

# New Haven Register

## *“Nonprofit helps realize child-care dreams”*

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By Joseph Straw

**NEW HAVEN** — For most of her life, Margaret Young has considered herself a "neighborhood mother."

Living in West Rock's sprawling Brookside public housing development, Young, a mother of four and grandmother of eight, cared for many working parents' children when needed.

But her dream was always to care for children professionally at her 30 Brookside Ave. home.

Young's dream came true this week, thanks to her drive and a little help from Yale University alumnae Jessica Sager and Janna Wagner of All Our Kin Inc.

The city-based nonprofit trains qualified women, most of whom have raised children, toward state certification as child-care providers. Young's "Children of our Future" day-care center is the first home-based facility opened by a graduate.

"I had a dream of doing this. And then I met these two Yale students. A lawyer and a teacher. What could they teach me about kids? Turns out they had something to teach me. I couldn't spank them no more.

Now we take a time-out," Young said.

Young and three other students completed All Our Kin's first nine-month child-care course in June.

Eight more are now training at the organization's 104 Brookside Ave. facility.

Young's home, situated at the end of a building in the sprawling, largely boarded-up red brick housing project, is now ringed by a new chain-link fence, decorated for Tuesday's festivities with colored balloons.

Sager started All Our Kin under a fellowship while studying at Yale law school, and was later joined by Wagner, a New Haven native and Wilbur Cross High School alumna, who got her master's degree in policy and early childhood education.

Of Young's classmates, two have joined facility-based daycare centers, while the fourth, Tryee Dickey, stayed at All Our Kin to teach more caregivers.

Typical of participants, Dickey had to leave a prior job to care for her own four children.

"This is a superb opportunity to support children and grow, and to teach my children how to grow," Dickey said.

All Our Kin is funded through several corporate and nonprofit sponsors, as well as the city. Payments from parents to caretakers like Young typically come from state aid, as many of the children's parents are shifting to jobs from welfare, Sager said.

Young, who said only that her age is "way up there," credited her own children, who in age from 31 to 37, with her achievement.

"I always pushed for my kids to go for what they wanted and to reach for the stars. When I did this they pushed me, so I strove for my dreams, and today my dreams become a reality," Young said.