



Getting to the Root of the Problem GRASSROOTS

The Newsletter of the Hunger Action Network of New York State

August 2011

Faces of Hunger Action Network

Derrick Boykin of Bread for the World has served on the Board of Directors of Hunger Action Network for several years and is chair of its membership committee.

Derrick, as Northeast Regional Organizer for Bread, helped organize numerous forums throughout NYS with Hunger Action as part of our joint project, the Faith and Hunger Network.

Derrick, who will be formerly ordained as a Minister this fall, was recently promoted to the position of Associate for African American Leadership Outreach for Bread. Derrick presently serves as interim pastor at Memorial Community Church in Westchester and previously was a pas-

cont. page 12



Membership Meeting - Sept. 19th “Income Inequality, the case for wealth redistribution”

The Hunger Action Network annual membership meeting will be held in Albany this year on Monday Sept.

19 from 9:30 to 4 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut St.

The theme for this year’s annual meeting will be addressing the growing problem of income inequality.

The richest 1% of New Yorkers now receive 35% of the state’s income - the worst situation since 1927, right before the Great Depression. When the wealthy have all the money, the economy collapses due to the lack of consumer spending by average Americans.

Closely related to the problem of income inequality is the need for job creation. Unemployment for the poorest Americans is 30% or more, higher than during the Great Depression. It is even higher for people of color, especially among youth. Unfortunately, neither the State

Legislature or Congress have supported strong public jobs programs like FDR initiated to put American back to work in the 1930s.

2012 is also the 30th anniversary of the founding of Hunger Action Network. We plan to use 2012 as an opportunity to strengthen the organization, building our membership at the local and state levels, and refocusing the public’s attention on the pervasive and growing problem of hunger. We are discussing holding a series of Hunger Summit around the state to discuss how hunger has changed over the last 30 years and what still needs to be done. We also want to applaud the tremendous work of the so many volunteers and staff who have dedicated themselves to anti-hunger work over the years.

A major focus of the annual membership meeting will be to get input from supporters throughout the state on how best to build our membership during these challenging political times. There will small group meetings in the morning to help develop an organizing and outreach plan for the coming year.

cont. page 12

In This Issue of Grassroots..

Problems with Federal budget	3
Farm Bill	4
Summer Meals in NYS	5
Greenspace	6
Child Poverty Soars	8
Wealth Gap Widens	9
NY Healthcare Bill	10
Children’s Art Project	11
Vt Single Payer	13
Federal Legislation for CSAs	14

Hunger Action Network of New York State

275 State Street, Albany NY 12210 - (518) 434-7371; Fax 434-7390

64 Fulton Street, rm 801, NY NY 10038 - (212) 741-8192; Fax 741-7236

920 Albany Street, Schenectady NY 12307 (518) 688-2054; Fax 688-2055

www.hungeractionnys.org - email info@hungeractionnys.org

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Austerity not prosperity -The new motto of the American political establishment

There are many grounds for complaining about the recent fiasco in Congress over the debt ceiling. The wealthy were not made to share the pain. Too many essential domestic programs took major cuts. A handful of right-wing ideologues in the House were able to thwart the will of the rest of Congress and the America people because they were willing to drop a nuclear bomb on the American economy.

The President doesn't seem to understand the politics of political negotiations. He lacked the courage to take unilateral action to raise the debt ceiling and threw Social Security and Medicare on the chopping block. He continues to rack up record donations from Wall Street while daring his base to walk away from him. Whose side is he really on?

The political establishment acts as if the Great recession and unemployment crisis doesn't exist. (And of course, forget about climate change or peak oil.)

Talk about your job killing budgets. Slashing government spending in the midst of a major recession is the traditional recipe for further economic collapse.

Nobel prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz recently explained that when the rich have so much money - the US has the greatest income inequality since 1927 - it makes no economic sense to give them more money (e.g., tax cuts). The only thing they can do with more money is gamble in the financial markets. And on the off chance that some of them might want to invest in building a factory, it wouldn't do any good because consumers don't have money to buy the products made.

The bible promotes the concept of Jubilee, reordering the whole economy every fifty years through the cancellation of debt and restoration of community. America needs that now. The trickle up theory - put money in the pockets of the poor and the rich will figure out how to get it into their bank accounts soon enough but in the meantime people can feed and house themselves.

While ignoring the fact that job creation and the economy were the voters' greatest concerns, Congress also ignored the reason for the national debt (which is still lower than in other time in our country's history).

The government's deficit is not due to excessive spending on domestic programs but from massive tax cuts to the wealthy (including a \$900 billion cut within the last year) and from paying for two (now three) wars and the war on terror (military spending has doubled since 9/11).

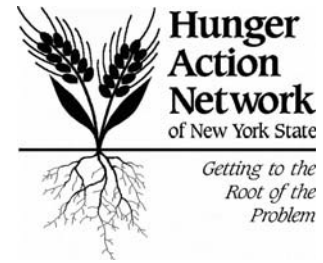
The economy is in the tank because of income inequality and because of the greed and criminal misdeeds of the financial community, bankers and Wall Street. Not only are they not going to jail, they have received literally trillions of dollars in taxpayer bailouts. (A GAO audit of the Federal Reserve found that the U.S. recently provided \$16 trillion in secret loans to bail out American and foreign banks and businesses.)

America is in a new age of robber barons but since they own all the media, no one is reporting it - instead, tiny Tea Party demonstrations become major news. And the rich own both parties, who compete to give more money to the wealthy while proclaiming only they can save America.

Don't mourn. Get Angry. Organize. Redistribute the Wealth.

In hope,

Mark Dunlea



Grassroots is published four times a year by the Hunger Action Network of New York State.

