

# Human Services Center 2009 Annual Report

## Celebrating 27 Years of *Serving the Mon Valley*

### HSCC Strategic Plan to Guide Services

The Board and staff engaged in a year-long strategic planning process and the overarching themes of the HSCC's strategic plan through December 2010 are:

- To broaden and deepen the agency's presence in the community and relationships with external stakeholders through marketing efforts and the work of the Mon Valley Providers Council.
- To maintain consistent quality programs and examine opportunities for growth.
- To increase the tenant occupancy rate given the rental market shift.
- To increase unrestricted revenue in already diversified income streams.
- To eliminate catastrophic risk to the agency's people, property, income, and goodwill.

The best-practice standards already espoused by the HSCC will continue to be priorities, and include:

- Being mission driven.
- Implementing evidence-based programs that meet community needs through outcomes.
- Examining external trends and being data-driven.
- Conducting multi-year planning, with measurable indicators and sustainable funding.
- Collaborating with partner agencies and attaining constituent input.
- Excelling in performance management, financial management, risk management, and diversified fundraising.
- Planning through written protocols used in governing, process management, internal controls, work systems, human resources for bench strength.

HSCC will continue to be a nimble provider, responsive to community needs, and providing excellence in service as evidenced by evaluation and outcomes. With a diversified revenue base, the management team and Board will investigate sources of sustainable revenue to potentially grow programs.

This organizational plan will strengthen the agency's operation toward enhancing program outcomes for those we serve, thus ensuring the HSCC is relevant and organizationally healthy and stable for years to come.



### HSCC Earns Awards for the Agency, Programs, and People

Pittsburgh Post Gazette Jefferson Award honors Dr. Barbara K. Shore for her 27 years of volunteer service to the Human Services Center, Fall 2009

Goodwill recognizes the Human Services Center as a 2009 Power of Work Awardee

2009 Friend of the Poor Award (from the Community Food Bank) and Turtle Creek Development Corporation Volunteer of the Year Award are presented to HSCC Mature Worker and Pantry Network Volunteer Rose Smeltzer, Fall 2009

2009 SHYNE Award for Community Service Nominee Cydnei Mallory, ELP Participant, August 2009

Mon Valley Initiative presents its 2009 MVI Program Collaboration Award to the Working Group on Employment and Training of the MVPC, July 2009

Center for Victims of Violence and Crime (CVVC) honors the Human Services Center with its Peace Partner Award for an Organization, February 2009

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## Emerging Leaders Has Exciting Year

**W**ith 40 participants in 2009, the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) had a very exciting and successful year. Participants Katrina Barlow, Kevin Brown, Cameron Burkhart, Hazel Fisher, Cydnei Mallory, Thomas McQuin, Tanesia Jones, and Sydney Thomas graduated from high school and went on to jobs or post-secondary education.

Furthermore, **100%** of participants engaged in job-readiness training, registered on the CareerLink website, improved their team building skills, learned how to conduct job and college searches online, learned about self-esteem and life skills, and much more. **22** of the students obtained an after-school job, summer job, or an internship. A number of others are involved in sports, theater, and volunteer activities during after-school hours.

The students also benefited from field trips to the Bidwell Training Center, PNC Park for a Pirates baseball game, Empire Beauty School, and to University of Pittsburgh. The field trips taught the students about planning for their future and drew them closer as a team. Numerous guest speakers, including representatives from Massaro Construction, Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force, ITT Technical Institute and Bidwell Training Center, participated in career panels and conducted seminars on job readiness and life skills.

It is always a pleasure to reflect on all of the impressive accomplishments that ELP students are able to achieve in one short year, and 2009 is certainly no exception. The entire youth staff is eager to see what they will achieve in 2010!

