

# **YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN KEY FINANCIAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS AT SPECIAL COUNTY WORKSHOPS**

*Poughkeepsie*....To help young people learn important skills needed to plan and budget for adult independence, the Dutchess County Department of Social Services (DSS) hosted a two and a half hour financial workshop in partnership with Bridgeway Federal Credit Union today (Monday, July 30<sup>th</sup>). Thirty individuals, between the ages of 15-18 years old whose families receive Temporary Assistance, participated in the today's workshop, part of a two-day program.

Dutchess County Social Services Commissioner Robert Allers said, "These workshops help let young people understand that there are opportunities and resources available to them to develop the necessary skills to pursue meaningful employment and productive lives. We are very pleased to be able to partner with Bridgeway Federal Credit Union and offer these important tools in an interactive and engaging way."

The financial workshop featured hands-on simulations where participants could face real life scenarios and have the chance to problem solve in areas of employment, income, family and debt.

"Our team of Bridgeway Federal Credit Union staff and volunteers had a wonderful time working with the students teaching them about managing money and living with the consequences of their spending decisions. This financial workshop is all about providing real life scenarios, where we often have to make difficult spending decisions. This program allows young participants to learn these mistakes early in life and in a safe environment," stated Melissa Walsh, Vice President of Marketing and Branch Administration for Bridgeway Federal Credit Union.

On Tuesday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, DSS will host the second part of the program - a computer workshop. The program, led by Deputy DSS Commissioner Theresa Giovannello, teaches young people how to use Microsoft Programs to write a resume, create a PowerPoint presentation, and utilize Excel to set up a budget. Each participant will earn a laptop, backpack and printer at the completion of the workshop.

More than 150 young people have earned computers and printers since DSS began hosting the annual computer workshops in 2007. Past participants have stated that having the computer has enabled them to

better focus on homework without having to go the library; served as an important tool to get into and/or be prepared for college; or they even used it to assist their parents learn computer skills.

Bridgeway Federal Credit Union presented today's financial workshop at no charge to the county and tomorrow's computer workshop is funded through the individual participant's Temporary Assistance education and training funds.