DOWNSTATE OFFICE

64 Fulton St, Rm 801
New York, NY 10038
(212) 741-8192
Fax (212) 741-7236

Mark A. Dunlea, Esq.
Executive Director

UPSTATE OFFICE

275 State Street, Albany NY 12210
(518) 434-7371
Fax (518) 434-7390

Deb Catozzi
Administrative Director

HAMILTON HILL FOOD PROCESSORS

920 Albany St., Schenectady NY
12307
(518) 688-2054
Fax (518) 688-2055

Vincent Ross
Project Director

Dale Lutz
Chef Instructor

Juliet Niles
Production Assistant

What is Wrong with the Federal Budget Deal by Coalition for Human Needs

What the nation needs from Congress and the Administration is a plan to create jobs and stop the economy's downward slide. What we've gotten is a manufactured crisis over the federal authority to borrow, and a solution to that crisis that will lead inevitably to more harm to low and moderate income people.

The price of allowing the federal government to pay its bills will be more than \$900 billion in cuts over the next ten years, followed by another \$1.5 trillion in budget reductions to be determined by a new joint committee of Congress. If Congress does not enact the joint committee's recommendations, automatic cuts will take effect. The joint committee can recommend new revenues as

part of its deficit reduction plan. But based on the failure by both parties to end upper income tax cuts a year ago and the intransigence of right wing members now, we know that it will be a difficult struggle, to say the least, to include new revenues in the plan.

Despite the difficulty, revenues must be part of the nation's deficit reduction strategy. It is unconscionable and dam-

aging to the economy for millionaires and billionaires to continue to rake in hundreds of billions of dollars while children, seniors, people with disabilities, the unemployed and uninsured get less health care, food, education, and other essential services.

The Budget Control Act includes some important provisions that reduce



the threats to vulnerable people. The first round of more than \$900 billion in cuts will include about \$350 billion in reductions to military spending, assuring that education, nutrition assistance, children's services, affordable housing, home energy aid, as well as environmental protection and many other domestic needs

do not bear the full brunt of the cuts. In addition, if automatic cuts are triggered, half the reductions will come from military accounts, and essential low income programs will be exempt. These protections are necessary, but they are not sufficient.

The Budget Control Act propels Congress towards a set of choices, leaving the details to future legislative battles.

HUNGER ACTION MEMBER SURVEY

As part of our 30th anniversary revisioning Hunger Action Network is conducting a survey of members to determine how we can best help them with anti-hunger efforts. The survey can be found at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7M2C9KB> or you may link to it from our website. If you would like a hard copy of the survey please contact us. Thanks for your input

Board of Directors

Minister Derrick Boykin
Bread for the World

William DiFazio
St. Johns University, NYC

Ron Deutsch
New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness

Rev. Ozzie Edwards
Harlem Community Employment Orientation Program

Dennis Hanratty
Mount Vernon United Tenants

Rev. Joyce Hartwell
The Interfaith Alliance of NYS

Rev. Debra Jameson
FOCUS Churches, Albany

Kelly Ann Kowalski
Food For All, Buffalo

Bill Peltz
NYS Labor/Religion Coalition

Brian Riddell
Dutchess Outreach, Poughkeepsie

Christy Robb
Hour Children, Long Island City

Tyletha Samuels
Community Voices Heard, NYC

Robert Schwartz
Interfaith Voices Against Hunger

Terri Scofield
Universal Living Wage Campaign

Heidi Siegfried
Center for Independence of the Disabled of New York

Rev. Terry Troia
Project Hospitality, Staten Island

David Van Arsdale
Onondaga Community College

Wanted: A Farm Bill that Helps Farmers & Consumers

The Federal Farm Bill is up for renewal next year, as it is every five years. The farm bill is how the federal government sets overall food and agricultural policy for the country. It needs an overhaul so it will help family farms and promote healthier diets.

The future of the farm bill is threatened by the recent negotiations over the budget and debt. With prices for some farm products at record highs, cutting farm subsidies was a tempting target.

House Republicans also sought to slash funding for food stamps. While most people assume the farm bill primarily is supposed to help farmers, two-thirds of its spending goes to food stamps (SNAP) and other nutrition programs. Yet hunger in America is at record levels. SNAP benefits fail to provide families with enough funding to obtain a healthy diet.

Some want to end the entitlement status of food stamps, turning it into a flat block grant. Right now, when the economy is bad and more people are out of work, food stamp spending increases as more people apply for benefits. The Republicans want to cap food stamp spending, arguing that it drives up government expenditures when the budget is tight. Advocates respond that during troubled economic times food stamps are most needed and program expansion should be expected.

Food stamps benefits need to be raised so households can afford a nutritious diet. Many of the three million New Yorkers who utilize emergency food programs see their food stamps run out way before the month is over. A critical problem is that the food stamp program does not reflect the high cost of housing in many parts of our state.

Revised federal health guidelines urge

Americans to eat many more fruits and vegetables. Yet hardly any money in the Farm Bill goes to these healthy foods. Instead, the Farm Bill funds sugar (corn syrup) and fats (soy), resulting in a diet of heavily processed unhealthy food that leads to expensive health problems such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

Family farms continue to disappear at an alarming rate. The existing farm subsidies predominantly rewards a small number of farmers, many corporate owned by wealthy investors, growing certain crops. Most small and medium size farms receive little or no help from the farm bill (average payment for 80% of farmers is \$579), with most support going to wealthy investors who own corporate farms. The rural counties that have the highest level of commodity payments also have the highest rate of poverty, since the payments actually go to their "owners" in urban areas like NY and LA.

Many farmers are unable to sell their crops or livestock to even cover their production costs. This has been a challenge for dairy farmers here in NY. There is no easy solution to the problem. But just eliminating all subsidies for farmers, as some suggest, is not going to keep family farmers on their land.

The commodity price support system is also a major contributor to hunger in third world countries, and is a major culprit in record high food prices worldwide, leading to food riots and political upheaval in many countries.

More funding is needed to preserve farmlands, especially near urban areas where development pressures are great.

More funding is also needed for infrastructure investments such as processing facilities. Many medium sized

farms find themselves little more than contract workers, forced to operate under the conditions and prices dictated by a handful of large agri-corporations.

The Farm Bill must do a better job of supporting rural development; farmers can't survive when neighboring communities disappear.

