book club entitled 'Cover to Cover.' We met with high school-aged boys and girls to enhance their love of reading once a week at Centro de la Comunidad in New London. The book chosen was based on topics that are of interest to teens in our community.

Some great summer reads:

- Thirteen Reasons Why - Jay Asher
- To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee
- Go Ask Alice - Anonymous
- The Hunger Games - Suzanne Collins
- The Catcher in the Rye - J.D. Salinger
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower - Stephen Chbosky

Summer Leadership Program



STEPS' fourth Summer Leadership Program for Girls was held at the Groton Municipal Building from August 12th - 23rd from 5-8 pm. It was an intense two-week leadership training event.

Some of the topics included Self and Cultural Awareness, Character Building, Manners and Etiquette, Art of Negotiation and Conflict Resolution.

Upon completion, the girls enjoyed an overnight stay at the Pinegrove Dude Ranch in Kerhonkson, NY.

Fundraisers

STEPS would like to thank everyone who helped in our fundraising efforts.

- Applebee's
- Big Hearted Books
- Captain's Pizza
- Chili's - New London
- Garde Arts - PACE
- GLSC - Gift Cards
- Lyman Orchards
- Macy's Shop for a Cause
- Pampered Chef
- Safelite Auto Glass
- The Greater Westerly Foundation - Pawcatuck River Duck Race
- Wendy's - Groton & New London
- Yankee Candle

Please support us in our **UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS** that will benefit our after-school programs.

- Pie Sales Oct 2013
- Gift cards Nov 2013

STEPS would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest Board member Laura Edelstein.

DEDICATED TO THE WOMEN AND GIRLS OF OUR COMMUNITY

OUR GRATITUDE

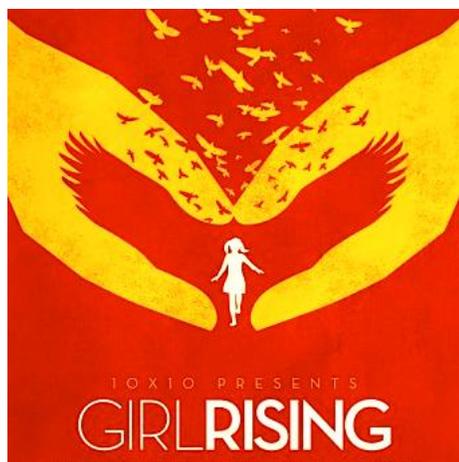
STEPS would like to thank the following Organizations/Businesses/Individuals for their contributions...

- Charter Oak FCU Community Giving Grant
- Chelsea Groton Foundation
- City of New London Community Development Block Grant
- Dime Bank Foundation, Inc
- Eastern Connecticut Assoc. of Realtors
- Liberty Bank Foundation
- Pfizer Foundation Volunteer Program
- Savings Institute Financial Group Foundation
- The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT
- The Community Foundation of Eastern CT
- The Frank Loomis Palmer Fund
- William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund
- Big Y Food, Inc.
- Captain's Pizza
- Garde Arts Center
- Lawrence & Memorial Hospital
- Ledge Light Health District
- Mystic Woman's Club
- Pleasant Valley Community of Prayer and Praise
- Riverfront Children's Center
- Shop Rite of New London

- Supreme Pizza
- Waterford Group
- Jennifer M. Carroll
- Lauren Davis
- Agnes M. Jaworski
- Frank Jennette
- Denise Ralls-Gaines
- Diann Ralls

MEMBERS

STEPS continues to grow. We are looking for dedicated Board members, volunteers and facilitators to help enhance our programs and what we do for our community. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about STEPS, please contact us for further details.



STEPS brought our girls to the Garde Arts Center in New London to see the film 'Girl Rising'.

The girls were moved by the film and quoted in The Day newspaper. Please read their responses in the article to the right.

The Day Film review: 'Girl Rising' sends message of empowerment

Article published May 4, 2013
by Kristina Dorsey

At the heart of the documentary "Girl Rising" is this idea: Educating a girl is a powerful force for change.

The film is at the center of 10x10's global campaign to educate and empower girls.

After seeing "Girl Rising," Angelique Cyrique, 13, of Groton said that the movie opened her eyes more to what is out in the world. She was particularly struck by how a girl in Afghanistan had to hide her face behind a burqa.

Kayleigh Knowles, 13, of Groton talked about how kids here sometimes complain about going to class, while the

girls in the film fought to be in school, learning.

Having seen "Girl Rising," Cyrique said, "I think it's going to empower us to do better things."

She believes, too, that it will inspire people not to give up because the girls in the film - despite facing dire circumstance - never gave up.

Knowles and Cyrique are both involved with the Groton-based **S.T.E.P.S.**, an organization that strives to provide "adolescent girls the tools necessary to build a life of integrity and self-sufficiency through the empowerment of positive choice."

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