

**THE PITTSBURGH
FOUNDATION**
QUARTERLY
Spring 2017

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*A Pittsburgh Foundation donor group
funds lifelines to youth caught in
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ON THE COVER

Pittsburgh Police Officer Nathan Auvil offers his perspective to a Pittsburgh area teenager about how police and young people can maintain peace and mutual respect during their interactions. The two were participants in a group discussion organized by Beltzhoover-based Voices Against Violence, a Pittsburgh Foundation-funded nonprofit with the mission of reducing personal conflicts among members of underserved communities in South Pittsburgh.

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ON MARCH 21, at a press conference in Pittsburgh's City Hall, Mayor Bill Peduto, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and other public officials welcomed eight young professionals — leaders among immigrants and refugees who have made our city their new hometown.

There were inspiring words all around as part of the national Immigration Day of Action, and if it were any other year, it would be just another unremarkable event on a mayor's calendar.

Except, this is a year in which every event is remarkable because partisan rancor from the 2016 election remains at full throttle — especially concerning immigration. Those who believe (rightly) that the immigration system is broken and in need of reform collide with those who believe (rightly) that anti-immigrant fervor is being whipped up through harsh policies and xenophobic rhetoric.

In the election aftermath, darker forces were emboldened across the country. Even in our region there were ugly incidents — racist, anti-Semitic even physical violence against immigrants.

The Pittsburgh response was a Martin Luther King Day rally at the August Wilson Center — an intentional scheduling to model King's championing of respect and dignity for all.

As one of 15 leaders speaking at the event, I offered a supporting message and a plea: yes, philanthropy must lead in making our communities more inclusive. But we cannot be successful in improving general quality of life if our immigration system remains dysfunctional. Illegal immigration must be curbed and the current haphazard enforcement replaced with a rational system that reflects actual demographic and workforce needs.

All of us who spoke promised to act on our lofty words, so we're not waiting on structural reform to make diversity and inclusion cultural markers for Pittsburgh.

We at the Foundation are leading with 100 Percent Pittsburgh, a plan which commits us to developing new opportunities for at least one-third of the area's residents who have been shut out of the revitalized economy. Just-released grants are supporting services that range from easier access to food banks to personal financial tutoring as a precursor to home ownership.

Others fund two immigrant-serving organizations — one assisting children and young adults through the immigration process to permanent residency; the other providing Latino youth with homework and English language tutoring.

Other grants are planned to make Pittsburgh more welcoming and more worthy of being, in the words of city native and historian David McCullough, "the indispensable American city." To own that title, we must embody the best American value: sharing opportunity. We are not there yet, and those of us with the power to provide more opportunity must lead the way to make it so.

Maxwell King | president & CEO

Amachi ambassador Tiger Weaver, who has an incarcerated parent, testified to legislators in Harrisburg, Pa., about how prison affects families. Amachi partnered with the Foundation to engage youth and gather data for the Youth Voices report.



TALKING ABOUT JUVENILE JUSTICE

What can advocates do to improve outcomes for youth involved in the juvenile justice system? A report issued by The Pittsburgh Foundation in February recommends asking the absolute experts: youth who have experience with the system in Pittsburgh.

The report, *A Qualitative Study of Youth and The Juvenile Justice System: A 100 Percent Pittsburgh Pilot Project*, calls on law enforcement, school and human services professionals to actively involve young people — particularly youth of color and girls who are disproportionately represented among those sanctioned by being placed in the system. The report calls for a youth perspective in shaping prevention and diversion programs.

The report was the result of an eight-month participatory research effort led by Senior Program Officer Michael Yonas, and is the first research initiative of the Foundation's new organizing principle, 100 Percent Pittsburgh, which seeks to address lack of opportunity for at least one-third of area residents to participate in a revitalized regional economy.

The study amplifies the voices of youth, which have largely been missing from the research about juvenile justice system involvement, and builds on the work of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and other giants in the field. "If we mean to put an end to the school-to-prison pipeline, reform efforts must include listening to youth and involving them fundamentally in developing programs and policy actions," says Maxwell King, the Foundation's president and CEO.