The farm bill is a major source of funding for conservation and environmental programs. Unfortunately, these programs are major targets for cuts as part of the debt reduction package.

An example of the importance of such programs is the recent flooding of the Mississippi River. Fertilizer and animal waste runoff has poured into the Gulf of Mexico, depleting the oxygen needed for marine life. The result is the largest dead zone ever in the Gulf, covering 9,400 square miles.

Runoff from farmlands, not factories, is the major source of pollution of our waterways.

Virtually no funding is going into figuring how our food system will need to respond to climate change, as temperatures, growing seasons, rainfall and insects life all change.

The Farm Bill should not penalize farmers who want to grow organically. More help is needed for new farmers and urban agriculture.

Another major controversy in the farm bill has been its misguided support for corn ethanol production, which costs lots of tax dollars, drives up food prices worldwide, and does virtually nothing to improve our energy system. Fortunately it appears that Congress will pull the plug on this boondoggle.



Hunger Action Calls for Action to Increase Number of NY Children Receiving Summer Meals

The Summer Meals Programs continues to miss many low-income children in NYS, with only 314,986 low-income children receiving summer meals in July 2010, according to a new national report released today by the Food Research and Action Center.

The Hunger Action Network of NYS noted that while participation has decreased from the previous July, New York ranked third best in the country even though it reached only 28.6 children for every 100 who got regular school year meals.

If New York was able to boost participation to serve 40 percent of eligible low-income children, the state would feed an additional 124,971 children and get an extra \$8.4 million in federal child nutrition funds.

NYC however remains third lowest among large cities in the percent of children participating in the school breakfast program.

NYS' numbers are better due to easier access to summer meals programs in NYC where local schools participate in the program. In the rest of the state, nonprofits and other government agencies such as Public Housing Authorities often have to be the ones that provide the meals if they are available at all. Finding site sponsors for the summer meals programs remains a major barrier.

“While participation in other federal nutrition programs grew rapidly because of the recession, participation in

the Summer Nutrition Programs continued to slide. It's time to reverse this trend. This is a time for action,” said Mark Dunlea, Executive Director of the Hunger Action Network of NYS. “State officials have been supportive over the years of efforts to expand the program but more must be done, especially with the incidence of hunger on the rise. Emergency food programs, including soup kitchens, see a big increase in children during the summer months when



they can't access the school meal programs,” added Dunlea.

NY's performance was better than the national rate, which reaches only one in seven eligible low-income children, according to “*Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation*”, an annual analysis by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). The FRAC report measures national and state trends in summer nutrition and compares states by determining for each the number of low-income children receiving summer food compared to the number of such children who receive regular school year lunch.

The summer food program unfortunately remains the least well-funded of the various federal child nutrition programs, and Congress failed to make many needed improvement during the reauthorization that was approved in December 2010. Of particular interest to New York was the proposal to expand the open-site eligibility threshold from areas where 50% of the children are eligible for free or reduced meals to areas where 40% of the children are eligible for free or reduced meals; this was particularly critical for many upstate and rural communities. (Once a site is declared “open”, any child can receive a meal without the need to meet an income eligibility test.)

Some reforms however were approved, including reducing the paperwork needed to operate summer meal sites. A cap on the number of sites and children served by non-profit sponsors has been removed. Schools are also required to help with summer

food outreach.

“There is an opportunity for all stakeholders to make a difference in participation and ensure that more children can access summer meals,” said Jim Weill, president of the Food Research and Action Center. “The Summer Nutrition Programs are a vital part of our nation's nutrition safety net. There is a foundation on which we can build and which we cannot afford to weaken further. From the federal level to the state and local levels, we must make access to Summer Nutrition a top priority.”

Green Space



NYC City Council Supports Local Food

The NYC City Council has passed five bills to promote local foods, including encouraging city agencies to buy New York State food.

The legislation, which builds upon the FoodWork report issued by City Council Quinn late last year, seeks to encourage regional farming, facilitate the identification of city property for gardens or agricultural use and decrease the city's waste and energy usage, while monitoring the city's progress toward better nutritional outcomes and public health.

The local food procurement bill requires the chief procurement officer to develop local food procurement guidelines for agencies, monitor agency implementation of the guidelines, and prepare an annual report for the Council on each agency's efforts to buy NYS food. Unfortunately, the bill does not cover the city school system, which accounts for 85% of the meals served by the city.

For the first time the City will have an annual report with data indicating to what extent the city is able to purchase local food.

"These bills are crucial to the goal of Foodworks – to use our food system to create jobs, protect our environment, and improve public health," said Speaker Quinn. "By encouraging city agencies to buy regional food, we'll keep more local dollars in the local economy. We'll make it easier for New Yorkers to grow their own food in roof-

top greenhouses, and push city government to purchase food without unnecessary packaging."

The Council also passed a resolution urging the State to expand its preference for food originating in NYS. This expansion would allow New York City to institute procurement preferences for the purchase of food originating within the greater New York region, including nearby states such as New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire.



Brooklyn Grange Rooftop Garden

The City Council voted on legislation that would require the Department of City-wide Administrative Services (DCAS) to create and maintain a searchable database of all city-owned and leased real property, including information regarding the location and current use of the listed property. This will empower the public to identify underused or unused property that can be used for other purposes such as, community gardening, urban agriculture, open spaces, affordable housing, or economic development.

The Council adopted legislation to require the Mayor's Office to issue an annual report that will measure specific information on various "metrics" across each phase of the food system. In the research for the Speaker's 2010 Food Works report, there were notable gaps in the basic data that was available about food the City purchases and serves and the impact of various food-related programs. Each of the metrics that OLTPS would be required to include in the annual city food metrics report is related to FoodWorks' goals and recommendations.

The annual food system, metrics report which will be issued for each fiscal year on September 1, will include, among other things:

- Information about the county of origin of food products purchased by the Department of Education (DOE) and the extent to which milk and fresh whole produce purchased by DOE is locally or regionally produced.

- Information about the extent to which our local communities are benefiting from City food initiatives, including FRESH, Healthy Bodegas, and Green Carts.

