

September 11 Attack Victims To Be Aided by United Fund

WESTFIELD - The United Fund of Westfield, an organization that financially supports several local agencies, is now providing direct services to a group of local residents affected by the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

The September 11th Fund has garnered more than \$180,000 to help Westfield residents who lost loved ones or those who were injured in the attacks.

"A tragedy of this magnitude wakes people up," Linda Maggio, Executive Director of the United Fund of Westfield said. "They understand now what our agencies do all of the time. And they are giving to the September 11th Fund and to our campaign."

The fund, which began a few days after the attacks, has so far taken care of the needs of 14 Westfield families and one person who was injured.

"All immediate needs (of the families) have been taken care of with confidentiality being maintained in every case," said Matt Forstenhauser, the head of the United Fund committee assisting the families.

The new September 11th Fund came from a variety of sources. Sixth graders at Roosevelt Intermediate School contributed close to \$200, local residents sent checks or donated at the FestiFall, brownie troops sold lemonade, proceeds of the Westfield High School Booster button sales yielded \$5,000 for the fund, Edison Interme-

diante School held a ribbon sale, the Westfield Public Schools donated their Penny Funds, the Westfield Tennis Club donated \$2,000, religious organizations collected money, the Westfield Symphony Orchestra/Westfield Young Artists' Cooperative Theatre, Inc. concert added \$3,200, and the largest single donation came from the Ernst and Young Foundation in the form of a \$25,000 check.

Besides the fund, a number of Westfield businesses donated a host of gift certificates and goods, toys and bicycles were presented to the surviving 21 children, free dental services were provided, the Westfield Y and the Jewish Community Center in Scotch Plains offered free memberships to families, the New Jersey Association of Realtors paid three months of mortgage payments for those who applied, and the Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield's "Adopt-a-Family" program volunteered services from babysitting to mowing lawns.

Donations also came from other parts of the country. A group in Colorado created a quilt for each of the Westfield area children whose parents died in the attack. From Oklahoma City, the site of a terrorist attack on the Federal Building, people sent stuffed animals to be given to the children.

"I am so proud of our Westfield community," Mrs. Maggio stated. "The response has been absolutely overwhelming."



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
MAKING A BIG DECISION...Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School senior Ray Williams hugs his nine-month old sister, Jovi, before signing the papers for his full-scholarship to Purdue University as his father Raymond and mother Jenine look on. Williams, the 2001 New Jersey state track champion in the 400 meters and a fine wide receiver/cornerback on the Raiders' football team, plans to compete in track and football.

Marilyn Ryan to Serve As Parade Grand Marshal

WESTFIELD - The Union County Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee has announced that a Grand Marshal Investiture Mass, honoring this year's parade Grand Marshal, Marilyn Ryan, will be held on Sunday, February 17, at 3 p.m. at St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church on Lambert's Mill Road in Westfield.



Marilyn Ryan

A reception will immediately follow in St. Helen's Parish Center, with music by the Eamon Ryan Show Band. The donation for the reception is \$20 and ticket supplies are limited.

The Sixth Annual Union County Saint Patrick's Day Parade will take place on Saturday, March 16, beginning at 1 p.m. on Morris Avenue in Union.

The parade will be preceded by a 9 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church on Court Street in Elizabeth, followed by grandstand events at noon at the intersection of Morris and Stuyvesant Avenues in Union.

After earning a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hall University in South Orange, Ms. Ryan embarked on a 20-year career as a teacher in the parochial school systems in both Elizabeth and Linden.

She returned to school and became a licensed practical nurse, working in the Rahway Hospital Pediatrics Unit for the next 12 years.

In 1985, she assumed the position of Pastoral Associate at St. Helen's parish in Westfield. She later became the Director of the Helping Hands and Hearts Program, which is designed to meet the spiritual, financial and material needs of families in inner cities.

Ms. Ryan also serves on the advisory boards of Sister Pat's Camp for Kids with Cancer in New York and St. Joseph's Social Center in Elizabeth. She also oversees the Holy Trinity Food Pantry while volunteering time at Sister Jacinta's Soup Kitchen in Elizabeth.

"Marilyn has dedicated her entire life to those in need. She truly emulates the Hibernian Motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity," said Parade Chairman James Dougherty. "She is a most wonderful choice for Grand Marshal."

Westfield League to Sponsor Spring Class at Adult School

WESTFIELD - When the spring session of the Westfield Adult School opens on Monday, February 25, the new course schedule will include "Great Decisions 2002," a series of eight workshops on some of the nation's most important current foreign policy issues.

Developed by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA) in 1954, the class will be offered locally for the first time, under the sponsorship of the Westfield Area League of Women Voters (LWV).

Considered the FPA's flagship education program, "Great Decisions" includes new topics selected each year for nationwide discussion. Some of this year's themes include, "Why Do They Hate Us? The Roots of Terrorism;" "Korean Security Issues;" "The Middle East Peace Process;" "Columbia and Drug Trafficking;" "South Asia-Focus on India;" "AIDS in Africa;" "Russia Re-examined;" and "Energy and the Environment."

Guest speakers for specific sessions will include the chairman of the Political Science Department at Monmouth University and other foreign affairs experts.

Dr. William Librera Named New Education Commissioner

TRENTON - Dr. William L. Librera, 55, brings over 30 years of educational experience as teacher, principal, and superintendent to his position as New Jersey's 26th Commissioner of Education.

"We must be prepared to face the challenge of providing our children with the highest quality education possible," stated Dr. Librera. "I am honored to serve a Governor who is committed to making educational excellence the cornerstone of his administration."

"I look forward to spearheading the Governor's initiative to guarantee that every child is able to read by the third grade, to create greater opportunities for our school children and to instill accountability in our classrooms," he said.

"This administration is also committed to ensuring quality early childhood education so that the state's children will reach kindergarten ready to learn," he concluded.

In his years as an educator in New Jersey, Dr. Librera has reduced costs and improved effectiveness by working with staff and community to design and implement innovative practices that achieved results.

Dr. Librera's experience has spanned preschool education to higher education. Before coming to the department, he served as an Associate Professor in the Educational Leadership Department at New Jersey City University, and as President of Educational Nexus, a consulting firm in which he advised districts in such areas as special education, early childhood programs, guidance services, and magnet schools.

In his career, Dr. Librera has had over 20 years of administrative responsibility, including four superin-

tendent terms in New Jersey. From 1997 to 2001, he was Superintendent of the Allamuchy Elementary School District.

During the first year, he reduced the school budget by 10 percent without cutting any programs. He worked with a citizens' committee to develop educational alternatives. As a result of community involvement, citizens supported two consecutive budgets that reversed a trend of defeated budgets. He also revised technology staffing to improve achievement in all grades.

As Superintendent of Montclair Public Schools from 1992 to 1997, Dr. Librera's leadership resulted in four schools receiving awards for excellence, including Blue Ribbon Schools, New Jersey Star Schools and Best Practices, and the Redbook Award for Best Elementary School in New Jersey.

He created a community council to address community concerns and intensified the district's emphasis on accelerating the rate of improvement in achievement. Dr. Librera also expanded Montclair's nationally-acclaimed magnet school program by developing a Pre-K-5 Magnet School for Information and Technology and a Renaissance Middle School. In addition, Dr. Librera established a research-based Pre-K center. Eighty-five percent of Montclair's student body pursue post-secondary education.

In the Bernardsville Public Schools, where Dr. Librera was Superintendent from 1987 to 1992, he was successful in winning voter approval for a new middle school. By working with staff, he completely revised and overhauled many of the administrative, operational, and instructional practices in the district. He worked with the community to involve citizens in advisory capacities.

As Superintendent of Wallkill Valley Regional High School from 1983 to 1987, Dr. Librera developed zero-based budget practices that led to passage of four consecutive budgets after a decade of defeated budgets. He designed and implemented systems that accommodated a rapidly growing district that showed enrollment growth of 40 percent from 1983 to 1986.

Prior to his four superintendencies, Dr. Librera had served as Principal of Columbia High School in Maplewood (1980-1983), Assistant Principal of Vernon Township High School in Vernon (1978-1980), and Assistant to the Principal at West Morris High School in Chester (1977-1978).

In addition, he had seven years of experience as a social studies teacher at West Morris and Park Ridge High Schools.

Dr. Librera, who currently resides in Denville, earned both his Doctorate Degree in Education and Masters Degree in Education from Rutgers University. He also holds a Master of Arts Degree in History and a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Vermont, where he graduated in 1968.

Dr. Librera's wife, Nancy, is an oncology administrator at Valley Hospital in Ridgewood. They have two daughters and one son. Kelly Anne is a lawyer in New York City, Sally is a teacher in San Francisco Public Schools, and Billy is a graduate student at Teacher's College in New York City.

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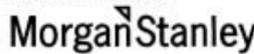
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