

Pittsfield: Creative director elected to arts council

Berkshire Creative Director Helena Fruscio has been elected to the Emerging Leader Council, an advisory body to Americans for the Arts, a leading nonprofit organization for the advancement of the arts.

Her term officially began on Jan. 1, and will run until Dec. 31, 2013.

As a member of the council, Fruscio will provide leadership across network projects and activities, and assist in developing programs and resources to promote the growth, development, and sustenance of emerging arts professionals nationwide. She will attend the organization's winter meeting in Washington D.C. next week.

Fruscio joined the Berkshire Creative Economy Council in 2007, and has worked with its board and volunteers to stimulate new job growth and economic opportunity in the region.

Pittsfield: Youth Center gets \$100K in grants

The Greylock Federal Credit Union and its subsidiary, the Greylock Insurance Agency, have presented the Williamstown Youth Center with two grants totaling \$100,000. The funding will support the development of the new WYC facility which is planned to be constructed 2011-12.

The Credit Union pledged \$75,000, and the Insurance Agency \$25,000. Each grant will be paid over a five year period. Construction is scheduled to take place between June 2011 and May 2012.

The Williamstown Youth Center facilitates an after school program, vacation week programs, many sports and artistic initiatives, and an eight week summer camp. The WYC has raised over \$3.3 million of the funding required to complete its capital campaign which will conclude this year.

Stockbridge: Riverbrook program director tapped

Deborah Francome of Lanesborough has been appointed program director for Riverbrook Residence, New England's oldest residential community for women with developmental disabilities. She succeeds Heather Murphy, who relocated to Arizona.

At Riverbrook, Francome will be responsible for supervising daily operations that include programs, health services, staffing patterns and maintaining compliance with state regulations.

Born in England, Francome graduated from Reading University and came to the United States as part of an exchange program for social workers. She traveled to the Berkshires, settled in Lanesborough, and became a naturalized citizen in 1999.

Francome worked for GE Plastics and then Sabic Innovative Plastics for many years where she was involved in training, sales and marketing and community volunteer work. She holds a degree in business administration from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams, and a masters degree in nonprofit management and philanthropy from Bay Path College in Longmeadow.