

NYFS News & Views

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If you have any comments or suggestions for future publications, please contact Amelia Majjala at amelia@nyfs.org

A Taste of Northwest: A Restaurant Extravaganza



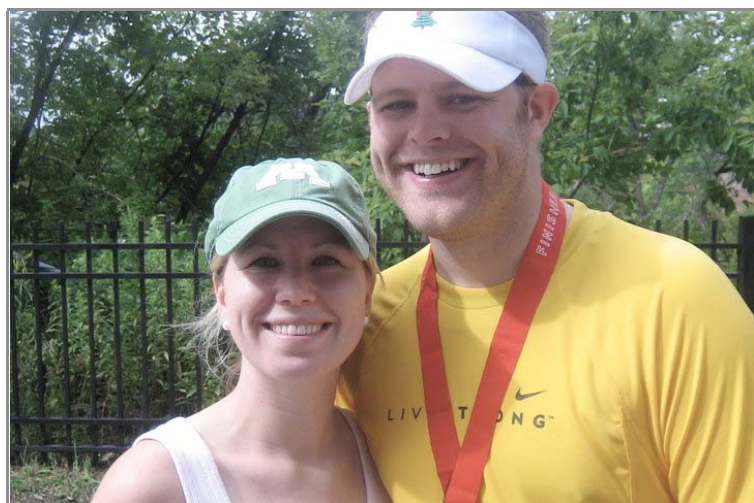
Join us for a night of great food, great prizes and a chance to help a great organization: NYFS.

The Taste of Northwest Restaurant Extravaganza will include a selection of the finest sweet and savory offerings from 23 local restaurants and caterers, a silent auction featuring local artwork, themed gift baskets and signed sports memorabilia and even a few door prize drawings. Please **click [here](#)** for a full list of participating restaurants and sponsors.

The event is Thursday, Sept. 29 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Kay Andrews Discovery and Event Center, attached to NYFS headquarters, 3490 Lexington Ave. N., in Shoreview. Tickets

are \$25 in advance, \$35 at the door. Proceeds from the event will benefit the programs of NYFS. To purchase tickets, contact Sandra Bahr at sandra@nyfs.org or register online at www.nyfs.org

Former NYFS Client to Run Twin Cities Marathon and Raise Funds for NYFS



At NYFS we are always happy to see a client make progress and reach the point where they no longer need our services. Recently we were gratified to be contacted by a former client who not only received our help, but wanted to return the favor:

Here is an excerpt of his letter to NYFS:

John Lennon wrote, 'Life is what happens to you, while you're busy making other plans.' While I was packing for college twelve years ago, life happened to me. My dad died

that night of a heart attack. The next days blurred into the next year... I was struggling with the daily grind of college and I even started lashing out at my family... In January 2001, I sought grief counseling at Northwest Youth & Family Services... I noticed a dramatic improvement in my grades, my temperament and my overall enjoyment of life... From then on, I started leading the life I knew I could - and one that would make my dad proud. I graduated from the University of Minnesota in the spring of 2003 with a bright future... Three years ago, I found the challenge I was ready for in my life; I took up triathlons and distance running after watching a good friend of mine from high school finish IRONMAN Wisconsin. That day with the inspiration at the IRONMAN finish line, I set a goal to pay homage to my dad with physical fitness. Since 2009, distance sports have become a staple of my life. This October 2, I am running the Twin Cities Marathon, my first marathon.

As I train for the marathon, my goal is to raise \$5,000 for NYFS help kids in their hour of need, just as NYFS helped me. While I had health insurance to pay for my counseling services, many do not. And I want to help those kids.

We're glad for Tony's support because oftentimes those who need our help the most are the least able to pay for it. The current economy only heightens the need for affordable mental health services and we are finding that more and more clients are either without insurance or are unable to pay their deductible. We are grateful that Tony understands the problem, too.

If you would like to support Tony and his work on behalf of NYFS, **please click [here](#)**. We are grateful for every donation and proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit low-income clients.

Fall Rake A Thon Helps Seniors Prepare for Winter

Seniors in need of a little assistance with fall yard work can look to NYFS for help. On Saturday, October 29, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., our volunteers will spread throughout the NYFS service area to help older adults rake leaves, clean up debris and get ready for winter.

The event is offered through the NYFS Senior Chore Program which helps older adults live in their homes for as long as possible with dignity and independence. While the Rake A Thon is a seasonal event, seniors can sign up for year-round help with regular housekeeping chores, lawn maintenance, snow shoveling and other services. For more information, or to volunteer for the Rake A Thon, please call Debbie Wells, Senior Chore and Volunteer Program Coordinator, at 651-379-3451 or email debbiep@nyfs.org.

