

# Human Services Center (HSCC) 2011 Annual Report

## *Celebrating 29 Years of Serving the Mon Valley*

### 2011 Banner Facilities Year

**A**t the Human Services Center, over 750 people are served daily. They walk through the doors of the Center or the HSCC's extended space across the street to reach their services; they ride the elevators, traverse the stairs, utilize the restrooms, and complete a plethora of tasks while on the premises. In recent years, wear and tear became much more noticeable as the visitors and staff in the building simply used the space. This year, the HSCC worked with over a dozen contractors and multiple funders to improve the facilities in important and substantial ways. Multiple major and minor projects were completed thanks to that valuable funding and hard work of the contractors.

The Center's roof was deteriorating rapidly and replacement was required. The entire project took significant planning and over three weeks to complete. The roof replacement included stripping the roof and replacing a protective layer of rock, replacing the rubber system, updating lighting as needed, and adding new walkways to postpone future deterioration. The project will impact the efficiency of heating and cooling the building and will also decrease the number of leaks for many years to come thanks to a grant from the Eden Hall Foundation.

The HSCC also completed a major renovation on the first floor of the Center. Jan McDowell, Senior Center Manager for Eastern Area Adult Services (EAAS) said of the updates, "The remodeling of the space afforded us the ability to increase the usage of what was a large, difficult area. It also allowed us to define the space as our own and give us more freedom to provide our programs." In the dining room, which is used by both EAAS and the HSCC for outreach programs, a new movable wall was installed to provide greater flexibility in the space. Walls were constructed to provide a warmer, more "living room" feel to a gathering area, and a wall was built to reduce the noise from the youth program/meeting room. All of these renovations, in addition to updates in carpeting, painting, tiling, plumbing, and bathroom doors, promote a higher level of utilization. Specific users are now able to maximize each area and provide many more services to the visitors.

Not only were large projects completed in the building, but around the building, as well. The walkway leading from the Center to the HSCC's offices and extended space was deteriorating. A portion of the sidewalk was replaced and timber edging was replaced for safety and an aesthetically pleasing entrance.

Also exterior to the building, the courtyard, which the youth programs and tenant agencies use daily, was significantly updated this year. The roots of two very large trees were substantially damaging the stonework in the courtyard and, if left to grow, could have created a safety concern. Both trees were removed and the stonework was repaired. Children using the space are now able to run freely about the courtyard.



The HSCC maintains four parking lots and all of its sidewalks, which require constant plowing and upkeep throughout the winter. The HSCC's truck and plow were used for over 14 years and the HSCC opted to purchase a new

truck, plow, and salt spreader to ensure that during another winter the lots and sidewalks will be kept safe and clear.

While in previous years the HVAC system at HSCC I was updated, the system at "HSCC II" was old and required frequent repairs. A new environmental system was just completed, allowing for each space to be adjusted independently and ensuring a significant energy savings thanks to support from the Hillman Foundation and Massey Charitable Trust.

Many smaller projects were also completed, including carpet upgrades, painting around the center, window cleaning, updating artwork, stripping and waxing of tile floors, and revitalizing green space around the Center.

According to Arwen Davis, Operations and Projects Coordinator, "Each project, no matter how large or small, contributes to the services provided at the Center. Creating a safe environment in which agencies can maximize their impact is vital to running a successful nonprofit center...and this year was a banner year for completing that goal!" These improvements show that the HSCC values the consumers, tenants, and the community at-large.

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## Emerging Leaders Program Successes

With over 40 participants in 2011, the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) had a very exciting and successful year. One of our ELP graduates was accepted to Youngstown State University. In addition, she received the distinguished Clairton School District Picco Scholarship!

The Clairton High School graduate comes from a low-income family, where she was the first in her family to attend college. It was a struggle for her to meet her academic goals for the future, but with determination her aspirations are coming to fruition. With the help and guidance from the staff on her college application and essay, she was not only accepted, but also received a scholarship to attend. Another ELP student, Asraiel Harewood, from the Woodland Hills School District is attending Duke University on a full scholarship and was a national Coca Cola Scholarship recipient. She is pictured.



Major outcomes for all participants were:

- **96% (24 out of 25)** of ELP seniors earned a high school diploma.
- **76% (19 out of 25)** of ELP graduating seniors entered post-secondary training/education, entered the military, or entered the workforce.
- **23** students obtained an after-school job, summer job, or internship.
- **98%** of participants were promoted to the next grade level.

