



WNY Women’s Fund Launches “Out-of-School Time” Initiative Pilot Program Aims to Bring Enrichment & Quality Programming to After-School Programs throughout Buffalo

The WNY Women’s Fund is proud to announce the official launch of the Fund’s Out-of-School Time (OST) Initiative. This Initiative represents one of the largest and most innovative pilot projects of the WNY Women’s Fund to date.

Research shows that children who attend high quality after-school programs show a rise in school attendance and academic performance. “We believe all students should have the opportunity to attend a quality out-of-school time program” states WNY Women’s Fund Executive Director, Heather Filipowicz. “We also believe that all out of school time providers should offer high quality learning and enrichment opportunities. The WNY Women’s Fund strives to be a systems change agent to improve the lives of all women and girls in WNY.”

Lead by community experts, the OST Initiative is aiming to achieve citywide change to all after-school programming resulting in increased attendance, enrichment and academics for all students. The OST Initiative has begun to:

- Pilot an after-school program run by the Northwest Buffalo Community Center at Buffalo Public School #59, the Dr. Charles R. Drew Science Magnet, which will promote the partnership between out-of-school-time program providers, school officials and additional stakeholders.
- Institutionalize a nationally-recognized assessment tool, Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) in conjunction with the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI), an improvement program that encourages individuals, programs and systems to focus on the quality of the experiences young people have in programs and the training needs of the staff providing the programs. Six after -school providers are taking part in this improvement program. These partners include: The Belle Center, Child and Adolescent Treatment Services, Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center of WNY, Northwest Buffalo Community Center, Seneca Babcock Community Association, and Westminster Community Charter School.

According to Buffalo Public Schools Interim Superintendent Amber M. Dixon, “This initiative sets a new standard in the quality of after-school programs. We’re developing a model that can be individualized in each school, and takes student culture into account. Implementing national best practices and integrating staff knowledge at the school level, this pilot has the potential to set citywide high quality standards in out of school time.”

A program kickoff event will take place on Monday, December 5, 2011 from 4pm-5:30pm at the Dr. Charles R. Drew School of Science’s Media Center, One Martin Luther King Park, Buffalo, New York 14211. The official program will begin at 4:15 pm with the following people scheduled to speak: Amber M. Dixon, Interim Superintendent, Buffalo Public Schools, Heather Filipowicz, Executive Director, WNY Women’s Fund, Denise Luka, Principal, School 59, and Lawrence Pernick, Executive Director, Northwest Buffalo Community Center.



About the Western New York Women's Fund

The mission of the Western New York Women's Fund is to remove roadblocks and provide opportunities to enable women and girls to become self-sufficient. The Fund believes that when women and girls are secure, entire communities are stronger. To accomplish its mission, the Fund researches best practices, convenes those with expertise in the areas of focus, advocates for policy changes and provides grants to programs that have the greatest leverage for improving the self-sufficiency of women and girls in the region and that will result in systemic change. Since its establishment in 1999, the Fund has raised over \$3 million, funds that have been utilized in building an endowment for long-term sustainability, operational funding and supporting programs that are making a real and lasting difference in the lives of women and girls.

For more information about the WNY Women's Fund visit www.wnywomensfund.org or call WNY Women's Fund at 716.887.2621

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