

BIG HAPPENINGS NEWSLETTER



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In This Issue:

- Welcome Nea McLin & Kristin Rossetti
- Welcome New Board Members
- New City Neighbors Magazine
- Express Stores Igniting Confidence Competition
- Community Giving to BBBS

To find out how to become a mentor or how to enroll your child(ren), please contact our Program Supervisor, Sarah Arras, at (845) 317-6112 or email at sarras@bbbsofrc.com!

To donate to help support our mission, please visit our donate page at www.bbbsofrc.com/donate



@BBBSofRC



@BBBSofRC



@BBBSofRC

"CHILDREN ARE LIKE
WET CEMENT:
WHATEVER FALLS ON
THEM MAKES AN
IMPRESSION."

HAIM GINOTT



USE THESE HASH-TAGS FOR ALL YOUR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS:

#BBBSRC #DEFENDERSOFPOTENTIAL #IGNITEPOTENTIAL

OUR MISSION:

Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.



2023 NEWSLETTER GREETINGS FROM GILLIAN

Firstly, please allow me this opportunity to wish all our readers, a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Secondly and without question, 2022 was a very tough year as we recover from the financial fallout of the pandemic and high inflation on all levels -but-as we cope with higher consumer goods and, utilities, especially - let's not forget that many, many more families fall deeper into the need of unaffordable rental accommodation! These are the families we serve -yes- the majority are living, sadly, in disadvantaged homes located within high crime neighborhoods. Furthermore, it is, indeed, unfortunate to hear that many families are struggling from distress of the economic fallout of the pandemic . These negative environments can contribute to the development of negative behavior patterns in vulnerable children and youth, making it even more challenging for families to break the cycle of poverty and improve their circumstances.

That's where we step in –The calendar is saying "2023"and that means saying goodbye to another year and all that comes with it -We wish our Littles and their families a great start to the new-year. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County has so much to look forward to as we transition to the start of "New Beginnings."

Big Brothers Big Sisters is not your typical organization. Helping children succeed in school, at home and in their communities has such a profound impact on lives, and no mentoring organization does it better than Big Brothers Big Sisters because we are here to start something! We help children realize their potential and build their futures. We nurture children and strengthen communities and we couldn't do any of it without you – our most valuable commodity!

Now, to a completely different topic – 2023 marks an exciting milestone for our agency, our 40th anniversary! We have many celebrations planned and we hope you will join us as we wish our agency the happiest of birthdays!

Stay posted!



MEET THE OFFICE STAFF!



Sarah Arras
Program Supervisor
(845) 317-6112
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Nea McLin
Program Manager
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nmclin@bbbsofrc.com



Judie Greenstein
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Karen Lewis
Data Entry Specialist
klewis@bbbsofrc.com



Patrice Brenner
Bookkeeper
pbrenner@bbbsofrc.com



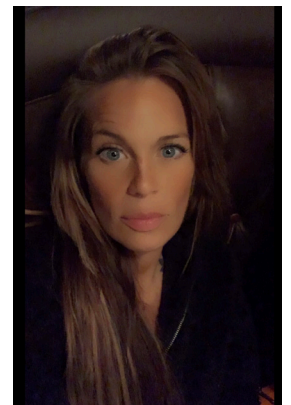
Kristin Rossetti
Match Support Specialist
845-317-6116
kristin@bbbsofrc.com

WELCOME KRISTIN ROSSETTI AS MATCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Big Brothers Big Sisters is a mentorship program that connects adult volunteers with children facing adversity in their communities. As a Match Support Specialist contact for this program, I play a crucial role in ensuring that the mentorship relationship between the volunteer and child is successful and fulfilling for both parties.

By providing regular check-ins, support, and guidance, I help to strengthen the bond between the Big and Little, and ensure that they have access to the resources and tools they need to thrive. Overall, the Big Brothers Big Sisters program is a powerful force for positive change in the lives of young people, and as a Match Support Specialist contact, I am at the heart of this transformative work.

