School of Education and Allied Human Services
Youth, Violence and Gang Prevention:
Promoting Healthy Alternatives

Thursday, November 15, 2007
8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Multipurpose Room
Sondra and David S. Mack Student Center
North Campus

Funding provided by Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice
and the State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association
WORKSHOP A: (Two-part workshop; registration is required for both Session I and Session II)
Team-Based Gang Intervention and Suppression
This two-part workshop will explore how a community can develop a localized plan of action to deal with serious gang problems through the use of the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention comprehensive gang model. Workshop topics will include conducting an assessment of the growing problem, developing an intervention team, and activities within five key strategy areas that include organizational change and development, community mobilization, social intervention, opportunities provision, and prevention. Workshop I will have the opportunity to discuss youth needs, community assets and the resilience of today’s youth.
Presenter: Michelle D. Arcinga, Senior Research Associate, National Youth Gang Center

WORKSHOP B: Put Your Faith in Us
This workshop will explore the faith-based community response to gang prevention and intervention. Successful program models from throughout the Low-Long Island region will be presented and discussed.
Presenters: Reverend Ramin Jackson, First Baptist Church, Riverhead
Biographer Reginald Benjamin, ABB & Leadership Center, Hempstead

WORKSHOP C: (Two-part workshop; registration is required for both Session I and Session II)
Cultural Issues in Gang Suppression
This two-part workshop will include a look at the cultural issues that influence gangs, gang traditions (which are affected by ethnic/racial considerations), the effects of media portrayals on gang membership, and gang prevention and intervention. Successful program models from throughout the Long Island region will be presented and discussed.

WORKSHOP D: (Two-part workshop; registration is required for both Session I and Session II)
“Same in the Same Cliques: Ending a War on Gangs by Declaring Peace on Our Youth”
Part I – Come listen and experience the life of real casualties of the “war on gangs” and gang violence. Former gang-involved youth and parents who have lost children to the senseless plague of gang violence, share their stories in an effort to provide hope and guidance to those working with this population. This workshop provides participants with an inside view of the addictive lifestyle that is destroying our community and the potential of our youth if they decide to change. Listen to the adversity they are facing as they try to redirect their lives, overcome the loss of a child or get their lives back on track. Learn about the challenges they face, and most importantly what has gotten them to the point where they welcome change.
Part II – STRONG Youth, Inc. was established in June 2000 to reduce gang violence and provide alternatives for gang-involved youth. Seven years later, what have we learned? Learn what works, what doesn’t, and, most importantly, what strategies need to be implemented in an effort to build “strong” youth and change the world one child at a time.
Presenters: Sergio Arroyo, Executive Director, STRONG, Inc., and parents.

WORKSHOP E: How Girls Bully: Recognizing, Understanding and Stopping Relational Aggression
Spreading rumors, “friendly” put-downs, exclusion from the popular clique, writing threatening and embarrassing anonymous messages are all examples of relational aggression – behaviors recognized and remembered by every adult female! Girls using relationships to embarrass or control their peers is not new to the school scene, but has finally been exposed. Join us as we take an in-depth look at this form of peer violence and discuss strategies to combat this destructive behavior.
Presenter: Cindy Pierce Lee, Associate Director, SCOPE Education Services.

WORKSHOP F: Developing Safe Schools/Healthy Students
Two comprehensive school-based models will be presented. Representatives from the Riverhead Council for Unity will discuss how they utilize this National High School, High School model as a comprehensive high school, middle school and town-wide project. Learn how students became empowered young people, with the skills needed to promote safety, unity and achievement in their schools and communities. The Uniondale School District was awarded a highly competitive federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant two years ago. In the past two years, the coordinator, in collaboration with the school district administration, school security, staff, law enforcement and various community agencies, has worked tirelessly to improve students’ sense of self-worth, well-being, and safety in the school and community. Join us to discuss the challenges and successes of the Uniondale School District initiative.
Presenters: Theresa Dredz and representatives from Riverhead Community Council for Unity

WORKSHOP G: Making the Case for Positive Youth Development
This interactive workshop will provide workshop participants with evidence on the constructive impact of Positive Youth Development in programming with high-risk children. By identifying, analyzing, and assessing the conditions that shape the lives of high-risk youth, attendees will have both the opportunity and the necessity to ask questions about the prevention and intervention efforts they support and teach. Participants will be challenged to explore existing evidence on the continuing efficacy of their efforts and the potential for new research on effective practice.

WORKSHOP H: Connecting Prevention, Redirection and Deterrence: The Nassau County Gang Prevention Strategy
With Operation Catalyst as its centerpiece, Nassau County has built a comprehensive gang prevention model that integrates prevention, education and deterrence in an effort to reduce gang violence. The presenters will discuss how each of these vital components contributes to guidance for gang-involved youth, while supporting their efforts for positive change.

WORKSHOP I: The Transformation of Gang Members Into Entrepreneurs
This workshop will describe the evolution of Homeboys Industries’ current activities and successes in transforming gang members into viable business leaders.

WORKSHOP J: Dimensions of Violence and Prevention
This workshop will explore the psychological understandings of adolescents who join gangs and traumatic precursor antecedents such as childhood abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Strategies for working with the adolescent, family and community to enhance resilience will also be explored.

WORKSHOP K: Ghouls From the Nursery – Tracing the Roots of Violence
Where do the violent kids who join gangs come from and what can we do to stem the tide? This workshop will look at ways to stop our youth from joining gangs. The causes of and solutions to gang violence are complex and multifaceted. A growing body of scientific research shows that abuse and neglect in the earliest months and years often lead to violence in older children and adults.

WORKSHOP L: Coming Home … Youth Resty Models
This workshop will explore the challenges and victories faced by youth offenders once they re-enter their communities. Also addressed will be the roles of law enforcement, school and community organizations in creating a positive transition for youth offenders.

WORKSHOP M: Project “Safe Neighborhood”: Focus on Schools, Peacemakers and Violence
Project Safe Neighborhood is a comprehensive enforcement, intervention and prevention strategy to reduce gun and gang crime in the United States. Project Safe Neighborhood is the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office’s innovative school-based violence prevention strategy that focuses on reducing gun violence by addressing the root causes of violence through education and community engagement in the schools. This workshop will present some of the creative approaches that have been used, and discuss some of the “lessons learned” and “best practices.”

WORKSHOP N: Targeting School Violence: Preventing the Unthinkable
This workshop will focus its attention on analyzing major school shooting incidents that have occurred in the United States. The presentation teaches behavioral and psychological indicators that typically present themselves in the perpetrator of these horrific acts. The presentation will then explain the technical tools and information to school administrators, teachers, parents, friends and loved ones, on how to recognize the warning signs of a critical incident or injection in the future.