

## **Opening Doors**

By: Ivette O'Sullivan

On June 3, 2017 the Village of Wappingers Falls suffered a devastating fire that impacted 5 buildings that displaced 30 people from their home. Three of the connected buildings holding several residents were destroyed and two others underwent water damage. Thank God no injuries occurred.

After hearing about the destructive fire the Next Generation Latino Youth Group felt the need to help out. The group decided to organize a carwash to raise money to contribute with supporting the needs of the families. The fundraiser was scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup> at Zion Episcopal Church 12 Saterlee Pl, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 from 1pm until 3:30.

We raised a total of \$ 1, 286.00. This money was distributed among two families that were adopted by Abriendo Puertas/ Opening Doors. The families are planning to use the funds towards rent deposits. I'm so proud of the Next Generation Latino Youth Group for taking the lead to honor their civic responsibilities. This is the age where they are standing at the crossroads of adolescence and adulthood and knowing what they owe to society and what is expected of them is imperative to their community. Change can only be brought with action and the best and most responsible thing Abriendo Puertas/ Opening Doors can do is to share the sense of civic responsibilities with the younger generation. Please remember for a socially aware and responsible generation, all parents and teachers need to play their part and educate children about the concepts and importance of living up to ones civic duties. When we teach adolescence that they have the power to have an effect in the community that shapes their lives, we also teach them the great responsibility that comes with this power. In putting fundamental civic skills into practice at the local level, teenagers cultivate a desire and the ability to exercise civic power effectively, and they are likely to continue using these skills as adults.

It is only with the support of all the volunteers and donors that we were able to make this fundraiser happen. Thank you for your kindness, generosity, time and effort that you put into making the event such a huge success. Thank you Legislator Francena Amparo for taking time out of your busy schedule to spend the day with us and your hands on directives to demonstrate to the youth how to wash the cars. Words cannot express my gratitude.