Kristin Rossetti
Match Support Specialist
845-317-6116
kristin@bbbsofrc.com





WELCOME NEA MCLIN AS PROGRAM MANAGER

I'm really glad to be a part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization of Rockland County!

I'm new to the organization as of January, 2023. My title is Program Manager and now that I am fully trained, I've learned everything that is required to enroll mentees and recruit mentors. As a Program Manager, I help to match a child with the right mentor, then I support this match by making monthly support calls to ensure everything goes well during the mentor and mentee outings and answer any questions or concerns from mentees, their parents or mentors when needed.



It has been a pleasure to meet the children in our program and to see a difference in their moods and attitudes in such a short time! Sometimes it only takes one person to change someone's life for the better and luckily, we have many amazing volunteer mentors that have been able to guide our mentees in the right direction of their young lives.

Our mentors are supportive individuals who build relationships with their mentees offering them guidance, support, and encouragement to make positive choices, help them with their self-esteem and support academic achievement and introduce new ideas. Mentors are not meant to replace parents, guardians or teachers, or to play the role of disciplinarians or decision makers. Rather, they become part of a team of caring adults to that young person.

Should you wish to reach me, my number is: 845.317.6113

With thanks and appreciation,

Nea McLin

Program Manager

(845) 317-6113

nmclin@bbbsofrc.com



Lia

Toyota of Rockland

is donating

\$10,000

to both



Big Brothers Big Sisters
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY

&



We're inviting YOU to our check presentation

April 18th @ 5:30pm

618 Route 303, Blauvelt, NY

enjoy food from

**LA
TERRAZZA**

live entertainment by



**Tommy
Dunn**

Money donated to **Big Brothers Big Sisters** is going towards their Court-Ordered Visitation Program, and money donated to **Bridges** is going towards their Disabled Veterans Transportation program.



BBBS Hosts Addiction Awareness Event at Crowne Plaza Suffern-Mahwah

All are welcome!!! Please join us in hearing this life-changing presentation.

Light refreshments will be served. Bring a friend who wants to help Rockland County youth!

RSVP by April 27th at the link below.

<https://forms.gle/dG2bVkAp2WuG96t16>

Please Join us

May 4th 2023

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

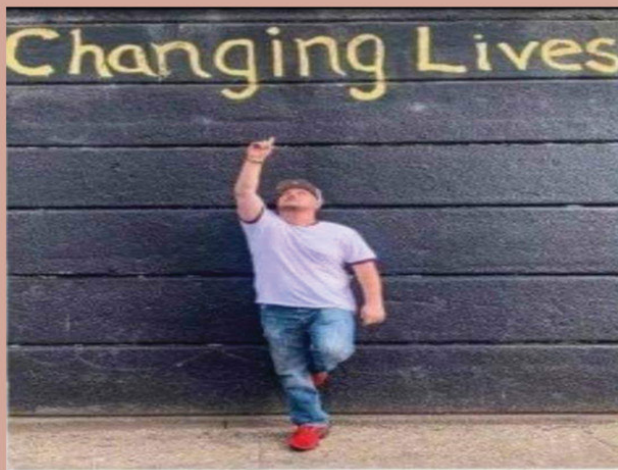
Crowne Plaza Suffern - Mahwah
3 Executive blvd Suffern NY, 10901



Topic

Testimony & Learning how to
understand awareness of addiction
Scott Mannheimer

T h u r s d a y
2023
05/
04/



*My name is Scott Mannheimer.
I am 38 years old. I am a recovered
drug addict. In early 2018, after
completing my life changing
treatment, I moved to Pennsylvania.
I noticed that I now saw life
differently. I put all of my
heart and soul into my interventions
I do with the people who need it
most! I continue to pursue my
dreams of telling my story to the
world. I was stuck, for a long time!
And after decades of struggle,
depravity, and hopelessness,
I can finally say that
I AM FREE!!!*

www.kensingtonhope.com

R.S.V.P. by Google form below



CONGRATULATIONS FORMER LITTLE DAPHKAR!