## Holiday Toy Program Evolves and Reaches Even More Children

**A**fter many years of service, our resident "Santa Claus," Randy Thomas, formally retired at the end of 2008. The HSCC's Holiday Toy Program is thrilled to be a partner with Pittsburgh Cares and the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots Campaign in an effort to streamline and optimize services around holiday toy collection. With the economic downturn and resources shrinking, it is best that organizations collaborate and streamline their operations. Planned and deliberate change results in a more positive experience for all parties involved – the toy donors, agencies that distribute the toys, and ultimately, the children and families that receive the toys. In 2008, the local (greater Pittsburgh region) Toys for Tots campaign leveraged 108,173 toys which were distributed to approximately 41,729 children. 2009 figures are not in yet, but outcomes are expected to be even greater this holiday season.

**ALL** agencies that received toys through the HSCC's Holiday Toy Program were transitioned to Pittsburgh Cares in a timely fashion. **ALL** of HSCC's toy donors and supporting businesses were educated about the changes as well.

The Center, in partnership with the Pantry Network, conducted a toy drive on a much smaller scale for direct consumers of the HSCC's youth programs, McKeesport Collaborative, and Westinghouse Valley Food Pantry.

## Over 300 Children Receive Toys

**T**his year, the Center worked in partnership with the Pantry Network to collect and distribute toys to local, needy children who are direct consumers of our programs. The average gift for each child is worth approximately \$30. In 2009, volunteer efforts represented well over 100 hours. The total value of all the donations was over \$10,000. The HSCC is grateful to State Senator Sean Logan, St. Colman's Catholic Church, and UPMC Diversified for their generosity and support of the 2009 Holiday Toy Program.

## Current Staff

**T**he Center continues to utilize a variety of creative staffing resources.

### Staff

Dave Coplan, Executive Director

Alicia Andrews, Associate Director

Ruth Smith, Collaborative Programs  
Director

Leah Price, Youth Programs Director

Sunny Medwid, Youth Development

Associate/Family Development  
Specialist

Kate VanDerSchaaf, Education

Advancement Coordinator

Carolyn Burkamp, Education Specialist

Lynn Andelmo, Receptionist

Jake Yeager, Building Superintendent

Ashley Adams, Education Associate

Carrie DiDomenico, Education Associate

Caitlin Evan, Education Associate

Joe Yeager, Education Associate

### Student Interns/AmeriCorps

Denise Daugherty, Caitlin Evan,

Meaghan Maher, and Ryan Thomas

### Urban League Mature Workers

Fred Dase, Joan Polesnak, and Rose

Smeltzer

## HSCC 2010 Outlook – Troubling Times in the Helping Profession

Although the HSCC’s Board and management continue to act in a fiscally responsible manner following the Seven Signs of a Financially Healthy Nonprofit Agency as defined by the Stevens Group, the external environment for the HSCC remains financially uncertain. HSCC itself enters this period of intense trepidation with concerns about the 2010-2011 state budget, the status of continued funding from corporations and foundations during a down economy, increased competition for United Way funding, and tenant and MVPC member agencies that are facing their unique challenges in the helping sector.

Compounding the issues are new attempts by elected officials to levy fees and/or taxes on nonprofits in lieu of property taxes. Through the Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership, the HSCC advocates for policy changes in government that will help our agency and our partners to better serve those in need. The staff have been trained to do lobbying within the laws for nonprofits to affect change. Yet, over the past decade, governmental funding to the services provided by HSCC continues to shrink. This year’s state budget impasse concluded with devastating cuts to social services, eroding the safety net that has assisted low-income families. HSCC has seen a considerable negative impact on tax credit programs that help to fund the youth programs.

In order to effectively help people and meet the mission, we need ample financial resources to maintain our operations. At the heart of the issue is the focus on our mission, our ability to help to improve the quality of life for children, families, and seniors in the Mon Valley.

### Collaborative Success Story

In August 2008, the Family Development Specialist (FDS) with the McKeesport Collaborative worked on goal planning with Donna. Donna was receiving DPW benefits and having extreme difficulty in maintaining her household expenses. In fact, Donna had been living for several months without hot water because she could not afford to purchase a new hot water tank. The FDS contacted the Salvation Army and they provided the majority of the funds for a new tank.