- Information about the City's efforts to improve the nutritional value of meals served in public schools, hospitals, senior centers, correctional facilities and homeless shelters.

7 Steps to Healthy Food Procurement

New York has over 36,000 farms, composed mostly of small, one to 99-acre lots. These farms have generated over \$5 billion in revenue in 2007 and produce a diverse array of products, from dairy and livestock to fruits and veggies. The foods sold and served in community institutions like schools and hospitals, and throughout government programs like senior meals are determined through food procurement policies. Working toward healthy policies that emphasize fresh and local products can boost nutrition and local business.

DASH-NY (Designing a Strong and Healthy NY) is a project of the NY Academy of Medicine with funding support from the NYS Dept. of Health. Hunger Action is a member of DASH's advisory board. DASH is NY's first-ever statewide policy center and coalition for obesity prevention. As the Center, NYAM will work with a statewide coalition to identify and bring about key needed policy changes that increase physical activity and healthy eating.

In May 2011, DASH-NY offered live trainings throughout the state presenting seven steps toward developing and practicing healthier food procurement policies and here is what we learned:

1. Inventory. Choose the setting where you want to offer healthier foods. Is it a senior center or a school? A correctional facility or the Office of Parks and Recreation?

2. Identify partners and enlist help. There is a potential plethora of groups who can get involved, from students to nutritionists, unions or associations, even school food directors, farmers and business experts who you may be able to partner with to make a change.

3. Control. Identify who sets the procurement policy for your establishment and be sure you understand what motivates their current practices. Is it cost? Convenience? Are they adhering to federal or other policies?

4. Standards. Decide what standards you will use or adapt to define a healthy procurement policy. Should the food be only locally grown? Organic? Low in fat and sodium?

5. Adopting a policy. When it comes to procurement, there may be barriers and resistance to instituting new policies. Pointing out the positive incentives of your new, improved, and healthy procurement policy goes a long way when presenting to the powers that be. For example, show that procurement costs will not increase or that increases will be offset by reduced healthcare expenditures.

6. Implementation. Putting in place new policies may require that you seek out new vendors that can meet standards specified in your new food procurement policy. Staff should be primed on the new standards and processes as well. Most importantly, you must ensure that contracts are revised to reflect the new procurement policies.

7. Enforcement. The final step in a successful transformation to a healthy food procurement policy is to decide on a scheme for monitoring and establishing repercussions for noncompliance.

KEEP IT LOCAL!

Compassionate Ear in Difficult Times

By Patricia Rojas, WhyHunger

Pregnant and fleeing her abusive husband, a woman from New York called the National Hunger Hotline in search of food and medical assistance for herself, and her toddler. While the toddler was already a recipient of Medicaid, the mother's immigrant status disqualified her from participation in the program. She spoke no English and thus could not communicate with any of the service providers she had been able to find. We referred her to a NYC domestic abuse hotline, the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) for her toddler, and several food pantries, including a non-profit social service which runs a program for pregnant, Spanish-speaking women. We also provided her with contact information for a legal support group so that she could pursue child support.

The National Hunger Hotline 1-866-3 HUNGRY and 1-877-8 HAMBRE (1-866-348-6479 and 1-877-842-6273) refers people in need of emergency food assistance to food pantries, government programs, and grassroots organizations that work to improve access to healthy, nutritious food, and build self-reliance. Help is available on Monday through Friday from 9am-6pm.



Poverty Soars Among Children

Children Defense Fund's *State of America's Children 2011* paints a devastating portrait of childhood across the country. With unemployment, housing foreclosures and hunger still at historically high levels, children's well-being is in great jeopardy. Children today are our poorest age group. Child poverty increased by almost 10 percent between 2008 and 2009, which was the largest single year increase since data were first collected. As the country struggles to climb out of the recession, our children are falling further behind.

The United States is going to miss the boat to lead and compete in our globalizing world because we are not preparing the majority of our children for the future. The greatest threat to America's national security comes from no enemy without but from our failure to invest in and educate all of our nation's children. Every 11 seconds of the school day a child drops out. A majority of children in all racial and income groups and almost 80 percent and more of Black and Hispanic children in public schools cannot read or do math at grade level in fourth, eighth, or 12th grade—if they have not already dropped out.

Looking at data across children's needs in child poverty, family structure, family income, child health, child nutrition, early childhood development, education, child abuse and neglect, juvenile justice and gun violence shows millions of children from birth through the teen years at risk of getting caught in the Cradle to Prison Pipeline crisis at the intersection of race and poverty that threatens the futures of poor children of color across our nation.

Black children are facing the worse crisis since slavery, and in many areas, Hispanic and American Indian children are not far behind. Children of color in America who now constitute almost 45

percent of all children will be the majority of children in 2019—just eight years from now. We will be counting on them as the economic drivers of the future, who will be raising their own families, assisting their parents and investing in the economy and in Social Security to keep us all thriving.

More than one in three Black, one in three Hispanic and one in 10 White children live in poverty (\$22,050 for a family of four). For children under age five, 41.9 percent of Black, 35 percent of Hispanic and almost 15 percent of White children are poor. More than one in six Black and one in seven Hispanic children live in extreme poverty—at



half the poverty level or below. One in 20 White children lives in extreme poverty.

Wide gaps in income persist. Since the late 1970's the incomes of the bottom 90 percent has essentially stagnated while the incomes of the top one percent have soared. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits in 2009 were less than half the 1970 real dollar amount in nearly two thirds of the states. While an average of 15.6 million children a month received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in 2009, more than one in 10 households has limited access to food in the vast majority of states.

There is also a lack of support for quality early childhood programs. The annual cost of center-based child care for a four-year-old is more than the annual in-state tuition at a public four-year college in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

The portrait of continuing and worsening racial and income inequality is clear as we look at the state of America's children today. Rather than moving forward, we are moving backwards. Programs and services that we know can help children thrive are being cut at the state and federal level, unraveling the safety net for poor and low income children.