Our agency is thrilled for our Former Little Daphkar who has been inducted into the Pre-Health Honor Society of Alpha Epsilon Delta. Most recently Daphkar shared the news with our agency that she has been accepted into the Early Opportunity Program in Medicine at Jacobs School of Medicine & Biomedical Sciences at the University of Buffalo. Admission to this program is based on a holistic view of a student's academics, personal attributes and life experiences. Daphkar, all of our team is proud of you and acknowledges the hard work you have put in to reach your goals. We can't wait until you return to our team as a Big Sister. Keep us posted on your journey!



CONGRATULATIONS TO LITTLE SISTER LINDZEY

A round of applause for Lindzey for being inducted into the World Languages Honor Society this year. Lindzey served as an ambassador to students through the Multilingual Club in her high school. As a leader in the club she enriched the school experience within and outside of the ENL community. Lindzey helped plan school and community activities that empowered students and helped others. Everyone on the team is so proud of her efforts!





**WE HAVE
MOVED**



Big Brothers Big Sisters.
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY

NEW ADDRESS:

257 S. Middletown Rd.,
Suite 204
Nanuet, NY 10954
845-317-6112



A WORD FROM SARAH ARRAS, PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

As Spring is coming, our agency is so excited to hear what exciting outing that all of our matches have planned.

Our team loves to hear your ideas, see your pictures and hear from you about what is working. Our team welcomes Kristin Rossetti as a Match Support Specialist and Nea McLin as a Program Manager. Thank you to Karen Lewis, our Data Entry and Match Support Specialist who helps remotely behind the scenes. And as always thank you to Judie Greenstein, our Volunteer Match Support Specialist, who has been pivotal in helping connect kids in the program with supporting our matches. Our team was able to spread the word on WRCCR to their listeners to raise awareness of our program. We are looking forward to great things!



YOUTH SAFETY TRAINING CALLED YOUR CHILD'S PERSONAL SAFETY

Most recently our National Office has made some enhancements that require all Parents/Guardians to have completed a Youth Safety Training called Your child's personal safety: What a parent needs to know. Please contact the office if you have any questions about how to access the training. Please partner with us to make sure that we keep our kids safe by having safeguards in place.



NARCAN TRAINING THIS SPRING

We are hoping to offer Narcan Training this Spring for Parents/Guardians, Bigs, Staff and Teens if permitted. Having recently met with a local Ambulance Corp we were amazed to hear how many calls in a week in which they have needed to administer this life saving medicine.

Also please consider donating what you can to the Camp Scholarship Fund as our agency collaborates with National Council, YMCA and other local camps to help kids receive financial aid or discounted rates on camps. Any private donations would be appreciated to help our agency assist in its efforts to keep kids active this summer.

Camp Scholarship Donations may be made online with the link below or by mailing a check to our office located at 257 South Middletown Road, Suite 204, Nanuet, NY 10954
<https://www.bbbsofrc.com/donate/one-time-gift/>





WELCOME DAN WUGMAN, ESQ.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County welcomes new Board Member, Dan Wugman, Esq., Principal Partner of the Wugman & Wugman, P.C. law firm, New City - specializing in Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability cases. Interested? Call (845) 499-2232 to schedule a free consultation.



WELCOME MICHAEL ELLMAN, ESQ.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County welcomes Michael Ellman, Esq., to its Board of Directors. Michael is an Attorney registered with New York State, Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration and works at the firm of Beldock & Saunders, P.C., 151 N Main St, Ste 300, New City, NY 10956-3850/Telephone: (845) 267-4878, which specializes in personal injury and medical malpractice.





NEW CITY NEIGHBORS SHOWCASE BBBS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County was recently featured in a July article of New City Neighbors, showcasing images of Littles & Bigs with Program Supervisor, Sarah Arras & Match Coordinator, Anne Nissen!

<https://www.bbbsofrc.com/july-new-city-neighbors/>

Also, thank you to photographer Rik Paul for donating your time to capture pictures for the article.