## Moving Toward Self Sufficiency

Jackie contacted the HSCC seeking rental assistance. After a conversation with her, Denise Daugherty, the Family Development Specialist (FDS) determined that Jackie would be a good fit for the McKeesport Collaborative. Jackie's husband had been recently incarcerated for robbery; he was a drug addict and needed money to purchase drugs. She was about to be evicted and the McKeesport Collaborative assisted her with rent in order to keep Jackie and her two young children in their home. Jackie and Denise also completed an online application for public assistance and she was able to qualify for food stamps. Jackie then sought and attained employment, and although the position is temporary, Denise and Jackie continue to seek more permanent employment opportunities. Jackie is "extremely grateful" for the assistance of the McKeesport Collaborative and describes the FDS as "an angel" to her family. Denise is quite proud of Jackie for hanging in there when it would have been easy to give up. Jackie wants to achieve her goal of being self sufficient, and then she wants to help others in need.

Essential outcomes of the McKeesport Collaborative in 2011 were:

- **5 out of 8 or 63%** of the Collaborative women obtained part-time employment
- **2 out of 5 or 40%** obtained full time employment with above minimum wages
- **5 out of 9 or 56%** obtained rental housing of choice
- **4 out of 12 or 30%** are enrolled in college

## Advocacy Efforts

This year, the Center worked diligently with the Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership to advocate for adequate funding for the nonprofit social services sector at the federal, state, and county levels. Staff of the HSCC are often at the forefront of these efforts especially through the work of the membership of the Mon Valley Providers Council.

If you have questions about our initiatives in advocacy and lobbying, please contact Dave Coplan, the Executive Director.

## Current HSCC Staff

The Center continues to utilize a variety of creative staffing resources.

### Staff

Dave Coplan, Executive Director  
 Leah O'Reilly, Youth Programs Director  
 Ruth Smith, Collaborative Programs Director  
 Arwen Davis, Operations and Projects Coordinator  
 Denise Daugherty, Youth Development Associate/Family Development Specialist  
 Kate VanDerSchaaf, Youth Programs Assistant Director  
 Meaghan Maher, Sites Coordinator  
 Carolyn Burkamp, Education Specialist  
 Lynn Andelmo, Receptionist  
 Jake Yeager, Building Superintendent  
 Part time temporary staff in the youth programs include Lead Education Associates, Education Associates, and Recreation Associates.

### Student Interns

Caitlin Evan, Jessie Mayes, and Linda Railing

### Urban League Mature Workers

Tyrone Johnson, Rose Smeltzer, and Joann Snider

### Ongoing Volunteers

Joe Jipson and Joan Polesnak

## Volunteers Make a Difference – 2011 Featured Group is Duquesne Light

The Human Services Center (HSCC) utilizes – and appreciates – its volunteers every day! From providing front desk coverage to multiple “days of caring” throughout the year, the HSCC could not operate efficiently without the aid of both the individuals and groups that volunteer. The HSCC is able to rely on the hard-working volunteers that come throughout the year to give their time, energy, and skills to ensure that the facilities are in top condition and are a reflection of the good work that is accomplished at the Center.

For many years, Duquesne Light has provided multiple volunteers to assist the Center when needed. In May of this year, volunteers assisted in a clean-up day for the expansive courtyard at the Center. Trees that provided shade and protection also left debris and, with just one staff member dedicated fully to all of the facilities, that debris occasionally builds up. The volunteers worked so hard and efficiently that day that not only did they complete the courtyard cleanup, but they also had time to assist with cleaning the Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs Food Bank space.



Lisa Minor, Senior Community Relations Specialist at Duquesne Light said of the relationship with the HSCC, “The Human Services Center Corporation is dedicated to improving the lives of children, families and seniors in the Mon Valley. Without its services, many in the community would be unable to make ends meet, feed their families or participate in exceptional educational and recreational programming. The fact that HSCC is there for the 750 individuals who use it each day and that the caring hard-working staff members always provide a warm welcome, makes it an easy site choice year after year for our volunteers!”

Later in the year, Duquesne Light sent another group of volunteers to the Center. They worked on two major projects. The first included removing rocks, roots, and debris from a large area of ground; spreading ten tons of top soil; laying down 25 pounds of grass seed; and topping it off with two cubic feet of mushroom manure. This project resulted in a refreshed green space at the Center. The second major project included stripping, sanding, and repainting picnic tables and benches in the Center’s courtyard. The result is a benefit to the HSCC and tenant agencies that utilize the courtyard daily. Other volunteers worked to hang and move artwork in the building, clean windows and scrub youth program tables.