Donna said she wanted to seek education and employment; however, was led to believe by others that because she was diabetic she would not be able to do so. At 57, Donna felt she was too old to seek education and employment. The FDS assured Donna that she was not too old and that she was smart enough, as evidenced by the excellent medical care Donna provided for her two children.

After overcoming numerous issues, including transportation, Donna participated in the Allegheny County EARN program; through this program, she was able to complete CCAC’s Nurse Aide training program. Participating in EARN and the Nurse Aide training program, Donna was required to be on the bus very early in the morning and oftentimes Donna did not return to her home until after 6:00 p.m. Donna was fully committed to doing well in class and at her clinical site. She never missed a class and was always on time. Donna recently passed her exam and is listed in the PA Nurse Aide Registry. Donna is actively pursuing employment opportunities and the McKeesport Collaborative feels quite confident that Donna will obtain employment.

With the help of the McKeesport Collaborative, Donna’s sheer determination, and some assistance from some very kind individuals, Donna is accomplishing things she never thought would be possible. Donna is extremely appreciative.

## Mon Valley Providers Council (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 75 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](http://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 affected by substance abuse and their children. 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.

## Volunteers Continue to Make a Difference

Volunteers have made significant contributions to the Center since its inception and 2009 was no exception. The HSCC hosted several *Days of Caring* and engaged staff of corporations, high school students, and more. Volunteers from Community School East, Gateway High School, Perry High School, Schenley High School, South Park High School, Duquesne Light Company, The Techs (a Division of Steel Dynamics, Inc.), and several tenant agencies helped with major facility initiatives. Thank you to the United Way, Pittsburgh Cares, and Collegiate YMCA at the University of Pittsburgh for helping to facilitate the service projects. Most importantly, thank you to all of the outstanding volunteers for their generosity, talents, and time. We look forward to working with you in 2010!



## 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 a detailed description, or with questions.
- ☑ The MVPC/HSCC **Annual Fund Drive** accepts donations throughout the year. The unrestricted dollars allow us flexibility in programs.
- ☑ The HSCC is a **United Way Contributor Choice** agency and can be designated 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 Super Expo.
- ☑ **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 **mentors and site visits** for job shadowing.
- ☑ **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).

## 2010 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

**Jenny's Tiny Tots** - 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 x. 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 & 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

## 2009 Key Partnerships for Positive Change

Each year, nearly 100 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 tax returns for **over 100** senior citizens living throughout the Mon Valley.
- **Dozens** of individuals met at the Center for support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents of Murdered Children, and others.
- **Dozens** of men were counseled by the Domestic Abuse Counseling Center.
- **95** individuals received a free seasonal flu shot through a partnership with UPMC Braddock 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 Back-Up Pantry provided support to a dozen individuals each month.
- Through a partnership 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 partnership with local schools, numerous adjudicated youth received tutoring on site at the Center so that they could return to the 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 family workers to learn and practice skills of strength-based family support with families.

## Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge the following for their generosity and support of the Human Services Center in 2009. 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 Department of Human Services- CSBG/CYF/HSDF/WIA  
 BNY Mellon  
 Citizens Bank  
 Duquesne Light  
 Eat' n Park  
 Falk Fund of United Way  
 The Forbes Funds  
 The Frick Fund of the Buhl Foundation  
 Equitable Resources  
 G.C. Murphy Foundation  
 Grable Foundation

**THANK  
 YOU FOR  
 YOUR  
 SUPPORT!**

### Operations and Special Projects (cont.)

Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield  
 Local Emergency & Shelter Board -  
 FEMA  
 State Senator Sean Logan  
 McKeesport Hospital Foundation (SHIP)  
 Howard and Nell E. Miller Foundation  
 National City Bank  
 The Pittsburgh Foundation  
 PNC – Charitable Trust Committee  
 Respirationics  
 The Techs, a Division of Steel Dynamics  
 United Way of Allegheny County  
 UPMC Health Plan  
 Urban Affairs Foundation (UJF)  
 Verizon  
 Veterans Leadership Program  
 Wal-Mart (North Versailles Store)  
 Robert and Mary Weisbrod Foundation  
 Westinghouse Electric  
 YouthWorks, Inc.