<https://www.rik-paul.com/>



RESIDENT FEATURE

GIVING BACK TO CHILDREN IN NEW CITY AND BEYOND

By Rex Robinson

Sarah Arras, the program supervisor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County, plays Frisbee at a local park with little Liam. (Photo by Rik Paul)

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New City Neighbors - July 2022



NEW CITY NEIGHBORS

AGENCY GIVES BACK TO AREA CHILDREN

PHOTO BY RIK PAUL
Best Version Media



Program Supervisor Sarah Arras, and Liam play loss rings together. (Photos by Rik Paul)

Sarah Arras, Program Supervisor, watches as Sophia, Lucas, and Liam start on the balance beam together.

Children and youth need all the help they can get in navigating this complicated world. The recent mass shooting at an elementary school in Texas that resulted in the death of 19 children and two adults shows just how much children and youth need attention and understanding from adult role models.

That is exactly what Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County is all about. "Being a Big Brother is an opportunity to share my life experience and be a positive influence in a young person's life in very direct and gratifying ways," says Jeffrey Epstein, of Nyack, who is a Big Brother volunteer with the organization. "That rewarding feeling flows in both directions, and I feel quite satisfied as I learn from the interaction. Being able to participate in the BBBS program is a gift to both of us."

Angelica is a New City mother with children in the program and she has seen firsthand the positive impacts it has on them. (Note: BBBS protects the privacy of the families involved in the program by not revealing last names.)

"My children have benefited from the program in many ways," she says. "One is mentoring. It helped them build better relationships, and work on their behavior, self-confidence, self-love, and developmental health. The kids have someone to talk to other than mom and it empowers them to use their voice to talk too."



Wilkins, one of the little brothers in the program, loses a Frisbee as Sarah Arras watches.



Big Sister Cindy and Lucas enjoy a tense game of Jenga at a local park. (Photo by Rik Paul)

continued on page 7

Her favorite memories, she adds, are watching her children grow through taking part in myriad activities - from attending camp (thanks to scholarships provided by BBBS) to movies, bowling, games, parties, and other activities. Angelica says she also sees how the program benefits New City and the surrounding region.

"This program is very important for the community because it helps parents help their kids learn more and become better parents. We all need the help and support from a mentor to help us understand our kids. Mentoring also allows people to learn from one another," she says.

Sarah Arras, of New City, is the program supervisor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County. She came to work for the organization upon relocation to New York after several years of working at a non-profit organization

for people with disabilities. "My father worked for Child Protective Services when I was a child and I remember him speaking fondly of the work Big Brothers Big Sisters did in my hometown to support youth," Sarah recalls. This connection drew me to apply to Big Brothers Big Sisters where I learned about everything that goes into supporting and matching mentors with children and youth and ignited their passion for their future.

"At this time, I have witnessed numerous mentee graduation ceremonies at the Rockland Legislative Chambers. Every participant carries amazing stories for each match partnership and remarkable experiences of what both 'Big' and 'Littles' have learned from each other. This connection drew me to apply to Big Brothers Big Sisters where I learned about everything that goes into supporting and matching mentors with children and youth and ignited their passion for their future."

Sarah, who graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Theater Production, lives in



Sarah Arras, BBBS program supervisor, and her daughter, Carissa, help out during a fishing derby in 2014. (Photo provided by Sarah Arras)

New City with her husband Jonathan and two daughters, Miranda and Carissa, and says she knows children and young people are going through so much right now and that many times their feelings get neglected as "just a phase."

"Having a nonjudgmental mentor in their corner can improve their situation tremendously," Sarah says. "Having someone who can reaffirm that they don't need to know, or have it all figured out by the time they leave high school and that there are many paths to success is key to their wellness."

"The impact I have seen the program have on families over the years is breathtaking," she adds. "I feel honored to get to hear their families' stories and that they want us to be part of their children's lives. Our lives get busy, and children aren't always heard. Having another adult to talk to and be in their corner is invaluable."