Volunteer Tom Faust said of the day, “This was my fourth year volunteering at the HSCC for the United Way Day of Caring. It is always a pleasure to help out the folks at the HSCC who appreciate all of the much-needed support from community volunteers. It is humbling to witness first-hand the HSCC’s mission and programs, and to understand its importance in helping so many. Thanks to HSCC, and to Duquesne Light Company, for providing the opportunity to participate in the Day of Caring.” Arwen Davis, Operations and Projects Coordinator at HSCC, said of Duquesne Light, “We are so thankful for their continuing support! Without them, projects such as those completed during this year would be hard to finish on our own. Thanks to each hard-working Duquesne Light volunteer that comes out – we appreciate you so much!”

## MVPC

The Mon Valley Providers Council is a major project administered by the Human Services Center. Serving residents in 37 Mon Valley communities, the MVPC is an alliance of 65 dues paying human service organizations that collaborate to provide services and solutions to the diverse needs of people.

A separate annual report for the MVPC is published as an insert in the McKeesport Daily News the second week of January each year, and further information is available online at:

[www.hsc-mvpc.org](http://www.hsc-mvpc.org)

## McKeesport Collaborative

With over 50 agencies working together, the McKeesport Collaborative has created new linkages for women and children affected by substance abuse, enabling participants to access many services.

A Family Development Specialist provides services addressing the main challenges faced by women in recovery: treatment for substance abuse, mental health issues, and improving self-reliance through stable housing, education, and employment programs. The Collaborative works toward strengthening families and encouraging educational success for children and adults, remaining dedicated to developing and improving services for women and their children affected by substance abuse. Community Service Block Grant funds from Allegheny County help to support case management.

The McKeesport Collaborative is a program of the HSCC and staff are located at HSCC II in Turtle Creek. Services are provided in McKeesport at the Family Center, in homes, and at HSCC.

## Mon Valley HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk

The McKeesport Collaborative, a program of the Human Service Center Corporation, sponsors the **only** HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention walk in Allegheny County. The purpose of the 3.4-mile walk is to generate awareness of HIV and AIDS in Mon Valley communities, and to aid in the elimination of the transmission as well as the stigma of the disease. Teams compete for the traveling trophy awarded to the team with the most walkers. On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mon Yough Juvenile Probation/McKeesport C.I.S.P. won the team trophy for the seventh time with 95 walkers. Through the leadership of the McKeesport Collaborative HIV/AIDS Working Group, the walk continues to be successful with approximately 350 individual supporters. The 12<sup>th</sup> annual walk will be on Saturday, October 1, 2012.



## How You Can Help the Center

A question we are often asked is, "How can I help the Center?" There are many ways to assist the work of the Human Services Center, but the primary ways to get involved are volunteering, donating, and providing corporate support:

- ☑ **Office and team project volunteers** are needed on a regular basis to assist with the front desk of the Center. This flexible opportunity can be done weekly or daily, and a variety of hours are open. Anyone interested can contact Lynn at 412-829-7112 for details.
- ☑ The MVPC/HSCC **Annual Fund Drive** accepts donations throughout the year. These unrestricted dollars allow us flexibility in programs.
- ☑ The HSCC is a **United Way Contributor Choice** agency and donations can be designated to our agency using code 922.
- ☑ The **Holiday Toy Project** accepts monetary donations to buy a \$25 gift for a child.
- ☑ **Corporations can sponsor** a variety of events such as the HIV/AIDS Walk of the McKeesport Collaborative or the MVPC events.
- ☑ **Tax credits** are another means for corporate support as the HSCC's youth programs are approved to receive Educational Improvement Tax Credits.
- ☑ **In-kind contributions** are accepted for a variety of purposes, and the HSCC does utilize **volunteers** in many additional capacities throughout the year, such as with the library, toy program, pantry, and other critical community services.
- ☑ The Emerging Leaders Program seeks **site visits** for job shadowing, site tours, or professional speakers..
- ☑ **Opportunities for internships, AmeriCorps positions, and part time staff** for the youth programs are usually available at the Center.

All contributions are tax deductible, and can be sent to the HSCC, attention Dave Coplan. Questions can be directed to Dave at 412-829-7112 or [dcoplan@hsc-mvpc.org](mailto:dcoplan@hsc-mvpc.org).

## 2012 Tenant Agencies

[All phone numbers are area code 412.]

