

W CENTERPIECE

THE ENGLISH CONVERSATION PARTNERS PROGRAM

Learning that nearby Yale University serves more than 3,700 international students and scholars gave Whitney Center resident Maria Levinson an idea. Whitney Center provides rich and varied activities programs, but for those who yearn for a way to be of service to the greater New Haven community, nothing was in place. Why not start something up with Yale?

“I contacted Elisabeth Kennedy, Assistant Director of Yale’s Office of International Students and Scholars, and suggested that residents of Whitney Center might enjoy meeting some of their international students and scholars and offering them opportunities for practicing and improving their English,” says Levinson, who arrived at Yale with a full and clear description of Whitney Center, as well as the detailed outline of the planned program.

Kennedy embraced the idea immediately. “Levinson’s idea would serve a need by meeting a need: connecting to our students and scholars who are far away from their own networks of care and support. She also



Elisabeth Kennedy and Maria Levinson

suggested that I come and be her guest at Whitney Center, visit her home, have lunch in the dining room and tour the community so I could understand the context better.”

Within a matter of weeks, students and scholars were responding to this e-mail that Levinson created and Yale posted:

English Conversation. Retired teachers, professors and others with excellent language skills would like to meet international students, scholars and their families. We offer one-to-one English conversation and other help. Free of charge.

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WHITNEY CENTER’S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ✦ FALL 2010

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WHITNEY CENTER

*A heritage of
exceptional senior living*

Fall 2010

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“We found that communicating with the international students by e-mail worked best. It was quick and simplified reaching participants with complicated schedules. It also eliminated misunderstandings because of difficulties in pronunciation,” says Levinson.

“The desire to give to one’s community can spring from many places,” says Kennedy. “Altruism, obligation, the practice of generosity or even just something to do. When that desire is well matched with an answerable need, not just individual partnerships but [new] communities are formed, strengthened or reshaped. Something is shared that has the potential to affect positive change. The world is made a better place.”

Levinson’s idea became The English Conversation Partners Program, which she has nurtured, managed and enjoyed. International students come to Yale from all over the world. “We have had students from Italy, Germany, France, Latin America, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Iran, China, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan,” says Levinson. “Most of them already have a fairly good command of English but are much better at reading and writing than speaking. Many do not dare to speak because they will make mistakes or sound ridiculous. A one-to-one conversation program is an excellent vehicle for overcoming such fears. All have learned grammar, but many still have difficulty putting words in the right order; for others, pronunciation is the main problem.”

“Over the past nine years, I have launched and sustained various programs involving hundreds of volunteers, but none have felt as natural and easy to manage as The English Conversation Partners Program,” says Kennedy. “Moreover, the bonds that are formed are particularly delightful to witness. Each year [since the program began] our office sponsors a luncheon at Whitney Center for all the conversation partners and their families, and there is palpable joy and caring in the unique connections between the U.S. seniors and the partners from all over the world.”

Though the name of this program stresses English conversation, the program has grown into a wonderful opportunity for cultural exchange. This, according to Levinson, “is stimulating for both groups.”

Kennedy and Levinson agree that the success of The English Conversation Partners Program — six years old and still growing — is due to the fact that it satisfies both partners’ needs. The students improve their English, gain support and are helped to adjust. The seniors enjoy the relationships with young people, feel stimulated and enjoy the satisfaction of being valued and of service to others. “We hope our experience will lead other universities and senior communities to form similar partnerships for mutual benefit.”

TOPPING OUT CEREMONY

On August 10, Whitney Center celebrated the placement of the last steel beam in the Renaissance Expansion’s internal structure with a Topping Out Ceremony. The celebration occurred outside under tents set up on the top level of the new parking structure. Whitney Center’s Board of Directors, future residents, staff and project team members were able to sign the beam before it was hoisted into place. Add in a wonderful array of food, drinks and a jazz band, and the celebration was enjoyed by all.



Workers place the last steel beam into position

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The new building is perfectly positioned so that to the north you can see Sleeping Giant; to the east, East Rock; to the west, West Rock; and to the south, downtown New Haven. The nearby tree-lined views are amazing at any angle, from any apartment.

Dear Friends,

Now, I know I have discussed in the past the wonderful landscaping that surrounds Whitney Center. I know I have mentioned the cultural offerings and architectural sights of nearby New Haven. But it wasn't until I climbed to the top floor of the new Whitney Center Renaissance Expansion that I truly understood how beautiful the area really is.