NYFS Welcomes Mental Health Therapist Susan Jasko

NYFS is happy to welcome Susan Jasko, LICSW, to our outpatient mental health counseling center. Susan has worked in outpatient mental health with children and families for over 20 years.

"Children with behavior problems often have underlying emotional issues, such as sadness or anxiety. Once these are explored in therapy, children can often be more successful at school, and happier at home", she says.

Susan works with clients providing play therapy, family therapy and psychodynamic treatment to address a wide range of concerns, including depression and anxiety, family stress, the after-effects of trauma and behavioral issues. She works with all ages, including young children and adults.

For more information about our outpatient mental health program, please visit us on the web at www.nyfs.org.

Kay Andrews Discovery and Event Center: a Perfect Spot for Your Fall/Winter Event



Looking for a beautiful, yet affordable spot to host your next holiday party or event? The Kay Andrews Discovery and Event Center is taking reservations for fall and winter events.

The 10,000 square foot multipurpose facility features a catering kitchen, conference room, dining area, multipurpose gymnasium and a recreation room.

"We created a versatile space to serve the needs of our NETS students and the community" said NYFS Special Events Manager Sandra Bahr. "Past renters have

included Zumba classes, a wedding party, youth sports groups and holiday parties. We can help you create a memorable event for an affordable price.”

For more information about the Kay Andrews Discovery & Event Center, [click here](#) or email Sandra at sandra@nyfs.org.

Lessons of Summer Can Last a Lifetime



Every child needs a strong foundation upon which they can build a successful life. This includes healthy relationships with adults inside and outside their family, as well as meaningful involvement in their school, work, home and community.

But while all youth deserve these things, not every youth has them. Kids who lack access to these foundational elements for success often fall behind their peers academically, socially and in the workplace. This is sometimes referred to as the Achievement Gap but at NYFS we also know that it is an Opportunity Gap.

This gap grows significantly over the summer months when isolated, at-risk youth lack daily stimulation from school activities. Every summer NYFS works to bridge this gap by offering five-week day camps for youth ages 5-12 from three manufactured home communities in our service area. These camps help keep children intellectually and socially engaged over the summer and ready for school in the fall. The team-building activities focus on building emotional intelligence, social skills, and life skills. This year, 89 youth benefited from the camp program. Parents are grateful for the program, too. According to a survey of parents whose children participated in the Summer Camp Program last year:

- 88% reported that their child had a safe place to play
- 71% reported the their child was learning new skills
- 60% of summer camp participants reported that without NYFS their child would not have had any summer enrichment activities at all.

“Many of these kids come from single-parent households that are struggling to keep food on the table and a roof over their head,” says Youth Development Director Tim Gusk. “Summer enrichment activities, while essential, aren’t always within reach for these families.” Gusk adds that while the kids are happy just to have a fun place to go in the summer, the parents are happy that with the fun, comes lessons that will benefit youth for a lifetime.

For more information about youth development programs at NYFS, please visit us on the web at www.nyfs.org.

Senior Chore Program Offers Help for Seniors, Work for Teens



As Baby Boomers enter retirement in record numbers, many are finding that maintaining their homes is becoming increasingly difficult. NYFS' Senior Chore Program helps address that problem by matching youth and adults with seniors who need help with indoor and outdoor chores.

"We want to be sure that seniors can live independently in their homes for as long as possible," says Senior Chore Program and Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Wells. She adds that as Baby Boomers age, the need for chore services will only grow in the future.

At the same time, Wells sees the need for teen employment increasing. According to recent estimates, teen unemployment is around 24%. Wells says she's happy to match teens who need a job with seniors who need the help

Matt Schreiber, a 16-year-old student at Irondale High School, heard about the Senior Chore Program at school and decided to give it a try. "I think it's great," he said. "The hours are flexible, you get to meet a lot of nice people and I feel like I'm doing the right thing by helping people."

One of the people Matt works for is Maxine Peck, a senior and old breast cancer survivor who appreciates extra help with outside chores. She adds that she works with several youth and "couldn't ask for nicer kids," she says. "They are so polite, so helpful."

Wells is currently recruiting both new workers and new seniors and Maxine is happy to help with the effort. "I'd tell 'em not to wait," she says. "Sign up and you won't be disappointed."

For more information, call Debbie at 651-379-3451 or email debbiep@nyfs.org.

NYFS Wish List

In the interest of saving money and using our resources wisely, NYFS occasionally publishes a "wish list" of items we could use. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation of any of the following items, please contact NYFS at 651-486-3808.

Thank you!

NYFS Wish List:

- Baskets to use for gift items for next year's Taste of Northwest
- Violin for a musically talented NETS student who doesn't have an instrument

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