### HSCC I – 519 Penn Avenue

#### FIRST FLOOR

**Braddock Carnegie Library Extension** - A mini-library providing books, videos, and other services. 829-7112

**Eastern Area Adult Services** - Support services to the over 60 population: noon meal, transportation, recreation, socialization. 824-6880

**Learn "N" Play** - Provides childcare services for infants (6 weeks) to 12 year olds. 829-0240

#### SECOND FLOOR

**Allegheny County Health Dept. - W.I.C. Program** - Supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children. 823-1333

**Alternatives** - Chemical abuse program. 824-9300  
**PA Representative Paul Costa** - Legislative Service Center to aid constituents with state and other public service matters. 824-3400

**Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Adult Outpatient Services** - Emergency help; crisis intervention; counseling. 824-8510

**Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Employment Services** - Workforce development training; employment search assistance; job coaching. 824-8510

**Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Psychiatric and Social Rehabilitation** - Rehabilitation coaches; classes; socialization. 461-4100 extension 728

#### THIRD FLOOR

**Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Community School East** - Alternative educational program for court-supervised students, grades 9-12. 464-4043

**Community Computer Lab** - A partnership between the Center and the members of the Mon Valley Providers Council to provide free computer training. 829-7112

**Community Outreach Services** - Space, marketing, and coordination is provided for a wide range of services using the Center on an as-needed, on-going, or seasonal basis. 829-7112

**Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Children, Adolescents, and Families** - Emergency help; crisis intervention; counseling. 349-0632

### HSCC II - 413 PENN AVENUE

**Human Services Center Corporation** - Facility management and coordination of the Westinghouse Valley Human Services Center, Mon Valley Providers Council, Youth Programs (Youth LIFE, ELP, and KOOL), and McKeesport Collaborative. 829-7112

**Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs** - Food pantry referral and clothing distribution in 20 east suburban communities. 24-hour hotline: 824-0006

## 2011 Key Partnerships for Positive Change

Each year, dozens of outreach agencies provide services to **thousands** of Center visitors. It is impossible to list each and every program provided, so several are highlighted below.

- Hundreds of individuals and families were provided funds for housing through the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh's Housing Assistance Program.
- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program prepared 297 federal and state tax returns for low-income citizens living in the Mon Valley.
- Dozens of individuals met at the Center for support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents of Murdered Children, Domestic Abuse Counseling Center, and others.
- Dozens of men were counseled by the Domestic Abuse Counseling Center.
- 98 individuals received free seasonal flu shots through a partnership with the McKeesport Hospital Foundation, the SHIP, FLEET, and Eastern Area Prehospital Services.
- Through a partnership with the Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs, 225 families received free supplemental groceries monthly, and the Emergency Pantry provided support to a dozen individuals monthly.
- Through a collaboration with the Braddock-Carnegie Library and Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh's Mature Workers Program, the Turtle Creek Library provided hundreds of families and individuals with books, DVDs, audio books, VHS tapes, literacy programming, and free computer access.
- In conjunction with local schools, numerous adjudicated youth received tutoring on site at the Center so that they could return to their home school.
- Countless individuals were able to sign up onsite at the Center for WorkLink, a free scheduled van service that helps people get to work, job training, child care, and life's other necessities, run by Heritage Community Initiatives.
- Over 30 individuals participated in Allegheny County and the PA Community Action Association's Family Development Credentialing (FDC) Program, a professional development course and credentialing program for frontline workers to learn and practice skills of strength-based family support with consumers.

## Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge the following for their generosity and support of the Human Services Center in 2011. Contributors to the MVPC Annual Fund Drive and individuals who gave through the United Way's Contributor Choice program are recognized in the January edition of **The Communicator**, which is available on our website at [www.hsc-mvpc.org](http://www.hsc-mvpc.org) or upon request.

### Operations and Special Projects

Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services- CSBG/CYF/HSDF/WIA  
 Allegheny County Dept. of Economic Development  
 BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania  
 Citizens Bank  
 Duquesne Light  
 Eat'n Park  
 Eden Hall Foundation  
 Equitable Resources

### Operations and Special Projects (cont.)

G.C. Murphy Foundation  
 Good Sports Inc.  
 The Heinz Endowments  
 Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield  
 Hillman Foundation  
 KaBOOM!  
 Kennywood  
 Local Emergency & Shelter Board - FEMA  
 Massey Charitable Trust  
 McCune Foundation  
 McKeesport Hospital Foundation (SHIP)  
 Howard and Nell E. Miller Foundation  
 PA Dept. of Economic Development  
 PA Dept. of Education  
 PNC  
 PNC – Charitable Trust Committee  
 Steel Dynamics  
 Mr. and Mrs. Chris Temple  
 The Techs, a Division of Steel Dynamics  
 United Way of Allegheny County  
 UPMC Health Plan  
 Verizon  
 Westinghouse Electric  
 YouthWorks, Inc.

