



NEWSLETTER

November 1, 1980

There's a lot to report.

Our incorporation process has been completed, our certificate as a nonprofit organization has been approved, and our initial board of directors is now in place. The group working on our continuing public-education program has been received with unusual interest and encouragement.

Our surveys have indicated that the most suitable house would be the one owned by the Congregational Church just across the street from the church, and so we are now in the process of discussions about it with the church and with planning and zoning authorities. Our fund-raising efforts will begin as soon as these negotiations appear favorable and, of most importance, we have a fine new part-time executive secretary, Laurie Pinover, who will be our key communicator between us.

The goal, of course, is to have in Darien what New Canaan has had for seven years--an ABC program whose centerpiece is a special house where a small group of intelligent and motivated minority students from other parts of the country can live while they attend the high school. This is a local expression of a national program: ABC--A Better Chance. Here we call it ABC in Darien. We hope to have the program in operation by the fall of 1981.

Here are the details on these stories.

There are 23 current members on our board of directors. They are:

Mrs. Thomas J. Albani (Suzanne)	Paul Furtaw
Mrs. James Armour (Karen)	Kenneth Harlacher
Jim Armstrong	David Kenny
Mrs. Robert Aymar (Marilyn)	Mrs. Richard Kimball (Anne)
Joel Brooke	Ms. Tamsin Mayers
C. Robert Brown	Mrs. Robert Nangle (Karen)
Glen Carter	Dr. Donald Robbins
Mrs. John J. Cotter (Ann)	Richard B. Sarr
Mrs. Robert Crane (Pat)	Rev. Walter Taylor
Mrs. Murray Crawford (Mary)	Mrs. Herbert West (Maria)
Donald W. Evers, Jr.	Herbert West
Rev. Samuel Fogal	

A BETTER CHANCE IN DARIEN, inc.

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Our officers are:

President	Herbert B. West
First Vice President	Mrs. Richard Kimball
Vice President	Joel Brooke
Secretary	Mrs. Thomas Albani
Asst. Secretary	Mrs. Robert Aymar
Treasurer	David Kenny

A key element of our public-education effort is a splendid sound/slide presentation prepared by Douglas Ray of St. Luke's Church. This has been shown as part of explanatory programs at most of the service clubs, the civic clubs, the churches, and the high school. Karen Nangle initiated the work on this important educational effort until she began a new career in New York City; since then we have carried it on with many different volunteers. As you will see, we can use more!

As this letter is being written, the members of the Congregational Church have not yet voted on whether to accept ABC. We take encouragement from the fact that key committees of the church have reacted favorably. Our consulting architect for ABC is Gil Lefferts, who is knowledgeable about planning and zoning regulations, and it is our hope that the town body will also react favorably. The house itself is in a very good location for our requirements; it will require considerable remodeling but the general plans Gil has prepared indicate that the result can be tasteful and serviceable.

With the help of Don Evers of CBS, a basic brochure about ABC in Darien is being prepared and should be ready in early December. It will be very helpful in our fund-raising campaign, which will begin in the next few weeks. The goal of our campaign will be about \$125,000 which, if we're careful, should get us started, pay for the remodeling and furnishing, and carry us through our first full year of operation.

The national office of ABC expects to supplement this money with some contributions of its own for the first two years to help us get started.

We hope you will continue your interest in this ABC effort, that you will want to help make it a reality, and that you will be willing to devote time and money to it.

Finally, a happy word about our executive secretary, Laurie Pinover. She's new to this kind of work and she's only part time but she's already proven the wonderful difference that a good communicator can make. She's working under the supervision of our able vice president, Anne Kimball, who is in her office at Person-to-Person at St. Luke's. Laurie is in an office down the street at the Presbyterian Church, thanks to that church, and can be reached at 655-1451. Her part-time hours are usually in the morning.

QUESTIONS SOMETIMES ASKED

Q. Will the students be boys or girls?

A. Probably girls. ABC in New Canaan is hoping we'll have girls, since they have boys. ABC nationally is hoping we'll have girls, since they have a large number of unusually qualified girls. We have checked with other ABC public-school towns who have girls and find that they are happy with their arrangements.

Q. If ABC students are screened for aptitude and motivation, won't they take away college scholarships that would have gone to regular Darien students?

A. That does not seem to have been a problem in other public-school towns. Most colleges classify ABC students according to where their families live and not where the host town is. Also most scholarships are given after a test of financial need, a test that is applied stringently and which many Darien residents could not meet. Finally the scholarships which are given without regard to financial need are usually sports scholarships for unusual athletes; there are few such awards open to girls.

Yes, I'd like to help if I can.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

- Work on public-education events.
- Office work assisting our executive secretary.
- Financial work, helping with the fund-raising campaign.
- Help our housing committee find furnishings.
- Work on our hospitality program to help incoming ABC students feel welcome.