Families too have become more fragile as jobs are lost, unemployment compensation has been reduced, public assistance and public health programs restrict access, housing foreclosures continue and affordable housing becomes scarcer.

We must invest in our children and their families. This means keeping key priorities for children front and center:

- End child poverty;
- Ensure every child and pregnant woman access to affordable, comprehensive health and mental health coverage and services;
- Provide high quality early childhood development programs for all;
- Ensure every child can read at grade level by the fourth grade and guarantee quality education through high school graduation;
- Protect children from abuse and neglect and connect them to caring permanent families; and
- Stop the criminalization of children at increasingly younger ages, reduce the detention and incarceration of children and invest in prevention and early intervention strategies.

Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks, Hispanics

The median wealth of white households is 20 times that of black households and 18 times that of Hispanic households, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of newly available government data from 2009.

These lopsided wealth ratios are the largest since the government began publishing such data a quarter century ago and roughly twice the size of the ratios that had prevailed between these three groups for the two decades prior to the Great Recession that ended in 2009. The Pew Research analysis finds that, in percentage terms, the bursting of the housing market bubble in 2006 and the recession that followed from late 2007 to mid-2009 took a far greater toll on the wealth of minorities than whites. From 2005 to 2009, inflation-adjusted median wealth fell by 66% among

Hispanic households and 53% among black households, compared with just 16% among white households.



As a result of these declines, the typical black household had just \$5,677 in wealth (assets minus debts) in 2009; the typical Hispanic household had \$6,325 in wealth; and the typical white house-

hold had \$113,149.

Moreover, about a third of black (35%) and Hispanic (31%) households had zero or negative net worth in 2009, compared with 15% of white households. In 2005, the comparable shares had been 29% for blacks, 23% for Hispanics and 11% for whites.

Hispanics and blacks are the nation's two largest minority groups, making up 16% and 12% of the U.S. population respectively.

These findings are based on the Pew Research Center's analysis of data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), an economic questionnaire distributed periodically to tens of thousands of households by the U.S. Census Bureau.

How the Federal Budget Deal Works

by Food Research and Action Center

The recent Congressional agreement on raising the debt ceiling creates a three stage process, while increasing the debt ceiling by \$2.1 trillion.

1) It immediately locks in a 10-year downward spiral in spending on discretionary programs – like Title I education, Head Start, law enforcement, juvenile justice, LIHEAP and many others. Over 10 years (FY 2012-FY 2021) the cuts will amount to \$900 billion -- \$350 billion from defense and security spending (defined for this stage as defense, state and foreign operations, homeland security and veterans affairs) and \$550 billion from non-defense discretionary, reducing the latter to levels not seen since the 1950s. These cuts are “backloaded” – the FY 2012 cuts will be painful but modest compared to later years. Pell grants are protected from cuts.

2) It creates a 12-member bipartisan, bicameral Congressional supercommittee, with 3 members each appointed by

House Democrats and Republicans, and Senate Democrats and Republicans. That committee's members will be appointed within two weeks of the deal's enactment – i.e. probably by August 16.

The committee is charged with producing \$1.5 trillion in further cuts by the end of the year from entitlements and tax revenues. The bill it reports out (if it succeeds in producing a bill) is “fast-tracked” – i.e., it doesn't go through normal committee processes and isn't subject to procedural roadblocks like a filibuster.

Regular authorizing committees (e.g., the Agriculture Committees in the House and Senate, the Senate Finance Committee) can, by October 14, suggest provisions to the supercommittee, but their suggestions are in no way binding, nor is there any indication of the scope of cuts needed in particular committees' jurisdictions. In other words, a committee could tell the supercommittee by October

14th the cuts they would prefer, but the supercommittee could cut far beyond the committee's recommendations.

The supercommittee must report out its bill by November 23rd. Congress must vote on it by December 23rd.

3) If the committee fails to produce a bill or the bill doesn't pass, that will trigger “automatic” across-the-board cuts (a “sequestration”) in the amount of \$1.2 trillion. One half of those cuts will be in defense, and one half will be in entitlement programs. However, Social Security, Medicaid, unemployment insurance, SSI, SNAP, child nutrition programs and TANF are exempt from the cuts. (The bill's language refers back to a 1985 law providing exemption from cuts for specified programs; we are not certain if mandatory TEFAP and two discretionary programs in the 1985 list – WIC and CSFP – are exempt or not.) Medicare can be cut, but there is a cap on that cut and it only applies to providers.

Health Care for All New Yorkers Bill Introduced

All New York residents would receive comprehensive health coverage under “New York Health,” a state single payer universal health care bill introduced in June. Publicly-sponsored coverage would replace insurance company coverage, and premiums would be replaced by broad-based public financing based on ability to pay.

The bill, A.7860/S.5425, introduced by Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried and Senate Health Committee Ranking Member Thomas K. Duane, is co-sponsored by 62 other legislators.

“We can get better coverage, get all of us covered, and save billions by having New York provide publicly-sponsored, single-payer health coverage, like Medicare or Child Health Plus but for everyone,” Assembly Member Gottfried said.

“New Yorkers need and deserve security when they are sick or injured, and should not fear for how they will pay for medical bills. Primary care and access to health care should be a right. A single-payer system is not only cost-efficient, but the fair and moral choice for New York,” said Senator Duane.

On May 26, Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin signed into law legislation that creates a universal health care system for the state, which may become a single-payer system (see page 13). New York can be the second state to pass groundbreaking legislation that would provide a full benefit package to all New Yorkers that is more comprehensive than most commercial health plans.

Under this plan, no one would have to give up the providers they use. Instead

of individuals and employers paying high premium costs, the coverage would be funded through a graduated tax on income, the legislators said. Deductibles would also be eliminated and co-payments would be non-existent.

