

## Activities

### Absolutely Incredible Kid Day and Fall River's 2012 Youth of the Year Announcement on March 15<sup>th</sup>!

The Youth of the Year Award, established by the YOUth CHOICES, is designed to recognize and encourage the contributions and excellence in the young people of Fall River who have built their character and competence through the fulfillment of the five Promises of the America's Promise Alliance. Youth were judged on personal achievement, leadership abilities, extracurricular activities, healthy living, effective learning opportunities, and community involvement. Fall River is proud that our youth have "can do" attitude and a designation in 2008 and 2011 as one of the 100 Best Cities for Youth demonstrates its commitment to young people. Citizens are proud of their residency and Fall River is proud of them. Mayor William Flanagan and leaders of YOUth CHOICES acknowledged those achievements by awarding a \$500 Youth of the Year Award to one outstanding youth. The honor was on Absolutely Incredible Kid Day in which adults are asked to acknowledge youth in their life and to tell them how important they are. The special day provided an opportunity to formally celebrate Fall River's recognition as one of the 2011 100 Best Communities for Young People. The Youth CHOICES Collaborative acknowledged the youth, adults, agencies and organizations that helped Fall River receive the prestigious recognition at the Eagle Event Center in Fall River on March 15th.

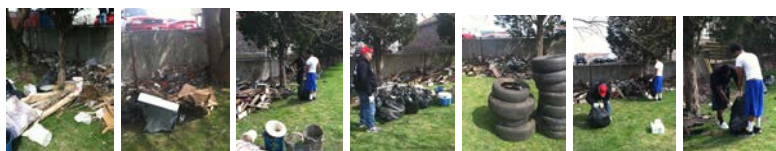
The 5th annual Youth of the Year nominees this year were: Peter Lee, Shela Carreiro, Brogan Murphy, and Olivia Marques. We are very proud of the winner, Olivia Marques!



Photos Courtesy of Dave Weed

### Youth Outreach Program Organizes Ongoing Britland Park Clean Up Effort

CD Rec's Youth Outreach Program got their hands dirty in the first Britland Park Clean Up on March 24<sup>th</sup>. With a huge amount of litter, YOW made some serious headway in beautifying our amazing park...great job!



### Leadership Training Held at B.M.C. Durfee High School on March 23<sup>rd</sup>

United Neighbors' Wendy Garf-Lipp lead a Leadership Training for the B.M.C. Durfee High School Leadership Team. This training was done to recognize the importance of community service, the power of one person, and how it related to violence prevention in our lives and community. We explored the power of giving that many celebrities have taken positive advantage of, while trying to find a cause we might each have a passion in which to take part. Members are planning future initiatives to become more involved in important causes while creating a more peaceful Fall River, including the upcoming Peace by Piece Summit on May 4th. The Women's Center also presented during the training with ideas to assist in the end of violence toward women.



### National Youth Violence Prevention Week a Great Success in Fall River

Schools and organizations all over Fall River were excited this past week to take part in National Youth Violence Prevention Week! Here are some highlights:

- Hundreds of students and staff took the Pledge for Peace at B.M.C. Durfee High School this week, writing their names on peace signs for the Peace Wall. Bulletin and morning announcements were made each morning to provide statistics about youth violence while offering an idea for peace each day.
- Spencer Borden Elementary School was visited by Peaceful Coalition members where Kindergarten and First Grade students. PC explained the purpose of Peaceful Coalition to the children, created a peace circle in each classroom, sang songs about love and friendship, read books about peace and loving yourself, and lead an art activity about our peaceful and safe places we have in our lives.
- United Neighbors lead a Leadership Training to the B.M.C. Durfee High School Leadership Team. This training was done to recognize the importance of community service, the power of one person, and how it related to violence prevention in our lives and community. Members are planning future initiatives to become more involved in important causes while creating a more peaceful Fall River. The Women's Center also presented during the training.



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- Silvia Elementary School had students take a Pledge to Help Make the World a Peaceful Place in a school-wide quilt pledge, created a peace chain in the cafeteria, held a poster contest, had daily morning announcements with Words of Wisdom on non-violence, and held a Teddy for Trauma drive in which stuffed bears were collected to donate to local shelters for abuse children living among us.
- CD Rec hosted space for video interviews for “The Mind/Mentality of a Phoenix”. Jermai Harrison, a student at UMass Dartmouth, interviewed various local youth to hear their personal stories and experiences of violence in their lives and how they have risen above these obstacles. Like the Phoenix bird, these youth have overcome hardships, coming out on the other side stronger and wiser. These interviews will be edited and used in future peace initiatives in the city. The major concept behind showing this video is for a variety of reasons: to show other struggling youth that they are not alone, for them to hear the real stories of their peers, see how fellow peers were able to rise above, and for families to see how important it is to keep their kids active to prevent violence.

## Announcements

### Fall River Shannon CSI Website

Make sure you check out our new website at [www.frshannon.org](http://www.frshannon.org)! It provides various information surrounding the Shannon Grant, partner information, a calendar of events, an ongoing blog of activities, and more.

### City Wide Clean Up to be Held April 28<sup>th</sup>

On Saturday, April 28th, there will be a citywide clean up at various parks with our neighborhood associations, and following the clean ups there will be a cook-out at Kennedy Park.