If you have not seen the new building for yourself or all of the changes coming to Whitney Center, I encourage you to join one of our hard-hat tours. I think you will find the view of the future here at Whitney Center just as beautiful as I do.

Sincerely,



Gregory B. Gravel, *President & CEO of Whitney Center*

A View From the Top



Whitney Center's Renaissance Expansion construction continues at a rapid pace. The new parking garage is complete and is already in use. All of the structural steel for the apartment building has been erected and sheathing on the southern half of the building, as well as window installation, is nearly complete. Whitney Center's goal for the apartment building

continues to be getting the entire building erected and the building envelope (masonry walls, windows and doors) completed by mid-December. Construction is currently on track to meet or exceed this goal.

A collection of construction photos and a link to a time-lapse view of the construction site can be found on the Whitney Center website at www.whitneycenter.com.

MEET DAVID RATLIFF,



WHITNEY CENTER'S NEW CFO

Making the move to Hamden, Connecticut, from Memphis, Tennessee, wasn't a difficult decision for David Ratliff, Whitney Center's new CFO. "I haven't been to the Northeast in quite awhile and after 25 years in Tennessee, seeing a new part of the country was of interest to me." The new CFO joined the staff at Whitney Center in April during a very exciting time, as the Renaissance Expansion is well underway. "It's an exciting opportunity for me to be CFO at a well-established community with a great combination of stability and growth. Plus the Whitney Center management team is top notch."

With 25 years of experience in the senior living industry, starting with financing and investment

and then ownership and management, David is very familiar with the responsibilities that come along with the new position he has accepted. In the late '90s, he worked for American Retirement Corporation as it grew into one of the largest for-profit senior living companies in the country. From there it was on to CRSA, a Tennessee management company that specializes in not-for-profit, single-site communities like Whitney Center.

An avid science fiction reader, David and his wife Esther have four grown children who reside in Tennessee, Missouri and Alaska. Though they didn't make the move to Hamden, David's dogs, cats and numerous other pets did. "Esther and I have a lot of pets!" he said. "We also love blues music and have been on several blues-themed Caribbean cruises." We hope it's smooth sailing for this new CFO from here on out.

LIVING HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND WISE

Attend the Healthy, Wealthy and Wise lecture series sponsored by Whitney Center, and learn valuable information about brain health, current financial resources and today's senior communities.

HEALTHY:

Brain Health, an Emerging Field

Tuesday, Oct. 5, 2010

Come learn about the emerging field of brain health and what you can do to keep your mind active and your memory sharp.

PRESENTATION GIVEN BY:

Donna B. Fedus, M.A.

Gerontologist

Coordinator, Elder Programs

The Consultation Center

Yale University School of Medicine

WEALTHY:

Financial Considerations
for Today's Seniors

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2010

Discussion will focus on today's challenging economic environment, with ideas on how to make the most of current financial resources.

PRESENTATION GIVEN BY:

Randi Oster

Long-Term Care Specialist

Long-Term Planning Associates, LLC

WISE:

Innovations in Today's
Senior Communities

Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2010

Information on today's senior residential communities, including independent residences, amenities, lifestyle conveniences and continuum of care options.

PRESENTATION GIVEN BY:

Sharon Brooks

CEO and Senior Living Consultant
SB&A

All three events will be held at the **New Haven Country Club** and will begin at **10:00 a.m.**

Call **(203) 848-2641** to reserve a seat at any session.



The Good News About the Real Estate Market

BY MAUREEN CAMPBELL 

President, Pearce Plus Senior Living Services

There is both good and bad news on the real estate front. I'm sure that many of you have been hearing or reading recent reports about the sluggish progress being made in the real estate recovery. Early in the year, there were positive expectations. The number of sales was up and median sales prices were holding steady. The second half has shown otherwise. The short-term fixes used to bolster the real estate market have proved to be just that: short-term fixes. Since the sunset of the homebuyer tax incentives on April 30 of this year, the number of pending sales has declined. The "experts" now seem to feel that the only true solution to the challenges in the housing market are the creation of jobs and the increase in consumer confidence that jobs will create.

The good news is that homes that are priced properly are selling quickly. Our senior clients, along with other motivated sellers, are not waiting for a market turnaround to make things happen. They are pricing for today's market...and having success.