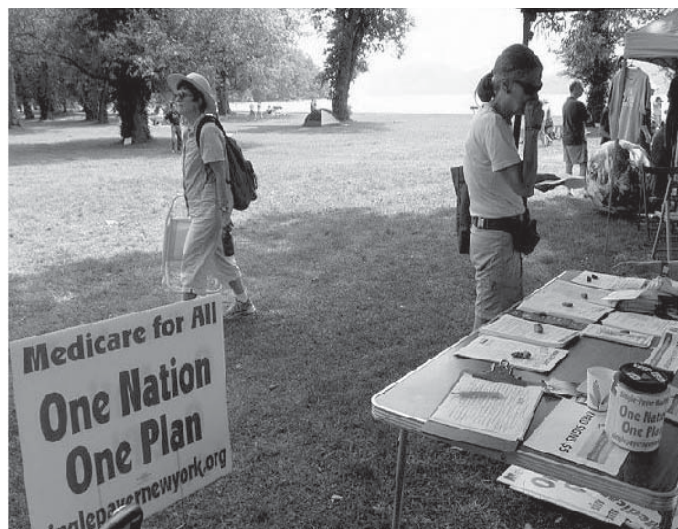
“Federal health care reform made major improvements, but it still leaves insurance companies with too much control over premiums. Premiums are unrelated to a consumer’s ability to pay. Too often, patients and their doctors are left trying to figure out what is covered and then trying to get reimbursed. New York State can do better,” Senator Duane said.

“Health coverage should be accountable to the people of New York, not to insurance company stockholders. We should

universal health care system started at the province rather than the national level, and it will be up to states like Vermont and New York to show how to make health care an affordable right at a sustainable cost,” said Mark Dunlea of Hunger Action Network and Co-Chair of Single Payer NY. (www.singlepayernewyork.org)

“Doctors and patients are sick of a system controlled by private insurance companies. They don’t provide the services they overcharge us for and they make huge profits by denying care. What we need instead is a system accountable to the public, not to CEOs and shareholders. The Gottfried/Duane bill would restore the doctor-patient relationship and give doctors the freedom to take care of patients,” commented Laurie Wen, Director of the Metro NY Chapter of PNHP.

In 2009, the “Partnership for Coverage” report by the New York State Health and Insurance Departments, based on an analysis by the Urban Institute, found that a single-payer plan would be the lowest-cost alternative for universal coverage, compared to plans relying on insurance companies and employment-based coverage.



get the administrative and cost savings of a single-payer system – which have been documented in repeated independent studies. It should be fairly funded based on ability to pay,” Assembly Member Gottfried added.

“Two critical elements missing from the recent national health care package were ensuring that everyone had access to quality health care and controlling costs. That is why this state single payer proposal is so critical. Canada’s

Single-payer plans like New York Health would save billions of dollars, including excess insurance company administrative costs and profit; and billing and collecting for hospitals, physicians and other health care providers. Current federal, state and local expenditures for health care services – primarily through Medicare and Medicaid – would be incorporated into the New York Health Plan to help pay for the program.

Represent Your Region or Group on Hunger Action Network's Board of Directors

At our upcoming membership meeting Hunger Action Network will be electing new representatives to its Board of Directors. The Board is made up of members representing regions of the state or certain constituency groups (unions, EFPs, Farmers, Low Income, Faith Groups).

Regionally we are seeking board member representatives from the North

Country and the Southern Tier.

Representatives are expected to act as a liaison between their region or constituency and the board; relaying information and concerns between the two groups.

Board members set broad policy goals, help steer the organization, provide fiscal oversight and supervise the Executive Director.

The Board meets 4 times a year. Meetings place varies (Albany, Poughkeepsie, NYC).

If you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone else, please contact Deb Catozzi:

518 434-7371 ext. 3#
dcatozzi@hungeractionnys.org

TANF Turns 15 - Time to End Workfare

by Jennifer Hadlock, Community Voices Heard

August 22nd is the 15th Anniversary of the signing of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families law under President Clinton in 1996.

TANF is supposed to be the safety net for families with children, yet the number of families receiving assistance is not any higher in this time of high unemployment and poverty .

TANF's strict work requirements became even stricter when it was renewed by the Bush administration. People receiving cash assistance can do one of seven things to satisfy the requirement for 35 hours of "work" per week: subsidized employment, education, vocational training, unsubsidized employment, work experience/workfare, community service or job search/job readiness.

Unfortunately New York State, like most other states, relies heavily on work experience (WEP or Workfare), which is unpaid labor. In New York City this means 15,000 people

are doing work for their benefits every day. They do work next to people who are getting a paycheck with benefits. The person doing WEP does not pay into social security, does not get sick days, personal days OR a pay check. The number of hours someone is legally allowed to do work experience is determined by adding food stamps plus cash assistance and dividing by the minimum wage.

Starting in February, across the country states began enforcing work requirements for food stamp cases. People are being forced to do WEP for just food stamps, including 80,000 in New York State.

WEP hurts union workers and all workers since municipalities and organizations do not have to hire someone because they can get free labor in the way of a WEP worker. People are being forced to take any job for any amount of money which lowers work standards across the board.

Community Voices Heard has been fighting to abolish workfare since it began. Transitional, subsidized employment is an alternative that satisfies the work requirements and gives people a paycheck and training instead of forcing people to do unpaid labor.

CVH is kicking off a campaign to get support from unions, elected officials and agencies across the state committing to say no to WEP and yes to transitional jobs. Signing the statement means you commit not to host WEP workers and to support fighting for subsidized employment. DC 37 Executive Director, Lillian Roberts, TWU President John Samuelsen and Congressman Towns have already signed on.

Visit the CVH Website at
www.cvhaction.org
or call more information at
212-860-6001 x26



Faces from page 1

tor in Costa Rica. He is married with three children.

Derrick recently helped released a report by Bread for the World Institute showing that African-Americans continue to suffer disproportionately from hunger, poverty, unemployment, and income and education disparities. The African-American poverty rate reached 25.8 percent in 2009 (the latest full year for which data is available)—far exceeding the overall national poverty rate of 14.3 percent.

“The economic recession has left African-Americans struggling,” said Rev. Derrick Boykin “But the truth is, African-Americans had been suffering from ‘recession-like’ conditions long before the recession hit the rest of the country.”