Sarah and other BBBS staff do "support calls" where they speak to a parent, youth, and mentor monthly. "This is where the magic happens as everyone gets to work together as a team to help a child find their passion," she says. "Being a part of that and hearing the new interests of youth helps me stay relevant. It has helped keep me open to what is important to children and young adults in our area."



BBBS Program Supervisor Sarah Arras and Big Brother Jeff Epstein help Sophia prepare for a hike as Liam looks on.

New City Neighbors - July 2022



Big Brother Jeff, Little Brother Wilkins, Big Sister Cindy, Little Sister Lucas, BBBS Program Supervisor Sarah Arras, Little Liam, and parent Angelica gather for a group photo. (Photos by Rik Paul)

Over the years, the agency has connected young adults with myriad resources such as school supplies, Thanksgiving dinners, tutoring, coat drives, and summer camp opportunities to name but a few. These programs, Sarah adds, would not have been possible if it were not for the support of Rockland County businesses and local donors who have answered the call for families in need. "These programs would also not be possible without our staff listening closely to the families about their needs and how we could help," she says.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County is a full-service, national gold standard award-winning, and pre-eminent, NYS Better Business Bureau accredited youth mentoring organization serving "at-risk" youth from the ages of 7 to 18 years throughout all Rockland communities, according to the organization's website. As the oldest, largest, and most effective youth mentoring organization in Rockland County, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been the leader in one-to-one youth services for 37 years.

Cindy Colgan, a mentor to one of Angelica's children encourages others to become mentors and says by doing so "you'll have some fun and spread some joy!" More information about enrolling in the program is available at www.bbbsofrc.com.



STOP & SHOP

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County was selected as the August beneficiary of the program by store leadership at the Stop & Shop located at Orangeburg, NY. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County received a \$1 donation every time the \$2.50 reusable Community Bag was purchased at this location during select months, unless otherwise directed by the customer through the Giving Tag attached to the bag.

Help your Community & the Environment by Purchasing a bag today!



**Give Back to the Community
and the Environment!**

COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM

When you buy a reusable \$2.50 Community Bag
at our local Stop & Shop location, our
organization will receive a \$1 donation this month.

Learn more at stopandshop.bags4mycause.com



2 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Big Brother Jeff & Little Brother Wilkins celebrated their 2 year Anniversary by enjoying a Mets game courtesy of Tickets for Kids Charities. Although the home team did not win, our agency wishes you both have many more celebrations together!



THE BACKPACKS FOUNDATION 43 BAGS OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Thanks to the generous donation from The Backpacks Foundation 43 bags of school supplies were distributed to Littles in our program this year. Pictured below Cara & Kristin delivered the supplies with a smile and wished all of our Littles the happiest of school years yet!!! Our agency could not be more grateful for the outpouring of support for our Littles return to school.





MENTORING

Mentoring is so much more than what we see on the outside. It's the transformation and the growth that makes it all worthwhile. This #BBBSMonth, support Big Brothers Big Sisters and help us create more moments that empower young people to reach their full potential! Whether it's a trip to the park or a Saturday morning coffee run, these experiences are cornerstones to lifelong impact for a Big and Little. These are the moments that make the biggest impact, and why we celebrate the power of mentoring this #BBBSMonth. Join us! <https://www.bbbsofrc.com/sign-up-to-volunteer/>



THEBIGDRAFT

It's time for #TheBIGDraft! We're teaming up with NFL @InspireChange to recruit 6,000 new Bigs in 60 days. JOIN THE TEAM: <https://www.bbbsofrc.com/sign-up-to-volunteer/>





CONGRATULATIONS TO BIG SISTER MARGIE AND LITTLE BROTHER ADONIS

Congratulations to Big Sister Margie and Little Brother Adonis on their 6 year anniversary! Thanks for sharing this "Then & Now" Picture to show us how much you have grown in your match. Don't worry we can see your smiles behind those masks!