It is time for us to acknowledge that the "bubble" is over. While back in 2006, sellers might have been able to sell their homes for 20–30% more, if the goal is to sell a home today, then they must price it at today's market value. And while homes may not sell for as much as they could have 4 years ago, they will certainly sell for more than the cost to purchase them 20 or 30 years ago. The reality is that people who have lived in their homes for an extended period of time and have little or no mortgage obligation are way ahead of the competition. They are in control of their fate. They have benefited from years

of appreciation and can price their homes realistically and still realize a sizable profit.

By planning your move to Whitney Center and utilizing the Whitney Center MovAbility Program, Pearce Plus Senior Services can help you determine the best price for your home. A Pearce Plus coordinator assists in the selection of program-approved Realtors, advocates on the seller's behalf, reviews the marketing strategy, requests the submission of monthly reports, discusses the pros and cons of household improvements and makes certain that our clients are kept informed of any developments. The Whitney Center MovAbility Program and Pearce Plus help their senior clients significantly reduce the average days on the market of their home.

The MovAbility Program also alleviates many of the responsibilities associated with such a major undertaking. Pearce Plus offers many varied resources, from painters and handymen who do odd jobs to get a house in good shape to estate sale professionals, economical movers and packers, stagers and reputable charities for donations, just to name a few.

Making the move from family home to a new community can be stressful and overwhelming. When that process is simplified, you will be able to concentrate on planning for the future and looking forward to a new and stress-free life.

To learn more about the MovAbility Program, contact the Whitney Center Marketing Information Center at (203) 848-2641, or call Pearce Plus Senior Services at (888) 473-2723.

OCTOBER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 2

Event: Whitney Center Movie Night
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Movie: "Swing Time"

OCTOBER 3

Event: Whitney Center Concert Series
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Performer: Students from the Yale School of Music

OCTOBER 4

Event: Whitney Center Lecture Series
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Speaker: Jody Sindelar, Yale University

OCTOBER 6

Event: Whitney Center Bus Trip
Time: 1:15 p.m.
Place: Long Wharf Theater
Performance: *Ella The Musical*

OCTOBER 8

Event: Whitney Center Movie Night
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Movie: "Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex"

OCTOBER 10

Event: Whitney Center Concert Series
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Performer: John and Barbara Metz, piano and cello

OCTOBER 11

Event: Whitney Center Lecture Series
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Speaker: Paul Dubinsky, Wayne University

OCTOBER 16

Event: Whitney Center Movie Night
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Movie: "Second Chorus"

OCTOBER 17

Event: Whitney Center Concert Series
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Performer: Zizi Yu, violin

OCTOBER 18

Event: Whitney Center Lecture Series
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Speaker: Robert Ellickson, Yale University Law School

OCTOBER 19

Event: Whitney Center Bus Trip
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Sprague Hall
Performer: Chamber Music Society at Yale

OCTOBER 19

Event: Whitney Center Foreign Film Night
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Movie: "La Guerre est Finie"

OCTOBER 21

Event: Whitney Center Bus Trip
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Woolsey Hall
Performer: New Haven Symphony Orchestra

OCTOBER 22

Event: Whitney Center Bus Trip
Time: 7:15 p.m.
Place: Woolsey Hall
Performer: Yale Philharmonia

OCTOBER 23

Event: Whitney Center Movie Night
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Movie: "Hud"

OCTOBER 24

Event: Whitney Center Concert Series
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Performer: Alex Solomon, piano

OCTOBER 25

Event: Whitney Center Lecture Series
Time: 7:45 p.m.
Place: Whitney Center Common
Speaker: John Levy, DDS

For more information,
call Whitney Center at
(203) 281-6745.



WHITNEY CENTER
Stay Ahead of the Curve.



200 Leeder Hill Drive • Hamden, CT 06517-2749
(203) 848-2641 • (800) 237-3847
www.whitneycenter.com • mail@whitneycenter.com



JOIN US FOR A HARD-HAT TOUR

Did you know that you can see the progress of the Renaissance Expansion firsthand by taking a hard-hat tour of the construction site? During the tour, you will get to see the progress of the new building and its many amenities, the layout of the new apartments and the amazing views of Sleeping Giant, East Rock and downtown New Haven. To schedule a hard-hat tour, contact the Marketing Information Center by calling (203) 848-2641 or visit www.whitneycenter.com.



View of Sleeping Giant from the Renaissance Expansion



**Yes, I'd like more information
about the Whitney Center expansion!**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Best time to call: _____ a.m. _____ p.m.

E-mail _____





WHITNEY CENTER

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