Derrick has also been active in opposing the Congressional cuts to food stamps, WIC and other nutritional programs.

“So many more people would have gone hungry last year if not for safety net programs that helped them make ends meet,” said Boykin. “It is both unfortunate and alarming that the very programs which support our most vulnerable people are the ones on the chopping block in congressional budget discussions.”

Derrick has worked to reform our foreign aid programs to focus more on ending poverty in third world countries. Derrick was active with the last Farm Bill reauthorization, speaking to the needs not only of consumers and family farmers here in the US, but addressing the negative impact our farm subsidy program has had on hunger in

third world countries.

“Any cuts to funding for international food aid programs will not significantly reduce the deficit,” said Derrick. “It will cost us more in the long run, undermining the progress already made in reducing maternal and child deaths and severe malnutrition—especially in the Horn of Africa.”

“HANNYS is a true champion in the struggle for justice for poor and hungry people. This fine organization remains at the forefront of many of the critical issues that impact the plight of those most vulnerable in our society. Whether healthcare reform, jobs or the Farm Bill, HANNYS is there articulating a policy position that seeks to improve the lives of people most in need. The organization policy pursuits are moral, sound, bold and courageous!,” noted Derrick.

Annual Meeting from page 1

In the afternoon there will be workshops around the 2012 Farm Bill; 2012 state legislative session; Medicare for All / universal health care; revenue strategies; and, the federal budget.

We will start the meeting off with short statements from individuals who have been personally impacted by the recession. Please let us know if you have anyone who would be willing to speak.

The meeting will also include the election of new members to our state Board of Directors (see page 11 for details).

Hunger Action Network of New York State
Annual Membership Meeting Registration Coupon - Monday, Sept. 19th, 2011

___I/we will attend the Sept. 19th conference. Number of attendees: ___

Suggested donation (includes lunch): More if you can, less if you can't.
Members: \$10 for individual, \$5 low-income individuals and students
Non-Members: \$20 for organizations, \$15 for individuals, \$5 low-income individuals and students
**\$5 off if you become a member

___ I am interested in carpooling. ___ I can offer a ride. ___ I need child care. (Need 1 week notice)

Name ___ E-mail ___
Organization ___ Phone/Fax ___
Address ___ City ___ Zip ___

Make checks payable to Hunger Action Network, 275 State St., Albany NY 12210
More info: 212 741-8192 or 518 434-7371

Vermont Enacts Universal Health Care but Short of Single Payer

Gov. Peter Shumlin's signing of Vermont's health reform bill in May of this year is spurring renewed interest in single-payer health reform across the United States, even though the Vermont legislation is much more modest in its actual reach than a single-payer plan would be, a spokesperson for a national doctors group said today.

"The people of Vermont, including the state's doctors, nurses and other health professionals, have inspired the entire nation by their unflinching dedication to winning a publicly financed, comprehensive and equitable health care system based on the principle that health care is a human right," said Dr. Garrett Adams, president of the 18,000-member Physicians for a National Health Program.

"This praise also extends to Gov. Peter Shumlin, who was elected to office on a single-payer platform and who has made many speeches in support of publicly financed care," Adams said. "The governor has argued, for example, that single payer is the best way for Ver-

mont to get its economy back on track and to create jobs."

"Credit is also due to Sen. Bernie Sanders and other members of the state's congressional delegation who are seeking waivers from the federal government so Vermont can innovate with its own model of reform," he said. As of now, the federal Affordable Care Act prohibits states like Vermont from adopting their own models of reform until 2017. Shumlin, Sanders and others are trying to move that date up to 2014.

Dr. Adams said while the Vermont law declares health care to be a "public good" and says the state has a responsibility to "ensure universal access to and coverage for high-quality, medically necessary health services for all Vermonters," a praiseworthy objective, the actual provisions of the law fall considerably short of the single-payer reform needed to realize those goals.

A major problem, he said, is that the Vermont law will permit multiple pri-

vate insurers to operate in the state indefinitely, setting the stage for multi-tiered care, rising costs and needless waste.

"Allowing multiple insurers in the system will deny Vermonters the enormous administrative savings they would otherwise get under a true single-payer plan," Adams said. "Having multiple insurers also nullifies the potential bargaining power of a 'single payer' to negotiate reduced prices for pharmaceutical drugs and other goods and services."

Dr. David Himmelstein, co-founder of Physicians for a National Health Program, said that the law's emphasis on complying with the Affordable Care Act means that it will leave the door open for burdensome co-pays, deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses that deter people from seeking timely care. Finally, to the extent the law permits large, for-profit institutional providers to allocate their profits as they see fit, it will deny the system the ability to do effective health planning.

Children's Anti-Hunger Art & Media Project

As part of Hunger Awareness Day which falls on the third Thursday in March, Hunger Action Network is sponsoring a display of children's artwork depicting their feelings about hunger in NYS. The artwork will be displayed in the well of the Legislative Office Building in Albany during the last two weeks of March.

We are encouraging children from across the state to participate. Our suggestion is that groups organize a display of the work locally before sending it on to Albany to be part of the statewide exhibit.



This year we are also looking for multimedia presentations on hunger such as videos that we can link to our web page.

Hunger Action Network can provide interested groups with an organizing packet that includes sample materials and other instructions for participation.

Those who would like to participate or need additional information should contact Deb Catozzi in the Albany office at 518 434-7371 ext 3# or by email dcatozzi@hungeractionnys.org

Culinary Corner with Chef Dale

Cauliflower & Goat Cheese Frittata

(Serves 2)

Ingredients:

5 Whole Eggs

1/8 cup Milk

2 oz. Goat cheese, crumbled

2 cups Fresh Cauliflower, thin sliced

2 Tbsp. Fresh Dill, chopped

3 Tbsp. Extra-Virgin Olive Oil

4 oz. Mixed Field Greens

1 tsp. White Wine Vinegar

Salt and Fresh Ground Pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees F.
2. Whisk the eggs and milk together, add ½ teaspoon of salt and pepper to taste.
3. Fold in the cheese and dill.
4. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in an ovenproof 6- or 8-inch nonstick skillet over medium-low heat.
5. Add the cauliflower, 1/8 teaspoon of salt and pepper to taste; cook until crispy-tender, about 5 minutes.
6. Pour the egg mixture into the skillet and stir gently with a rubber spatula to distribute the filling. Cook until the bottom is just set but not brown, 3-4 minutes.
7. Transfer the skillet to the oven and bake until the frittata is almost set on top, about 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, cover and set aside for 5 minutes to finish cooking.