LITTLE BROTHER LUCAS & BIG SISTER CINDY

Little Brother Lucas & Big Sister Cindy. They went to Billy Beez in the Palisades mall.





THANK YOU TO ALL THE MENTORS

Thank you to all the Mentors who came to share resources and learn from each other. It was a very valuable experience to hear what everyone had to share. Thank you to RCADD for providing us with medicine disposal bags to learn about safe disposal and to Bubbakoo's Burritos for helping encourage our littles year round to increase their reading.



MEDICINE DISPOSAL BAG



READING PROGRAM CONTACT OFFICE FOR DETAILS



TWO OF OUR LOCAL LITTLES JAQUELYN & LINDZEY

Two of our local Littles Jaquelyn & Lindzey were nominated by their Bigs & BBBS Staff for the Igniting Confidence Shopping Spree sponsored by EXPRESS as part of their collaboration with BBBSA through Express Stores Dream Big Project. We are happy to announce that Both Littles have won the shopping spree. These Littles were selected for the growth that they have shown, since they began in the program. These ladies have become leaders in their schools and communities. Our age... See more





THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 BBBS HOLIDAY PARTY SPONSORS:

· Corey Zbar, CPA · CPS Business Products · Hudson Health & Spine
· Jacob J. Katz & Company · Yossi's Woodworx

Extended thanks to our supporters who supplied some great prizes for our raffle:

Duke of Oil | 16 Handles | Rocco's Italian Restaurant | New City Bowl & Batting Cages

Family of Capt Pat Hogan | 5 Wits, Palisades Mall





THANK YOU TO CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

Thank you to Christie's International Real Estate for making the holidays brighter for the last three years for a number of children in our program. Thank you to this year's elves Francesca Bonivita, Richard Hershka, and Theresa Negast for carrying on the tradition. Happy Holidays to everyone!

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE
GROUP



THANK YOU TO GIRL SCOUT SERVICE UNIT 413

Thank you to Girl Scout Service Unit 413 for selecting BBBS as one of their charities to donate to this Holiday Season. The Holiday season will be brighter because of your donations. Keep doing great things together!!!



THANK YOU TO COMMUNITY ELF SHARON

Thank you to Community Elf Sharon for adopting a family this Holiday season and for the last three years. Our families are glad to be kept in your thoughts.





TOY DRIVE BY HOWARD RAND REALTY

We extend sincerest of thanks to the entire Howard Rand Realty team for their fantastic Toy Drive
Thank you for visiting our BBBS office in Nanuet, Rockland County!

L - R:

Samantha Ortiz, Manager, New City & Suffern - Howard Rand Realty; Gillian Ballard, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County, CEO; JP Endres, Sr. Manager, Howard Rand Realty, Suffern & New City Branch; Mark Dari, Realtor, Howard Rand Realty





Won't You Be Part ^{of} our Success Story?

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland is a non-profit organization supported through the government of Rockland County, its villages and towns. Federal, state and corporate grants, as well as fundraising, directly support the children in your community.

When you donate to Big Brothers Big Sisters, you help make a difference in the lives of young people. Your financial support helps us provide programs and services throughout the Rockland community so we can nurture more college graduates, community leaders and entrepreneurs. In addition, your support enables BBBS to:

- offer cultural and social activities to enrich the opportunities and lives of children.
- recruit new Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers.
- cover the costs of background checks, while ensuring trained professionals match Littles to responsible Bigs.
- provide ongoing supervision and relationship support for every Big, Little and Little's family.

POTENTIAL

IS EVERYWHERE



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 2023

Jennifer Sislin, Chairperson

Ed Brignoni, Vice Chairperson

Keith Brown, Treasurer

TBD, Recording Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023

TERM 2023

Ed Brignoni

TERM 2024

Robert Barilli

Keith Brown

Jim Lugo

TERM 2025

T. Faherty, Esq.

Sean Maher

Mike Ellman, Esq.

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Jennifer Sislin

Dan Wugman, Esq.



**Big Brothers
Big Sisters®**
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY