

Human Services Center (HSCC) 2013 Annual Report

Celebrating 31 Years of Serving the Mon Valley

Emerging Leaders Program Expands After Years of Success

Emerging Leaders, a workforce development and college readiness program for low-income seniors in high school, celebrated its eighth year by expanding its school and outside partnerships as well as offering the program to more students than ever before! Thanks to funding from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) via the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board we were able to increase our enrollment from **45 to 75** students across East Allegheny, McKeesport Area, and Woodland Hills High Schools in 2013! The Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) started with 12 students making this year's expansion a **525%** increase in enrollment since inception!

With the anticipation of increasing the numbers served, the HSCC strategically partnered with a group of professionals involved in the Leadership Pittsburgh Program. The participants worked with the ELP staff to develop an extensive contact list of professionals from all major industry clusters in the region to better expose ELPers to an assortment of workplaces and experiences. As a result, we have established job shadows, job tours, and/or informational interviews for almost all of our youth for this school year. Some students have already attended The Techs' NexTech (see picture to the right), Orthopedic and Sports Physical



Therapy Associates, and Q-Dot, Inc. Moreover, the 2012-2013 ELP class participated in job shadows and tours that included Pittsburgh Community Television, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Pirates Organization (see picture to the left), an air force base, and many others.

Over the years, the Emerging Leaders Program has helped the participants fulfill the goals they established while enrolled. The staff have watched the students become productive adults in numerous arenas. ELPers not only strive to

graduate high school, but many desire to become the first in their families to attend post-secondary education. The Emerging Leaders Program has had the opportunity to provide the tools and knowledge for at-risk students to succeed after high school and for many to graduate from a four-year college. For instance, a past participant that started as a freshman in high school from the first class of Emerging Leaders worked diligently with the staff throughout her time with ELP to accomplish all of the necessary steps to become a successful high school student and move on to college. She is now finishing her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts at Pennsylvania State University (see picture to the right) and is planning to attend graduate school in sculpture/foundry. She will be the first in her household to complete post-secondary education. Some ELPers have not gone on to four year schools, but entered training and/or technical schools that have helped them achieve a



productive career path. One of our past participants became a barber and owner of a successful shop after attending Empire Beauty School.

At the completion of the 2012-2013 program year, **90%** of ELP graduated seniors entered post-secondary training/education, the military, and/or the workforce. This stellar outcome alone shows the impact that the Emerging Leaders Program makes in students' overall quality of life and made the compelling case to expand enrollment numbers.



From left to right: Ivan Castaneda (WH), Precious Pritchard (WH), Ricky Coats (EA), Jim Anderson (GM of The Techs and HSCC Board President), Sebastian Cruz (EA), and HSCC Youth Development Associate, Sarah Burger.

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Individual Time Enhances ELP Success

With over 45 participants in 2013, the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) had yet another exciting and successful year. Thanks to funding from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) via the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board, we were able to further enhance the services offered to our Emerging Leaders by providing much more one-on-one time with the participants in order to focus on their individual goal plans and any other special needs they encountered throughout the school year. The ELP staff worked individually with students very regularly to ensure they were completing graduation requirements, assisting with job and post-secondary application processes, and helping students overcome any personal barriers to success. Students continued to meet as a group in weekly sessions where they were taught lessons and activities such as interview and job search techniques, college essay do's and don'ts, career and course of study research, and financial planning for after high school. In addition, they participated in various job shadows and tours that included Pittsburgh Community Television, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Pirates Organization, an air force base, and many others.

Major outcomes for all participants were:

- **94%** ELP seniors earned a high school diploma
- **68%** of ELP graduated seniors entered post-secondary training/education
- **90%** of ELP graduated seniors entered post-secondary training/education, entered the military, or entered the workforce.

Self-Sufficiency and the McKeesport Collaborative

She's a single, middle-aged woman with children, no job, lots of bills, and a big spirit. She finds the McKeesport Collaborative or we find her. Partnering with one of our Family Development Specialists, the woman begins working on goals of education, employment, and budgeting, among others. Women of the McKeesport Collaborative are serious about improving their lives. They come to us ready to think, ready to work, and ready to change their circumstances. They give us serious commitment and effort. We respond in kind. The mission of the McKeesport Collaborative is not a simple one: *Self-sufficiency: a freedom from all benefit programs, assistance, and subsidies.* Self-sufficiency is a daunting task for any person, let alone an individual, couple, or family affected by substance abuse or mental health and living deep in the trenches of poverty. Yet, we know that our women are up to the challenge. They show us that every day. The following are representative achievements of the McKeesport Collaborative in 2013:

- One woman found employment helping individuals understand and purchase health insurance, promoting awareness and education about federal healthcare rollouts. She appeared in a fall 2013 Pittsburgh Post Gazette article about the new healthcare marketplace.
- Two of our women participated in an Allegheny County initiative called The Poverty Simulation, an exercise aimed at helping individuals and groups understand the realities of poverty and the choices that low-income families are faced with every day.
- A mother attained a car through the North Hills Community Auto program, helping her secure employment, work additional hours, and meet the transportation needs of her family.