In the months ahead, the Foundation will work with partner organizations to identify and fund programs focused on reforming discipline policies, creating race-positive curricula and changing court-related fees and restitution policies, which can leave some youth trapped in the system. Read the full report at pittsburghfoundation.org/Youth_Voices_Study.

Critical attention to Critical Needs \$1.3 million goal largest ever for annual giving event

The Pittsburgh Foundation will host this year's Critical Needs Alert giving day on May 23, the fourth year for the giving event that supports organizations providing basic needs such as food assistance, housing and health care in western Pennsylvania. Concern for these vital services has led to this year's Day of Giving hiatus and an unprecedented commitment by the Foundation to strengthen the area's safety net organizations.

The goal is to raise \$600,000 in public donations to shore up vital human services. Adding significant incentive for the general public to contribute this year is a record-setting \$700,000 match funding pool made up of \$400,000 in grants from the Foundation and \$300,000 in contributions from its donor community.

Beginning at 8 a.m. on May 23, Critical Needs donations can be made at PittsburghGives.org and each will be supplemented at a percentage that will be determined by the total amount raised. Donations will be accepted until midnight.

To date, Critical Needs Alerts have raised a total of \$2.5 million for more than 200 organizations in the region addressing a range of basic needs.

Kelly Uranker, director of the Foundation's Center for Philanthropy, says this year's event ties directly to the Foundation's 100 Percent Pittsburgh organizing principle aimed at building a region where all citizens of western Pennsylvania have more opportunities to be full participants in the area's revitalized economy.

"Our research for 100 Percent Pittsburgh shows that at least one-third of residents in our region are struggling at or below the poverty line," says Uranker. "Critical Needs goes directly to assisting those who are trapped in that box, such as single women with children. These women make up 77 percent of households in poverty. While longer-term efforts are happening to provide greater opportunities, families must have the essential services supported through the generosity of Critical Needs donors."

What motivates donors, she says, is the western Pennsylvania ethic of helping those in need neighborhood by neighborhood throughout the region. "Despite the new prosperity, we still have situations where former thriving, working-class neighborhoods are now struggling, poor neighborhoods. Our donors respond to Critical Needs because they know that no region can thrive without everyone having a stake in its success."

OUT OF THE DEEP END

A PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION
DONOR GROUP FUNDS
LIFELINES TO YOUTH
CAUGHT IN THE JUVENILE
JUSTICE SYSTEM

Richard Carrington, gesturing at right, founded Voices Against Violence in 1995 to build stronger bonds in south Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

HE SHOPLIFTS A CAN OF SODA AND SOME CHEESE CRACKERS — perhaps because there wasn't any food at home that morning. Or, she's pregnant and suspended from school; or he's facing a court date and possible time in a detention center; or she's dealing with an abusive boyfriend and fighting with a parent at home.

These are all the backstories played out repeatedly among a mostly invisible population in Pittsburgh: young people ordered into the juvenile justice system, or close to it. They may not be in a detention center yet, but when they are fined by a court for a minor infraction and can't afford to pay, they land in the purgatory of juvenile probation.

"These are kids who have had a small brush with the law. They just need guidance, direction and consistency," says Richard Carrington, head of Voices Against Violence, a Beltzhoover-based program serving youth across the city.

Carrington's program was one of three selected for a \$25,000 grant in January by a group of 15 members of The Pittsburgh Foundation's Juvenile Justice Impact Giving Circle. The group wanted to figure out how best to

pull this population, ranging in age from 12 to 18, back from the precipice.

Giving Circle members met with experts, community activists and young people familiar with the juvenile justice system as part of a four-month process. The process is designed to transform donors into funders, "to teach them to think like a funder," says Kelly Uranker, director of the Foundation's Center for Philanthropy. This was the eighth Giving Circle presented by the Foundation since 2013. To date, the Circle members and the Foundation have together awarded \$646,000 in funding to nonprofits in the fields of education, Alzheimer's disease research, clean air advocacy and homeless children.

