

Early History of the Valley Council

The Valley Council of Health & Human Services is the product of the unique collaborative spirit found among the Valley's nonprofit service providers. It grew out of Valley United Way's Partner Agency Council and a series of initiatives that demonstrated the strength and benefits of the Valley's nonprofit community working together.

In April 1993, Valley United Way invited all of the nonprofit providers in the Valley to an organizational meeting at United Way's facility in Ansonia with Marilyn Cormack of the Birmingham Group and Rick Evans of the Valley Substance Abuse Action Council serving as co-chairs. The agencies were told that the "...concept is that this group would work to facilitate cooperation and coordination. It would involve the commitment of executives to meetings that would most likely take place on a quarterly basis. Subcommittees would be formed to deal with specific issues such as state regionalization, cultural diversity, early childhood, and others." That first meeting of what was called The Valley Agency Council took place on May 4, 1993.

In the first months, the Council focused on reversing a detrimental state plan to divide the Valley among three separate service delivery areas, developing a mission statement and by-laws, forming early childhood and AIDS committees and working on diversity in the Valley. By October, a Planning Committee was established and proposed seeking a grant to participate in a National Civic League Health Communities and Civic Assistance Program as a vehicle for planning.

On March 1, 1994, The Council formally adopted the Name Valley Council of Health & Human Services and a month later, the Council received a large grant from the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven to start the Healthy Communities Project with the National Civic League. That project did develop into a community planning project called Healthy Valley 2000 which eventually created more than 25 successful community projects which eventually served as the Foundation for the Valley's 2000 selection as an All America City award winner.

Key Accomplishments

Historically, the Valley Council has been involved in a variety of initiatives that have improved the quality of life in our Valley. Many of the initiatives either started or supported by the Council have grown into programs that continue today as stand-alone programs or as a program of Council members' organizations. These past and present initiatives include:

All America City; AIDS Project, Ryan White Funding; Community Conversations on Education & Childhood Poverty; Community of Promise, America's Promise Program; Cradle to Grave Retreat and Report; Electronic Valley website; Family Violence Task Force; Healthy Valley 2000; Latex Foam Fire Response; Legislative Breakfasts; Mini Grants to Education; Professional Development Conferences & Trainings; Project CONect; Valley Alliance for Economic Growth; Valley Care Collaborative (HIV/AIDS); Community Health Profile; Valley Heritage Driving Tours; Valley Transportation Task Force; Voter Registration Drive; Regional School-to-Career Initiative; Youth Yellow Pages; Early Childhood Task Force and Discovery projects; Mental Health Crisis Team; Valley CARES Quality of Life Report; Senior Services Council; National River Heritage Designation efforts; Food Security Task Force; Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan; Leadership Greater Valley

Valley Council Leadership History

Year	Chair	Vice Chair
1993	Marilyn Cormack/Rick Evans	
1994	Marilyn Cormack/Rick Evans	
1995	Marilyn Cormack/Rick Evans until May when Rick moved	
*1996	Jack Walsh	Tom Carnevale/Rich Knoll **
1997	Jack Walsh	Rich Knoll
1998	Rich Knoll	Bill Powanda
1999	Rich Knoll	Bill Powanda
2000	Bill Powanda	Ron Barisano
2001	Bill Powanda	Ron Barisano
2002	Ron Barisano	Michael Wynne
2003	Michael Wynne	Sue Reilly
2004	Michael Wynne	Sue Reilly
2005	Sue Reilly	Karen Spargo
2006	Sue Reilly	Karen Spargo
2007	Karen Spargo	Joyce Barclay
2008	Karen Spargo	Joyce Barclay
2009	Joyce Barclay	Pam Mautte
2010	Joyce Barclay	Pam Mautte
2011	Pam Mautte	John McGann
2012	Pam Mautte	John McGann
2013	Pam Mautte	Victor Pittman ***
2014	Pam Mautte	Diane Stroman
2015	Diane Stroman	Patricia Tarasovic

*Election of officers was first held at the first official annual meeting in December, 1995

** Tom Carnevale left the area and resigned the position, and Rich Knoll was elected in June, 1996

*** John McGann left the council in November, 2012 and was unable to assume the Chair position. At the annual meeting in December, 2012 Victor Pittman was elected as Vice Chair.

Creation of Valley Council

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 21, 1993
From: Jack Walsh
To: Valley non-profit agency directors
Subject: Valley Agency Council

For the last several years we have been fortunate to work with many of our funded agencies through our Member Agency Council. Agencies have had the opportunity to come together to discuss common issues and concerns. As a result we were able to run a highly successful series of workshops attended by many area non-profits. Several other initiatives involving area agencies have also taken place recently. Following our government breakfast in January, an ad hoc committee was formed to deal with the state's plan for reorganization. We also worked with the XO Committee to plan two workshops on cultural diversity for the entire community. Another group is currently working on a summer directory of youth programs. Still another group is looking at the AIDS issue in the Valley. There is also an effort to look at early childhood issues. The Brown Bag luncheons have brought area service providers together to discuss issues of concern.

These cooperative efforts are a positive sign for the Valley. At the same time, it is becoming more and more apparent that there is a need for a mechanism to help foster this growing spirit of cooperation. The United Way would like to help facilitate that process by expanding our core group of member agencies into a Valley Council for all non-profit service providers based in the Valley. I have asked Marilyn Cormack of the Birmingham Group and Rick Evans of the Valley Substance Abuse Action Council to co-chair this group through its initial stages. Both represent agencies that serve the entire Valley and work together with other agencies to accomplish their missions. Rick's agency itself is a product of a community-wide retreat held several years ago.

Our concept is that this group would work to facilitate cooperation and coordination. It would involve the commitment of executives to meetings that would most likely take place on a quarterly basis. Subcommittees would be formed to deal with specific issues such as state regionalization, cultural diversity, early childhood, and others. We are inviting you and other Valley non-profit leaders to a meeting on Tuesday, May 4 at 8:30 A.M. at the Valley United Way (75 Liberty Street, Ansonia) to discuss the concept and the steps needed to make it happen.

We have seen many times in the past that the Valley is a unique place because of its cooperative spirit in making this a better place for all of us. The formation of an Agency Council can help to foster an even higher level of cooperation. I look forward to seeing you on May 4th.