## KOOL Program

During July and August, 195 first through fifth graders participated in the Kids Outgoing, Outdoing, and Learning (KOOL) Summer Program at the HSCC in Turtle Creek and at the Woodland Hills Junior High in Swissvale for eight hours, Monday-Friday. Each day the students were provided with a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack. The children also participated in a variety of academic, social, and recreational activities, and attended a field trip each week.

The summer program continues our work in promoting math and reading success for students.



## Study Island Is Improving Reading and Math with Our Youth

We have also noticed the impact of Study Island. The curriculum allows children to work at their own pace and play a modest game when they answer questions correctly. One of the Youth LIFE students would rather work on Study Island than play nonacademic online games. This child enjoyed both the academic work and the games on the Study Island curriculum. He received a blue ribbon, scoring at least 75% on every topic in math and reading and continued to work on both math and reading topics to increase his score to over 80% on each topic. He enjoyed learning so much that he worked on Study Island at home and during free time at school.

A child in third grade did not like reading in the least. He pouted anytime it was time to work on his reading skills in Study Island. Our Youth Programs Assistant Director sat with him to ensure he read the paragraphs and answered the questions correctly instead of guessing as he had done in the past. The more time she spent with the student the more she realized that the problem was not that he was guessing on the answers. Instead, the problem was that he did not have any confidence in his reading so he told himself that he could not do it. She sat with him for several days, helped him sound out words and praised him every time he got an answer right. By the end of the school year he was doing so well. He was not guessing the answers, was trying very hard to answer them correctly, and was eager and willing to work on reading topics when the time came. He is now a confident reader and does not let the big words or long paragraphs scare him into thinking he cannot do it. He improved in reading from a 33% to a 71% on the Study Island pre- and post tests.

## Youth LIFE and KOOL Programs Impact in the Woodland Hills School District

During 2010 and 2011, the HSCC expanded its after-school and summer programs thanks to support from the PA Department of Education, United Way, Allegheny County, and the Heinz Endowments. Over 355 youth were served and the outcomes from the first full year were outstanding:



- Participants regularly attending the program far exceeded the 60% target for improvement in math and reading, with a reading improvement rate of **75%** and a math improvement rate of **81%**.
- The HSCC has had a history of positive collaborations and relationships with stakeholders and, with **100%** of qualitatively surveyed stakeholders citing satisfaction with the programs, it has continued that successful trend.
- Through the bullying prevention and behavior program, Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS), the HSCC showed an extremely high level of discipline/behavior improvement, with **93%** of the 30 participating students reducing violent and/or problem behavior.

Continuing these stellar results is a focus of the staff. Additionally, for 2012, the HSCC is working with the District to expand the Youth LIFE Program into Fairless Elementary School in Braddock to serve additional youth.

## Human Services Center Corp.

HSCC I – 519 Penn Avenue  
 HSCC II – 413 Penn Avenue  
 Turtle Creek, PA 15145  
 Phone: 412-829-7112  
 Fax: 412-829-4363  
 Website: www.hsccl-mvpc.org

*A copy of the official registration and financial information of the Human Service Center Corp. can be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

## HSCC Leadership

### The 2012 Board of Directors:

James Anderson, President  
 David Priselac, Vice President  
 Pam McIver, Treasurer  
 Vivien Luk, Secretary  
 Jo DeBolt  
 Joseph Dombrosky  
 Greg Galford  
 Linda Harris  
 Kevin Kearns  
 Gus Miller  
 Darla Poole  
 Ellen Ramsden  
 Michelle Smith  
 Lynn Tatala  
 Damion Wilson

### 39 Communities Served:

Braddock	McKeesport
Braddock Hills	Monroeville
Chalfant	Munhall
Churchill	North Braddock
Clairton	North Versailles
Dravosburg	Pitcairn
Duquesne	Port Vue
East McKeesport	Rankin
East Pittsburgh	South Versailles
Edgewood	Turtle Creek
Elizabeth Borough	Versailles
Elizabeth Township	Wall
Forest Hills	West Elizabeth
Forward	West Homestead
Glassport	West Mifflin
Homestead	Whitaker
Jefferson Hills	White Oak
Liberty	Wilkins
Lincoln	Wilkinsburg
	Wilmerding