## Volunteer Spotlight

Recognizing the contributions of volunteers is essential. This year, one of the HSCC's volunteers was honored by two local groups. As a volunteer at the Westinghouse Valley Food Pantry for the last ten years, **Rose Smeltzer** has helped **thousands** of people in the Valley. Always putting others before herself, Rose is a true believer in the Golden Rule and treating others as she would like to be treated. Some words that best describe her are selfless, giving, generous, compassionate, courageous, energetic, and enthusiastic. She helps prepare the pantry for distributions every Friday by unloading the van of donated goods, stocking the shelves, and taking inventory. On actual distribution days, she is always the first volunteer present and the last to leave and she brings a "team" of volunteers to help, consisting of her husband Don, and three grandchildren, Jimmy (12), Jessica (8), and Kaitlin (6).



## Youth Venture to PATHS

Now in its tenth year, the Youth Learning In a Fun Environment (Youth LIFE) After-School Program continues to provide enrichment programming, offering youth an abundance of activities, academic support, social skill building opportunities, recreation, and field trips. Through several partnerships and services, the Youth LIFE Program provides youth with fun and exciting opportunities. This year, for example, we started a new curriculum called PATHS (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies). Currently, PATHS is a social and emotional learning program for kindergarten-third graders, which is carried out three days per week. Research-based and proven-effective, PATHS is a violence-prevention curriculum that promotes social and emotional learning, character development, and bullying prevention. The curriculum also builds the problem-solving abilities and other life skills required for positive relationships today and throughout students' lives.

Some of the major highlights from the 2008-2009 school year were:

- **90%** of all youth improved/maintained their grades in the grading period following completion of the program than in the grading period preceding enrollment in the program.
- **100%** of Youth LIFE participants engaged in educational activities two days per week throughout the school year as measured by their attendance/point sheets.
- **81%** of Youth LIFE participants utilizing Study Island achieved Basic or greater status in reading or math.
- **100%** of youth increased awareness of community needs through engaging in community service projects.

## KOOL Activities at HSCC

For seven weeks in July and August, 150 youth between the ages of five and thirteen participated in the Kids Outgoing, Outdoing, and Learning (KOOL) Summer Program at the HSCC from 8:30AM-4:30PM daily. 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 different field trip each week. The students were divided into nine classes, which were led by nine highly motivated young professionals seeking to gain more direct experience with diverse groups of children in a classroom setting. Additionally, eight Counselors In Training (CITs) assisted the teachers with planning and carrying out activities with the youth. The CITs were between the ages of 14 and 17 from the Mon Valley who committed most of their summer to help the staff and participants of KOOL while acquiring work experience and developing their skills. Some of the major highlights were:

- Various cultural and recreational field trips to Frick Park and the Frick Art Museum, Heinz Field for a Stadium Tour, and Boyce Wave Pool.
- Through a partnership with the Tickets for Kids Foundation, the youth were also able to attend the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium, Carnegie Science Center, and Idlewild Park.
- FREE nutritious breakfast and lunch served daily through Allegheny County's Summer Feeding Program.
- **150** youth received two FREE new books from Reading Is FUNDamental (RIF) Pittsburgh.
- **70%** of KOOL youth achieved greater proficiency in reading and/or math at the conclusion of the program as evidenced by their scores on a pre- and post-test.

## 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](http://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 2010 Board of Directors:

James Anderson, President  
 David Priselac, Vice President  
 Pam McIver, Treasurer  
 Kate Dewey, Secretary  
 Joseph Dombrosky  
 Linda Harris  
 Kevin Kearns  
 Vivien Luk  
 Gus Miller  
 Darla Poole  
 Steve Quick  
 Michelle Smith  
 Lynn Tatala  
 Damion Wilson (LOB)

### 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       |