Our women are taking strides down the path of self-sufficiency.

Advocacy Efforts

This year, the Center worked diligently with the Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership, the Campaign for What Works, and by teaching an Advocacy Series with the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work to advocate for adequate funding for the nonprofit social services sector at the federal, state, and county levels. Staff of the HSCC are 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 Special Projects Director
 Denise Daugherty, Youth Development Associate/Family Development Specialist
 Meaghan Maher, Youth Programs Assistant Director
 Sarah Burger and Paul Jenkner, Youth Development Associates
 Lynn Andelmo, Receptionist
 Jake Yeager, Building Superintendent
 Part time temporary staff in the youth programs include Lead Education and Education Associates.

Student Interns

Stephanie Eson, Joe Fultz, Marie Linebaugh, and Jessica Rush

Urban League Mature Workers

Patti Johnson, Tyrone Johnson, Bonnie McLain, and Joann Snider

Ongoing Volunteers

Joe Jipson, Joan Polesnak, and Rose Smeltzer

Volunteers Produce Positive Change

The HSCC has a small staff but produces big results in the Mon Valley. The organization is able to complete many efforts through the work of volunteers. Each day, volunteers participate in fulfilling the HSCC’s mission by completing work at the Center, from working at the front desk to completing maintenance work to huge “days of caring.” This year, the HSCC was fortunate to have over **100 volunteers complete over 4,500 hours**. This year, the HSCC was delighted to have Make A Difference Day volunteers from the national radio station, K-LOVE. K-LOVE volunteers came out with radio hosts Scott and Kelli; during the day, they worked on the Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs, the administrative offices of the HSCC, and the Center’s courtyard. The HSCC also had a large Day of Caring, sponsored by the United Way of Allegheny County, during which volunteers from Duquesne Light, Pittsburgh Corning, and The Techs joined together to complete projects with the Pantry, applying polymeric sand, washing down walls, painting in the courtyard, adding fencing privacy slats, spreading mulch, moving furniture, and cleaning up the courtyard! Volunteers not only gave their time and talent, but were always hardworking and enthusiastic! Regular weekly volunteer, Joan Polesnak commented, “Volunteering at the HSCC is so rewarding. I get to interact with my community and make a difference in people’s lives by working at the front desk when I’m needed.”



Staff Earn Recognition

This fall, Marie Linebaugh and Stephanie Eson, both Program Associates with the HSCC, were recognized by the **Mon River Fleet as their Women of Achievement in the Special Project category**. Marie and Stephanie received the award as a result of implementing Project H.E.A.R.T., an HIV/AIDS and career readiness hybrid program, with teens in the Mon Valley area communities. Marie and Stephanie implemented a peer leadership component to this year’s Project H.E.A.R.T. program and assisted participants with developing their own HIV/AIDS awareness projects.



The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) and the National Writing Project (NWP) selected Leah O’Reilly, Youth Programs Director to participate in the National Afterschool Matters Initiative Practitioner Fellowship which began November 2013.

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 over 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.hscm-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.

Family Development Specialists provide 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 homes throughout the Valley, at the HSCC offices, and in McKeesport at the Family Center.

Mon Valley 13th Annual HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk

Beautiful weather made the 13th Annual HIV/AIDS Walk an event to remember. Over 350 walkers joined the McKeesport Collaborative on Saturday October 5, 2013 to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in the Mon Valley communities. As the *only* HIV/AIDS awareness walk in Allegheny County, teams are encouraged to compete for the traveling trophy, awarded to the team with the most walkers. This year, the Human Services Center/Mon Valley Providers Council team won the trophy with 97 walkers. Participants from the McKeesport Collaborative's HIV/AIDS prevention program, Project H.E.A.R.T., won the best visual award for the banner they carried at the walk. In addition to the walk, the McKeesport Collaborative's HIV/AIDS Working Group hosts an annual World AIDS Day event, a Women and Girls HIV event, and a hybrid HIV/AIDS and career readiness summer program, Project H.E.A.R.T.



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:

- ☑ 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 (EITC).
- ☑ **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, youth programs, 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 with multiple programs 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.

Current Tenant Agencies

HSCC I – 519 Penn Avenue FIRST FLOOR

Braddock Carnegie Library Extension - A mini-library providing books, videos, and other services. 412-829-7112

Eastern Area Adult Services - Support services to the over 60 population: noon meal, transportation, recreation, socialization. 412-824-6880

Learn "N" Play - Provides childcare services for infants (6 weeks) to 12 year olds. 412-829-0240

SECOND FLOOR

Allegheny County Health Dept. - W.I.C. Program - Supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children. 412-823-1333

Alternatives - Chemical abuse program. 412-824-8510

Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council - Provides English as a Second Language (ESL) and Adult Basic Learning GED tutoring services. 412-969-8486

PA Representative Paul Costa - Legislative Service Center to aid constituents with state and other public service matters. 412-824-3400

Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Adult Outpatient Services - Emergency help; crisis intervention; counseling. 412-824-8510

Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Psychiatric and Social Rehabilitation - Rehabilitation coaches; classes; socialization. 412-461-4100

THIRD FLOOR

Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Community School East - Alternative educational program for disruptive youth, grades 7-12. 412-464-4043

Community Computer Lab - A partnership between the Center and the members of the Mon Valley Providers Council to provide free computer training. 412-829-7112

Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation - Children, Adolescents, and Families - Emergency help; crisis intervention; counseling. 412-349-0632

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. 412-829-7112

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. 412-829-7112

Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs - Food pantry referral and clothing distribution in the east suburban communities. 24-hour hotline: 412-824-0006

2013 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 here.

