

COALITION NEWS

Improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.

Our Mission

“Dedicated to improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.”

In pursuit of this mission, we place particular emphasis on the following:

- Strengthening neighborhoods and community life
- Preventing alcohol and substance abuse
- Fostering economic development
- Mitigating poverty
- Supporting positive youth development
- Building bridges between residents and service agencies

Coalition Supporters

Public Sources

- MA Department for Children & Families
- MA Cultural Council
- US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- MA Department of Public Health
- MA Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

Foundation Supporters

- Fund for North Adams
- Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Local Support

- North Adams Human Services
- Contributions from our many individual supporters

The Coalition is a membership organization of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition and the Williamstown Community Chest.

To submit announcements to the Coalition News:

The *Coalition News* is a publication of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. We encourage submissions of announcements from local organizations.

March Newsletter Deadline

February 18, 2009

Please submit announcements (100 words in paragraph form) via e-mail to: jcece@nbccoalition.org or abashevkin@nbccoalition.org. If necessary, announcements may also be faxed to 413-663-9877. Thank you!

February Coalition Meeting:

A Conversation with Mayor Alcombright

Join us on **Friday, February 5** for “A Conversation with Mayor Alcombright” at our monthly Coalition forum. (Please note this is the first Friday in February; forums will typically be on the 2nd Friday of the month.) At this community forum, Mayor Alcombright will spend a few minutes talking about his immediate and long term plans for the City of North Adams. We’ll specifically talk about one item of importance for the Mayor; how we can increase safety in our neighborhoods. We hope that the February Coalition Forum can open new ways for the City of North Adams to reach out to the Northern Berkshire community.

We will begin, as always, with a round of introductions, followed by brief announcements of your upcoming events or new projects. Please do not forget to bring flyers about your announcements also, as there will be a display table in the middle of the room for them. Childcare can be available for our meeting; please contact Liz Boland at the Coalition office (663-7588) by February 1 if you need it.

We hope to see you on **Friday, February 5, 10 a.m. to noon, at the First Baptist Church in North Adams.**

-- Al Bashevkin

Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative: Update on RECONNECT

At the January NBYC meeting, 18 members got caught up on the northern Berkshire efforts of the RECONNECT Center. Bryan House of Berkshire Community Action Council provided background information on RECONNECT and shared details of current outreach and programming. RECONNECT was developed as part of a partnership between the Berkshire Community Action Council (BCAC) and the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board (BCREB) called P-21 (career pathways by age 21). RECONNECT offers holistic, personalized support to youth ages 16-24 who have left school and/or need help being connected to an education or career path. RECONNECT has a drop-in center in Pittsfield at the Catholic Youth Center and offers 15 hours/week of outreach in North Adams. For more information, contact Bryan House at bhouse@bcacinc.org. Many thanks to Bryan and his RECONNECT participant Anthony for sharing their work with the NBYC!

The NBYC is accepting SAY It Proud nominations on a rolling basis. SAY It Proud (“SAY” stands for “Supporting and Acknowledging Youth”) was a recognition award created by the NBYC a few years ago in response to the suggestion in the PNA results that youth don’t feel recognized by adults in the community for positive actions. Any community member can nominate a young person for a SAY It Proud award. Awards will be presented four times a year at public community events. For a nomination form, please visit nbccoalition.org/forms. You can nominate individuals or groups of young people ages 11-19 for participating in positive activities, making healthy choices, and/or working hard. For more information, please contact **Kate Merrigan** at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org or 663-7588.

-- Kate Merrigan