

September 16th Step Up for Kids New York Rally

After a big welcome from planning chair Michelle Gross of Prevent Child Abuse NY and chants of "Vote for Kids!", our speakers stepped up to the mike and called upon the crowd of nearly 300 gathered at the Capitol to vote in November. The speakers made the case for why this election is so important to children and families and urged those gathered to question candidates about their positions on important children's issues. Preschool children paraded through Capitol Park and the many teens present showed that they too are involved in the advocacy process. Enthusiastic parents, grandparents, teachers and advocates waved signs supporting children and cheered the speakers with outbursts of the rally chant, "Vote for Kids!"

Thank you to all who made the rally such a success including the Horace Hagedorn and Rausch Foundations for funding support and Dunkin Donuts and Hannaford Supermarkets for donations of refreshments. Thank you to Every Child Matters Education Fund for planning and coordinating Step Up events across the country. Thank you to the folks who organized groups and buses to come to Albany from Long Island, New York City, Rockland County, Orange County, Rochester, and Syracuse. And thank you to the children, youth, parents, grandparents and others who care so much about New York's children that they gave their time on the 16th to make the case. There are too many of you to mention individually but know that we could not have done this without you.

Speakers included Albany County Executive Mike Breslin; Deputy Director for State Operations, Kristin Proud; Board member from Families Together New York and YouthPower, Christina Felix; Pediatric Pulmonologist and Docs for Tots member Dr. Helen Rouvelas; Principal of Abram G. Lansing Elementary School in Cohoes, Clifford Bird; Executive Director of the Albany Police Athletic League, former Sergeant with the Albany Police Department Leonard Ricchiuti, Jr. and SCAA President/CEO Karen Schimke.

We had tremendous press coverage both at the event and before the date, especially in light of the fact that most media had completely turned their attention to concerns about Wall Street. The press coverage began with an op-ed in Sunday's Albany Times Union and with appearances on radio and TV shows on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday morning, many of which will air across the state. Local TV channels, the Legislative Gazette, and the Albany Times Union covered the rally itself.

Now we need you to carry the message further. Rally materials are on the New York CAN website at: <http://www.scaany.org/nycan/Resources.php>. Among the resources are questions to ask candidates and fact sheets. Make use of these to talk about issues along with local examples and data. Go to candidate

events and ask questions. Encourage others to register to vote. Vote for kids in November!

Rally photos are on the New York CAN website's Photo Gallery page at:
<http://www.scaany.org/nycan/PhotoGallery.php>