With hope and hard work, Bertha and Israel Perez have shown how their efforts to create a brighter future for their family: Bertha and Israel met and married in 2002 in Guatemala, where they faced very stressful family situations and struggled to earn a living. In August of 2003, Israel left for the U.S. seeking a better life for his family. He arrived in Mount Kisco where his father was living, but only found a clear path when he started taking English classes and obtaining work through Neighbors Link. Bertha stayed in Guatemala for two and a half years more. When she finally reunited with Israel she was surprised to see how different he looked and spoke. A year later, Bertha and Israel were thrilled to be expecting their first child, Jason, who is now eight years old. Sindy, their youngest, was born three years later. Today, Bertha actively participates in English classes and parent-child together groups at Neighbors Link. Because Bertha wants her children to experience a childhood full of love and companions, she has also undertaken a 12-week “Parenting Journey” program which helps parents understand how their own childhood impacts their parenting. Israel completed the highest level of ESL, and has been employed at an oil recycling company for five years. Bertha devotes most of her time to raising their children and also works in cleaning and childcare for extra income. Bertha and Israel are shining examples of what is possible, and they are very proud to be part of Neighbors Link. “We have made it so far with our strength and their help.”

Be a Hero Award
Recipient of the 2015 Gabby Rosenfeld Be a Hero Award

The Perez Family—Recipients of the 2015 Gabby Rosenfeld Be a Hero Award

Thank you & Congratulations to our 2015 Neighbors Link Volunteer Award Winners

Outstanding Volunteer Award
Margot Palmer, Horace Greeley High School

Outstanding Volunteer Award
Poppy Cummings, Bedford Neckinger-Armonk

The Mary Weiss Volunteer Spirit Award
Established in honor of Mary Weiss, Board Member, volunteer and Friend of Neighbors Link, for her many years of service. The volunteer chosen for this award demonstrates leadership, compassion and dedication while impacting many programs.

Elisa Bozarrna, Bedford Hills

The Agnes Hassell Youth Leadership Award
Established in honor of Agnes Hassell, founding Board member, volunteer and Friend of Neighbors Link. The volunteer chosen for this award demonstrates exceptional leadership in multiple programs and is an active ambassador in the community for the mission of Neighbors Link.

Dana Bergenfeld, Horace Greeley

Mandelier

This award demonstrates

Volunteer Award Winners to our 2015 Neighbors Link & CONGRATULATIONS

Our Mission: To strengthen the whole community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of immigrants and refugees OUR STRATEGY: Educate, Empower, Employ

Neighbors Link

2,600 people served almost 80% of possible

There’s always something good happening at Neighbors Link. In 2014...
Neighbors Link Honors Heroes Past and Present

What makes a hero? It can be one’s strength, achievements, courage or understanding. The inaugural Gabby Rosslund may be a hero amongst heroes people who have demonstrated such qualities right here in our local community.

Commemorating the Life of Gabby Rosslund

Kroen to all as Gabby, Gabriel J. Rosslund had a long history of service to his country and community. A WWII veteran in General Patton’s Third Army, member of the Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, and inductee to the French Legion of Honor, Gabby’s heroism overseas was extraordinary.

Closer to home, he served his community just as faithfully on various committees and boards, always focused on giving back and making a difference.

Gabby lived a full and eventful life until he passed away in August of 2014. He and his wife Louise had a loving family and many, many life-long friends. He enjoyed nothing more than meeting people of all ages and from all walks of life. As Board Member, advisor and philanthropist, he helped and inspired many in our Neighbor Link family to make a new home in America. It is in his name that we honor everyday heroes in our community who make a difference in the lives of others.

Neighbors Link Network was awarded a $100,000 grant by the Westchester County Department of Social Services (WCDS) to implement cultural proficiency training to their 1,100 member staff. The program, called The Changing Face of Westchester, began earlier this year and will continue through 2017.