For the Circle, the Foundation invited ten nonprofit programs to make presentations and chose three to receive funding. Each donor

“
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RICHARD
CARRINGTON
Voices Against
Violence

pledged \$2,500, a sum that would be matched by the Foundation, for a total of \$75,000.

In addition to Voices Against Violence, Gwen's Girls, founded by the late police commander Gwendolyn Elliott and now run by her daughter, Dr. Kathi Elliott, has received a grant. Also receiving funding is a new legal assistance program at Duquesne University. At Duquesne, Tiffany Sizemore-Thompson runs two clinics — the Juvenile Defender Law Clinic and the Education Law Clinic — that deal with school-related disputes over due process and special education.

The Circle's \$25,000 grant will extend walk-in hours and fund additional staffing at both clinics, while helping to pay seemingly minor costs that can loom large in a young person's life, says Sizemore-Thompson.



- ↑ Youth speak and write about their experiences with local law enforcement.
- ← The meeting adjourns to the kitchen where everybody cooks dinner together. This night, the menu includes pancakes and omelets.

“My client got into a scuffle with another young man in his school and broke his glasses,” she says. “All the father wanted was for my client to pay \$69 for new glasses, saying he knew his son was at fault, too. But my client didn’t have the money to pay, so the school had to refer the case to the police.”

Fortunately, the boy’s family called Sizemore-Thompson, who paid for the glasses and had a probation officer agree to 60 days of monitoring and, if the boy stayed out of trouble, the expunging of his record.

“These are what we call the ‘shallow end’ kids who’ve had limited contact with the criminal justice system,” she says. “But even those in the deep end who are incarcerated for violent felonies initially entered the system for things that were not actually that serious.”

Gwen’s Girls provides shelter and counseling for girls and young women who’ve tangled with the law. As they move forward, the nonprofit’s goal is to help girls achieve higher education or long-term employment. The centers also provide after-school programs that include tutoring, job training, health-and-wellness activities, and counseling support to deal with serious issues such as sexual trauma, bullying, body image, dating violence and family conflicts.

3,328

Number of youth referrals in 2015 to the Allegheny County Office of Juvenile Probation for offenses that include possession of drugs, theft or failure to pay court fines.

972

Young people placed in juvenile probation in secured detention centers

704

Young people in electric home monitoring detention

11x

More likely that black girls will be referred to juvenile court than white girls

At any given time, about 100 girls move through three Gwen’s Girls centers on the North Side, and in Clairton and Penn Hills.

Gwen’s Girls also runs a 15-bed residential facility on the North Side, where girls who are pregnant or already young mothers can stay along with their babies. That facility also serves a few girls who are in the care of Allegheny County’s Department of Children, Youth and Families, but who are also delinquent and have been referred there by a juvenile probation officer.

“Instead of going to Shuman [Allegheny County’s juvenile detention center] they come to us,” Elliott says, adding that the grant money will fund an in-house therapist to provide more intensive one-on-one support in addition to group therapy. On average, the girls who are pregnant or parenting stay for about six months while the probation department creates a transition plan, but, too often, “there’s no follow-up or contact and the case is closed,” says Elliott. Now, the grant money will allow a care manager physician to maintain a database that tracks the girls’ progress after they leave.

“The girls I worry about are 17 and 18. They don’t have the resources or a family to support them. We want to make sure that, wherever

they are, they are kept from going into the criminal justice system,” she says.

That’s also the central goal of Voices Against Violence, whose director, Richard Carrington, runs a restorative justice program serving 70 young people, half of whom are court-referred. The other half are walk-ins. They spend eight hours a week performing community service projects and six hours a week in classes ranging from academic tutoring to cooking.

The grant will fund sorely needed bus passes so that young people can get to job interviews, school and work, while also providing meals for kids “when their version of dinner is ramen noodles,” Carrington says.

For him, “restorative justice” should not center solely on the traditional community service model “of sweeping out church pews,” but also learning from authority figures, mentors and therapists meaningful life skills like cooking, budgeting, planning a career.

