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Donor Spotlight A Family's Loss Creates Opportunities For Others

THE PAMMY FUND LEGACY

Pamela Lynn Posen, 20, was aboard Pan Am flight 103 from London to New York on Dec. 21, 1988, returning home after a semester abroad when the plane blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Pammy Posen was a poet, a music lover, an eternal optimist. The final page of her journal noted that one day she hoped to make a movie titled "I Laughed. That's All That Mattered."

Her father, Dr. Jack Posen, a prominent Westchester orthodontist, wanted to honor her by helping young people fulfill their dreams, so in 1989, he established the Pammy Fund at the Westchester Community Foundation. *"Her spirit is what is being carried forward in the Pammy Fund,"* Dr. Posen told the New York Times at the time. Nearly 30 years later, the Pammy Fund still supports early literacy programs for young people.

One program is the Parent-Child Home Program at Westchester Jewish Community Services, which helps families in the county's low-income communities create a home environment that prepares their children for school and academic success. Scores of 5-year-olds have started their first day of kindergarten better prepared for school thanks to the Pammy Fund's consistent support.

Briana Mosquera was 2 when her mother and grandmother enrolled in the Parent-Child Home Program. While Briana's mother worked, Briana's grandmother kindled her curiosity about learning. When Briana went to kindergarten, she was ready to learn.

Today, Briana is a social worker in New York City, helping countless families improve their lives. *"Without early support from the Pammy Fund," she says, "my family may not have been able to help me achieve academic success. I am grateful for the ways in which the Pammy Fund shaped my life."*

Dr. Posen, who died in 2009, took an active role in getting to know the families the Fund helped—he met with them and attended their graduations. Today his family carries on the good work—and Pammy's legacy lives on in every life the Pammy Fund touches.

Social worker Briana Mosquera credits the Pammy Fund with preparing her for success.



Community Matters series continues

REAL BOY

Thursday, June 1, 2017 • 7 p.m.

Jacob Burns Film Center
364 Manville Road, Pleasantville, NY 10570

"Real Boy" is the intimate story of a family in transition. As a 19-year-old navigates early sobriety, late adolescence, and the evolution of his gender identity, his mother makes her own transformation from resistance to acceptance of her trans son.

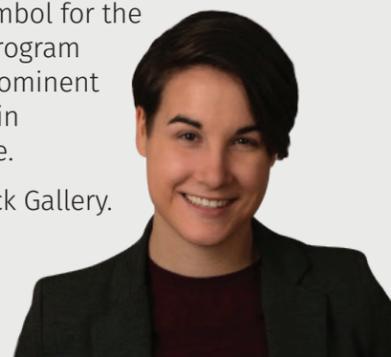
Join us for a post-film panel with Jamie Bruesehoff, a writer, speaker, and advocate whose first-born child transitioned at age 8 and became a national symbol for the transgender community, and Shepard Verbas, program manager at The LOFT Community Center, and prominent spokesperson for trans rights who was profiled in National Geographic's January 2017 Gender issue.

A reception will follow upstairs in the Jane Peck Gallery.



Jamie Bruesehoff and her daughter

Shepard Verbas



Helping young people along the way

How would you react if you encountered a clearly distraught teen? Would you turn the other way, or reach out and help?

In Westchester, mental health disorders are the main reason teens age 13 to 17 are hospitalized. Yet school staff and administrators, coaches, police, and even parents often fail to recognize or react to warning signs of mental distress. Our support to two agencies is helping them tackle this growing problem.

Youth mental-health first-aid training in Tarrytown, Ossining, and Peekskill school districts by Westchester Jewish Community Services is teaching professionals the steps in helping a distressed person: assess for risk of suicide or harm, listen nonjudgmentally, give reassurance and information, encourage appropriate professional help, and encourage self-help and other support strategies.

“Recognizing when a young person is in crisis and knowing how to help can save lives,” says Robin Melén, Westchester Community Foundation program officer.

Children who have experienced trauma at an early age need continuing support at home, so Family Services of Westchester clinicians are being trained in trauma-informed therapy, which focuses on the child’s emotional and behavioral needs as well as the environment—home, school, and community. These clinicians will counsel families in Port Chester, Yonkers, and Mount Vernon.

Helping mental-health programs like these gives young Westchester residents a better chance for a full and happy life.



3 Questions for Kathy Rosenthal, Esq.

Kathy N. Rosenthal, a partner at Rosenthal & Markowitz, LLP, specializes in trusts and estates law. She has been on the Board of Advisors of the Westchester Community Foundation for 10 years, and chairs our new Professional Advisory Council.

Q: Why did you get involved with the Foundation?

A: I saw it as a way to give back to the community, to combine my passions with community needs. As an estate-planning attorney, I can help my clients channel their philanthropic goals in a very meaningful way. The Westchester Community Foundation has been a terrific resource for me.

Q: What is the new Professional Advisory Council?

A: Professional advisors have always had a large presence on the Foundation’s Board of Advisors. Now, with the new council, professional advisors can share ideas on how to better include philanthropy into their practices.



Q: How has the Westchester Community Foundation helped you help your clients?

A: I love being a matchmaker, particularly in a win-win situation. It is very satisfying to help my clients carry out their philanthropic goals and improve the quality of life in their communities. They can direct grants while they are alive, and they can set up a fund at the Foundation as part of their estate planning. So the short answer: It makes me feel great, and, more important, the clients feel great, too.

Our Professional Advisory Council includes legal, financial management, accounting, and other professionals who are committed to helping their clients achieve philanthropic goals.

Donor luncheon briefing on immigration highlights challenges ahead

“I went into this field to help immigrants. This is the WORST I’ve ever seen.”

HAMRA AHMAD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HUDSON VALLEY JUSTICE CENTER

In the face of more aggressive federal immigration enforcement, immigrants are afraid to leave home for school, work or medical aid, because they might be stopped and deported.

Westchester’s immigrants are in crisis as fear increases, Sister Susan Gardella of the RSHM Life Center, and Hamra Ahmad of the Hudson Valley Justice Center said at a recent briefing for Westchester Community Foundation donors. Both organizations provide legal services to immigrants with our support.

Sister Susan described a second-grader’s fear “that mommy would be taken away one day.” Ms. Ahmad noted that doctors’ offices report more no-shows, and that patients are seeking their medical records because they fear any contact will raise the risk of deportation. Reports of landlords and employers exploiting vulnerable immigrants have increased. Westchester nonprofits are responding to changes,

and working together to ensure front-line providers and policy advocates are connected, the speakers said.

“Despair is not a strategy,” said Tara Seeley, Westchester Community Foundation program officer and panel moderator, quoting from blogger Abby Brockman. Donors encouraged one another to reflect about issues affecting Westchester’s diverse communities and to understand where more work needs to be done.

Thursday, May 25, noon to 1:30 pm
Donor Luncheon Briefing on environmental policy. PANELISTS: Rachel Leon, Environmental Grantmakers Association and Marcia Bystryn, New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. RSVP to Jennifer Hu Corriggio at (914) 948-5166 ext. 4.



(L-R) Hamra Ahmad of Hudson Valley Justice Center, Sister Susan Gardella of RSHM Life Center, Tara Seeley and Laura Rossi of the Foundation

What do you care about? We can help you help others. Call us @ 914-948-5166.