### White Ribbon Campaign Event

On behalf of The Women’s Center and United Neighbors, we would like to invite you to attend the White Ribbon Campaign event at Fall River City Hall. The purpose of this event is to encourage men to work against men’s violence against women. It is the largest effort in the world to this cause. Unfortunately, violence against women is everywhere. Every nine seconds a woman is beaten by her partner in the US. Virtually all women will be sexually harassed or subjected to domineering behavior at some point in their lives.

Male members of the Fall River community will be encouraged to stand in support of all women in community. Their pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women will send a strong signal that this behavior will not be tolerated in Fall River.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m., the campaign will come to Fall River where Mayor William Flanagan will proclaim April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month. Please join us and others to show your support to your community.



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## **Governor's Youth Council**

*For the past two terms, Fall River has had representation on the Governor Deval Patrick's Youth Council!*

Governor Deval Patrick has prioritized ending youth violence in our communities, and as part of a multi-facet strategy created the Governor's Statewide Youth Council to incorporate youth voices into the policy-making process. The Youth Council serves as a critical resource in advising the Governor in making decisions and setting policy to improve the lives of young people throughout the Commonwealth.

Current Youth Council members are now serving their second and final term. The Governor's Office will be selecting 28 new Youth Council members to represent Massachusetts' 14 counties, two Council members per county. Members serve for 2 years. We are now aggressively seeking to contact and recruit potential candidates throughout the state to apply for membership in the Youth Council.

Youth Council applicants should be passionate, motivated and emerging leaders between the ages of 14 and 20. Their responsibilities will include: attending monthly meetings and conference calls, advocating for youth issues and incorporating the ideas of other youth and young adults into the creation of effective policy.

The Youth Council has advocated on various issues in the Patrick-Murray Administration; including the historic anti-bullying legislation that Governor Patrick signed in May 2010. To learn more about activities, initiatives and trainings that the Youth Council has participated in please visit [www.mass.gov/governor/youthcouncil](http://www.mass.gov/governor/youthcouncil) or contact Anny Jean-Jacques Domercant at the Governor's Office of Community Affairs (617-725-4020).

## **Youth Court Seeking Volunteers**

Youth Court (Fall River and New Bedford) is seeking new volunteers to sit on the jury, as well as to become attorneys in Youth Court. Please sign up at the Youth Court website: [NB-FRyouthcourts.org](http://NB-FRyouthcourts.org).

## **March's Events**

5 – United Neighbors Community Partnership Meeting, St. Vincent's Home Chapel, 10am

6 – Nurturing Fathers Program, United Neighbors of Fall River, 6-8pm (Beginning of 13-week training program)

7 – Youth CHOICES Meeting, CD Rec, 3pm

10 – Winter Indoor Farmers' Market, CD Rec, 8am-12pm

15 – Absolutely Incredible Kid Day Event and announcement of Youth of the Year, Eagle Event Center, 5-7pm

15 – US Attorney's Gang Summit, Bentley University

15- VOLUNTEER: Fall River Firefighters Wives Club Association assistance, 5:30pm – 8:30pm, Donation Center

16 – Katie Brown Educational Program 10th Anniversary Benefit, Eagle Event Center, 7pm

17 – VOLUNTEER: Free Family Fitness and Fun Day, UMass Dartmouth's Tripp Athletic Center, 12-4pm



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- 17 – VOLUNTEER: Fall River Firefighters Wives Club Association assistance, 8:30am – 11:30am, Donation Center
- 19-24 – National Youth Violence Prevention Week
- 23 – B.M.C. Durfee High School Leadership Group Training, 1:00pm – 2:40pm, Durfee Library
- 24 – VOLUNTEER: Britland Park Clean Up, 9am – 1pm
- 28 – MA Dept. of Public Health’s Regional Dialogue, 3pm-5pm, Bristol Community College – G Building
- 29 – The Women’s Center Open House, 12pm – 2pm, 209 Bedford St. Fall River
- 29 – Town Hall Meeting hosted by BOLD Coalition, 5:30pm – 7pm, Bristol Community College – G Building

### April’s Upcoming Events

- 4 – White Ribbon Campaign: Mayor William Flanagan to proclaim April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month, 3:30pm-5pm, Fall River City Hall
- 4 – Youth CHOICES Meeting, 3:30pm, Government Center
- 9 – Fall River Shannon Meeting, 10am, CD Rec
- 17 – Massachusetts Department of Child and Families College Fair, 11am-1pm, Holiday Inn – Marlboro, MA
- 28 – VOLUNTEER: City Wide Park Clean Ups, 8:30am – 12:30pm (cook out to follow at Kennedy Park)
- 30: Self-Defense Made Simple Class, 6-8pm, CD Rec

*Please check the website for continuous updates for upcoming events at [www.frshannon.org](http://www.frshannon.org)!*

**\*\*Shannon Partners: Please remember to email Michaela Gagne Hetzler with your updated contact information for the FR Shannon website, a written testimonial, and schedule a site visit with her if you have not already: [michaelajgagne@gmail.com](mailto:michaelajgagne@gmail.com). Thank you!**