“These kids need someone consistently in their lives, and involved in their daily activities,” Carrington says, recalling his earlier days volunteering at local schools where he would be “there at the beginning of the day when they got off the bus and at the end of the day to calm them down.”

And he can look back on some success stories, including one involving the arrest of a 10-year-old boy.

“He was charged with a felony after assaulting a police officer who was trying to remove his mother from their house,” Carrington says. “One of the things I’ve tried to teach our kids is to not let anyone lay a hand on their mother or any female in the family, because domestic violence was not the way to go.”

In this instance, Carrington went to the police, explained what had happened and was able to persuade authorities to drop the charges. Because that kid didn’t “go over the fence” into the juvenile justice system, as Carrington put it, this young man ended up becoming a college graduate and a banking executive.

“The thing to remember is that any kid could become the next surgeon, the next judge or find the cure for cancer, if they’re given the opportunity to meet their potential,” Carrington says. “But we don’t know the potential of what’s inside of them until we pull them back over the fence and see them through.”

By **Mackenzie Carpenter** | freelance journalist based in Pittsburgh

100 Percent Pittsburgh

The Impact Giving Circle funding initiative aligns with the Foundation’s new organizing principle, 100 Percent Pittsburgh, created after a 2014 study found that the economic rebound experienced in recent years by the “new Pittsburgh” only benefited 70 percent of the population. Foundation President Maxwell King challenged the staff to develop strategic grantmaking to help the other 30 percent, mostly people of color, struggling with poverty. According to a 2014 Urban Institute study, the two most vulnerable groups identified were youth, ages 12-24, in the juvenile justice system, and single women raising children alone with incomes within 200 percent of the poverty line. Today, 60 percent of the Foundation’s discretionary funds are granted to nonprofits that serve these populations.

- Tiffany Sizemore-Thompson runs the Juvenile Defender Law Clinic and the Education Law Clinic at Duquesne University. The clinics received a \$25,000 Impact Giving Circle grant.



DONOR
PROFILE

CLIMBING PAST ADVERSITY

MOM'S LEGACY
LIVES AT SUMMITS
AND ON THE
GROUND THROUGH
SCHOLARSHIPS

On the frigid face of the world's tallest mountain, Jim Holliday persisted through a five-day climb over deep snow, bare rock and exhaustingly thin air to emerge from the final stretch victorious in reaching the peak.

At the top of 29,000-foot-high Mount Everest, he celebrated and posed for photos with his climbing team.

But Holliday also intended to leave a photo behind. He reached into his expedition parka, pulled out an image of a smiling older woman, and added it to the mementos stacked around them — evidence of the human touch at the top of the world.

Holliday's gesture is a small one: a leave-behind picture of his mother, Mitzie, who died in 1998, to honor the remarkable life of a woman who overcame significant adversity as a single mother in Pittsburgh and who inspired her only child to become a successful engineer and mountaineer.

But what elevates that one act to the ranks of the profound is that Mitzie Holliday's photo now rests at the top of dozens of mountains across the world. Holliday has made the leave-behind a continuing memorial throughout his 15-year climbing career.

"She's there in the picture and she's in my heart," he says. "I want her to see what I see and experience what I experience."

While he believes in the spiritual power of each mountain-top ritual, he also recognizes, as a Pittsburgh Foundation donor, that the best memorials are those that work to better the

lives of others. That is the grounding for the Mitzie Holliday Memorial Fund that provides scholarship assistance for young women who are pursuing a degree — an opportunity his mother never had.

Holliday, 61, cites his mother as the motivation behind his successful engineering career and becoming a world-class mountaineer. According to [7Summits.com](#), he is only the 400th person in the world to master the Seven Summits — named for the highest mountain on each of the world's continents. He has left a photo of his mother on five; two have prohibitions against leaving any material.

Holliday's passion for mountaineering emerged during a wrenching period of grief and self-reflection after Mitzie's death following complications from rheumatoid arthritis at age 66. He describes his life for the several years afterward as being "under a rock." In the midst of that grieving, a co-worker invited him on a hike in February 2004. He had not done that type of outdoor activity since his teen years, and the experience rejuvenated him. Just seven months after the hike, he traveled to Tibet to climb in the Himalayas.