To Serve:

Toss the mixed greens with the remaining tablespoon of oil and the vinegar.

Slide the frittata onto a cutting board and slice into wedges. Garnish with dill.

Serve warm with the salad and perhaps some fresh sliced heirloom tomatoes.

Federal Legislation Seeks to Aid CSAs

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand recently introduced legislation to create a competitive grant program to promote Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The legislation was authored by Senators Leahy and Sanders of Vermont and is part of the effort to reform the federal Farm Bill.

CSA directly connects consumers with the farmers who grow their food. At the beginning of each growing season, members of CSA pay for a share of a farm's produce. Throughout the season, members receive a weekly box containing their share of the farm's yield for that week.

Hunger Action Network recently helped start three low-income CSAs in NYC. Governor Cuomo has announced that he intends to create a CSA program to assist such CSA projects but the details have not yet been released.

“Community Supported Agriculture can be a key component for providing

our families with more locally grown produce,” said Senator Gillibrand, the first Senator from NY to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee in 40 years. “Tens of thousands of families have joined CSAs over the years, bringing fresh, vitamin-rich fruits, vegetables, eggs, homemade breads, meats, and cheeses to tables all across America. Supporting and promoting local businesses and healthy diets, this arrangement benefits both the farmer and the customer. CSA has already done so much for this country – let's give it the boost it needs to reach even more Americans, especially our brave men and women who have served in our armed forces returning home and looking for work, and those in low income areas where nutritious foods are difficult or even impossible to come by.”

There are more than 12,000 CSA farms currently operating throughout the United States and approximately 350 in New York. Both numbers are expected

to rise steadily in the coming years.

Community Supported Agriculture Promotion Act (S.1414) would award federal funds to non-profit organizations, extension services, and state and local government agencies to provide grower support – ranging from marketing and business assistance to crop development – to new or current CSA farmers, as well as assist in the development of innovative delivery and distribution programs. These efforts can help attract more consumers to CSA, facilitate the formation of multi-farm CSA arrangements, and promote participation in CSA through outreach and education activities.

Preference would be given to projects working with family farms, farms operated by or employing veterans and those that expand CSA reach into “food deserts,” or low income communities without access to fresh food around the country.

HUNGER ACTION NETWORK OF NEW YORK STATE MEMBERSHIP COUPON

- Yes, I want to help end the root causes of hunger by becoming a member:
- \$30 Individual \$5(low/fixed income)
- \$40 small organization \$75 medium organization \$150 large organization
- Here is my donation of _____
- Please send me information about volunteer opportunities

Name _____ Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____ (FAX) _____ (E-Mail) _____

Please make checks payable to and return to Hunger Action Network of NYS, 275 State St., Albany NY 12210

Hamilton Hill Kitchen Serves Healthy Meals to Children and Provides Job Training

Hunger Action Network produced and served over 32,000 meals during last school year for low income children as part of the Hamilton Hill Food Processors project. The meals were served to children enrolled in Schenectady's Head Start program. For many of those children this is their only hot meal of the day.

The Hamilton Hill Food Processors program is an intensive 16 week food-service training program combining hands-on food-service training with classroom instruction, individual case management and job placement services. The program prepares at risk youth and disadvantaged men and women for jobs in the restaurant and hospital-

ity industry and helps them to acquire and retain those jobs with training and a strong work ethic.

"The meals which are served to the children are highly nutritious and are most importantly kid friendly" project director Vincent Ross says. The project's largest client Schenectady Community Action Program's Director of Early Childhood Education Keith Houghton adds "They make this food extremely palatable to the children who really are eating well. As we all know, being creative with a healthy meal is not always easy and they do a great job. "

Paulette Walley from the NYS Office of Child and Family services says "As

the licenser of all the Day Care Centers in Schenectady County, I can't tell you how often I've seen 'unhealthy' lunch options coming in from home" "I love when centers provide the meals but I often hear the expense and labor don't often pay off."

A grant from the Schenectady Foundation will be used to offset costs and expand the number of students being trained by Hamilton Hill Food Processors. By June 2012 the program will be able to train classes of 8 – 10 students and plans on successful graduating and placing 28 students into meaningful employment each year.

Hunger Action Network OF NEW YORK STATE

275 State St.
Albany NY 12210

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 111

FRAC Releases Latest Food Hardship Data

More than 23 (23.3) percent of households with children in NYS reported in 2009-2010 not having enough money to buy food that they needed at times for themselves or their family during the prior twelve months, according to a new analysis of food hardship data released

by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). The rate for households without children was 14.6 %.

Hunger was especially a problem in the Bronx, Central Brooklyn, and the inner cities of Rochester/Buffalo. 44% of

households with children in the South Bronx (CD 16) reported food hardships. The full analysis is available at www.frac.org/pdf/aug2011_food_hardship_report_children.pdf

What is your membership status?

Hunger Action Network's strength is its membership. It is through our membership that we develop our priority issue areas and elect board members. We ask all newsletter recipients who are not active members to take a moment and complete the membership form located on page 15. If you're not sure what your current status is you may call or email Deb Catozzi. 518 434-7371 3# dcatozzi@hungeractionnys.org.

Membership fees can be waived for low income individuals who commit to volunteering with us at least 5 hours each year.

We now have t-shirts available with the classic end hunger now logo. Recruit three new members and receive a free t-shirt – a \$15 value. available in small, medium, large and extra large

Take \$5 off registration for the Annual Meeting by becoming a member.