By deconstructing stereotypes and providing training on immigration issues, the program aims to improve outcomes for immigrants from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. Just a few months into the program, trainers report that very engaged groups of employees are gaining knowledge, skills and awareness that will lead to concrete changes in how they deliver services on all levels.

"The Department of Social Services is committed to providing culturally relevant services to all our customers regardless of their ethnicities," said Kevin M. McGuire, Commissioner of DFS. "We are confident that Neighbors Link has the experience and expertise to raise our awareness and effectiveness in this area." Commemorating the Life of Gabby Rosslund

Neighbors Link & WCC Selected to Fill Growing Healthcare Need

With healthcare emerging as one of the largest economic sectors in Westchester County, there is a growing need for healthcare employees, especially those who work with the elderly. Recognizing this trend, the National Council for Workforce Education (NCWE) is investing in Neighbor Link and its well-established ESL partnership with Westchester Community College (WCC) to develop a plan to offer a new, customized program.

The demand for home health aides in Westchester is expected to climb 30% in the coming 3 years.

"Neighbors Link & WCC were selected as one of eight teams in the country to develop education and training opportunities to help immigrants who move to family-wage careers. The program will offer healthcare training with in-context language learning, setting them on a pathway to earning college credit and attaining healthcare workforce credentials such as Certified Nurse Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, and Mental Health Technician. With further education, participants can increase their earning potential in careers such as Medical Billing and Coding, Nursing, or Radiologic Technology.

"Neighbors Link was selected to fill a growing healthcare need in Westchester County due to our commitment to serve the community. We are confident that Neighbors Link has the experience and expertise to raise our awareness and effectiveness in this area," said M. McGuire.

You may recognize Beverliz as the friendly Administrative Assistant who greets you when you enter Neighbor Link. Beverliz also has an immigration story of her own to share.

When Beverliz was a toddler in Paraguay, her father traveled to the United States to try give his family a better life. Although they stayed in touch via phone calls and letters, she would not see him again until she was 12 years old. Her father was one of the lucky few who was able to qualify and become a legal permanent resident. He was then able to petition for his daughters to come visit him. After finishing high school in Paraguay, Beverliz moved to New York and quickly enrolled in English classes at Westchester Community College (WCC). She completed all levels of English classes and then enrolled in an Associate program for Business Administration at WCC.

Last year, Beverliz decided to volunteer at Neighbor Link. In no time, she became an important member of the Neighbor Link team and joined the staff. About her work, Beverliz says, "I feel good knowing that I am part of something meaningful in the community."

Recently, Beverliz accomplished her goal of getting her citizenship exam and becoming a United States citizen. For her, it was important to become a citizen so that she could vote and more fully participate in her community.

Neighbors Link Recognized for Expertise in Training

Cultural Training Addresses Changing Face of Westchester

Reflecting the need to make collaborative connections with Westchester County’s increasingly diverse population, the theme for the 2014 Neighbors Link Gala was “A Night at the Kentucky Derby.”

Agnes Hassell, Triple Crown Sponsor

“Wood and creating healthy role models, motivate others, or beating the odds and creating healthy role models for their children are qualities right here in our local community. Although Beverliz had a loving family and many, many life-long friends, she stayed in touch via phone calls and letters, she would not see him again until she was 12 years old. Her father was one of the lucky few who was able to qualify and become a legal permanent resident. He was then able to petition for his daughters to come visit him. After finishing high school in Paraguay, Beverliz moved to New York and quickly enrolled in English classes at Westchester Community College (WCC). She completed all levels of English classes and then enrolled in an Associate program for Business Administration at WCC.

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Portrait of a Neighbor

Celebration of Life as a Novela

In this collaborative project with the Jacob Burns Film Center, Neighbors Link families worked to develop an original television script based on their own lives, hopes, and fears. At the celebration event, participants did a reading of the script, facilitated by film writer Angel Luis Lara, and were recognized for their years of hard work and dedication.