- 354 people completed the Center's annual visitor survey with over 74% earning an annual household income below \$15,000; 96% of the respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the services they receive.
- 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 311 federal returns for low-income citizens, bringing in nearly \$275,000 in refunds to people living in the Mon Valley.
- Dozens of individuals met at the Center for support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Domestic Abuse Counseling Center, and others.
- 168 individuals from 39 communities 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, hundreds of local 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 Eastern Area Adult Services and the Community College of Allegheny County, dozens of seniors attended two free computer courses, learning a variety of technology issues and skills, from turning on a computer to working with Windows 8.
- Over 250 people participated in the Community Resource Fair hosted by the HSCC in conjunction with Lights On After-School and the Mon Valley Providers Council.

Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge the following for their generosity and support of the Human Services Center in 2013. 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 or upon request.

Operations and Special Projects

Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services
 BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania
 Citizens Bank
 DSF Charitable Foundation
 Duquesne Light
 Eat'n Park
 Eden Hall Foundation

Operations and Special Projects (cont.)

Falk Fund of United Way
 G.C. Murphy Foundation
 Grable Foundation
 The Heinz Endowments
 Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield
 Kennywood
 Local Emergency & Shelter Board - FEMA
 Massey Charitable Trust
 McKeesport Hospital Foundation (SHIP)
 Mellon Bank N.A.
 Howard and Nell E. Miller Foundation
 PA Dept. of Economic Development
 PA Dept. of Education
 Peoples Natural Gas
 PNC
 PPG Industries
 Steel Dynamics
 The Techs, a Division of Steel Dynamics
 Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board
 United Way of Allegheny County
 UPMC Health Plan
 YouthWorks, Inc.

New HSCC Van

The HSCC was able to acquire a new cargo van to be used primarily by the Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs to pick up food weekly for the Pantry's regular distribution to hundreds of people in the Mon Valley. Thanks to a gift from the United Way of Allegheny County's Falk Fund initiative, the HSCC was able to substantially reduce its own costs for the purchase.



Overview of 21 CCLC Impact

The 2012-2013 school year was the final year for the Department of Education's 21st

Century Community Learning Center (Cohort 5) funding for the Youth LIFE (Learning In a Fun Environment) After-School and KOOL (Kids Outgoing, Outdoing, and Learning) Summer Programs. As a result of this endeavor the HSCC expanded programming and enhanced services during the three-year contract yielding outstanding outcomes for the participants. Successes achieved by the programs include continued high levels of improvement in both math and reading, complete satisfaction by stakeholders, and significant behavior improvements by students participating in the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) program.



As with prior years, the math and reading targets were not just met, but were far exceeded. The HSCC Youth Programs achieved outcomes beyond their goals for all years. Program targets included 70% improvement rates for both math and reading by the end of the last year. This year's program resulted in an **81%** improvement rate among the state defined "regularly attending" students for math and **88%** for reading.

Major stakeholders cited **100%** satisfaction with the HSCC Youth Programs when considering overall satisfaction and more specifically communication, collaboration, academic impact, and recreation impact. The feedback demonstrates that the HSCC Youth Programs continues to operate at a high level of organization and management and are clearly impactful to their constituents and community. In addition, the evidence based, social-emotional curriculum, PATHS, taught to a subset of the Youth LIFE participants results showed that the program was highly successful, with a **90%** improvement rate.



The following are key results from the 2012-2013 program year of KOOL and Youth LIFE:

- **100%** of students participated in the tutorial services were promoted to the next grade.
- **100%** of all youth in the Youth LIFE Program who participated in the tutorial services completed their homework on a regular basis.
- **76%** of Youth LIFE participants utilizing Study Island improved in math.
- **69%** of Youth LIFE participants utilizing Study Island improved in reading.
- **64%** of Youth LIFE youth improved in their grades during the course of the school year.
- **65%** of KOOL participants (based on a pre- and post- test) improved or maintained their math skills, as determined through an online computer curriculum, Study Island.
- **62%** of KOOL participants (based on a pre- and post- test) improved or maintained their reading skills, as determined through an online computer curriculum, Study Island.

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.hscm-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 2014 Board of Directors:

- James Anderson, President
- David Priselac, Vice President
- Lynn Tatala, Treasurer
- Jo DeBolt, Secretary
- Joseph Dombrosky
- Greg Galford
- Kevin Kearns
- Beth Lackner
- Gus Miller
- Lisa Minor
- Darla Poole
- Ellen Skakalski
- Michelle Smith
- Damion Wilson

It is with heavy hearts that we report the passing of Dr. Barbara K. Shore, a dedicated Board Director who helped to launch the agency in 1982.

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