There was a view on that trip that moved him — one peak elevated into the clouds — and when he reached the summit, he felt



Jim Holliday has drawn inspiration and strength from the memory of his mother, Mitzie, to scale the world's largest mountains and establish a scholarship for young women.



his mother's presence. "I knew then that she was OK — that I didn't have to worry about her — and it changed me."

The experience spurred him to dedicate his personal life to taking on physical challenges and honor his mother in the challenges she surmounted.

In 1945, Mitzie Holliday was a ninth-grader when her father died, and she had to drop out of school, taking a job as a candy dipper at a Downtown Pittsburgh store to help support her mother and nine brothers and sisters.

Later, she endured a difficult marriage for years before summoning the courage to end it. Her ex-husband helped pay the mortgage of the family home in Overbrook but he was not present in his son's life. With her lack of formal education, she struggled to make ends meet.

"When you're living it, you don't realize it's not the norm," he says. "You make the best of it and work hard and hope that you can make it."

Even as a child, Holliday realized that if their life together was going to improve, he would need a college degree.

He made it to the University of Pittsburgh, and worked side jobs while studying for a bachelor's and a master's degree in civil engineering. But through his university years, he worried about his mother, who had been diagnosed with the arthritis condition. After graduation in 1977, he convinced her to retire. "It was my turn to take care of her," he says.

He was fortunate to quickly land a job as a structural analyst at Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory in West Mifflin and has remained there his entire career.

For the next two decades, Holliday devoted himself to her care. She required several hospital stays each year as the disease took its course. After her death, mountaineering enabled him to move forward and gain fresh perspective on the circumstances that had prevented her from living a fuller life. Holliday wanted to mark her life in a way that would help others take advantage of opportunities denied to her.

A living memorial was realized when Holliday's financial advisor, Rob Rodgers from Hefren-Tillotson, introduced him to the Development team at The Pittsburgh Foundation. Holliday moved to create the donor-advised Mitzie Holliday Memorial Scholarship Fund in 2014. Its main purpose is to support women pursuing university degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics, fields that he believes guarantee incomes allowing them full control of their lives.

"Hopefully, they won't have the difficult time in life that my mom had," he says. "She was limited in what she could do because she didn't have the education." The fund, which he plans to contribute to each year so that it will be able to provide sizable awards, "is a helping hand, not a handout," he says. "This would be my mother's way of 'teaching women to fish,' so that they can find a way to a better life."

By **Christian Pelusi** | senior communications officer

Jim Holliday shares the summing of, from left to right, Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Nepal's Lobuche and Mt. Kosciuszko in Australia, with the image of his mother, Mitzie.



Music director Francesco Lecce-Chong conducts students of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra, a beneficiary of the Foundation's Wish Book.



DONOR
PROFILE

WISHES GRANTED

Donors fulfill modest funding requests through Wish Book

FROM NOVEMBER 2016 THROUGH MARCH 2017, The Pittsburgh Foundation donors were offered the opportunity to use their donor-advised funds to make grant requests in the annual Wish Book campaign. They responded by raising more than \$211,000, fulfilling most of the wishes of the 73 participating nonprofits that requested financial support.

Wishes focused on meeting "small-ticket," unmet needs in the categories of arts and culture; community development; education; environment and nature; families, children and youth; health and special needs; and human services.

Last year, 49 separate donor-advised funds contributed more than \$204,000, meeting the wishes of 60 participating nonprofits.

Wishes do not exceed \$2,500 per nonprofit, but donors often give more than the requested amount. The funds provide specific assistance to organizations and validation for donors of direct impact. Donor services officer Christy Stuber believes that spotlighting organizations with small but specific needs has an emotional effect on readers.

"Donors and prospective donors love the Wish Book," she says. "They tell us that they use it to engage multiple generations of their families — including children and grandchildren — in their philanthropy. Plus, donors, who have an idea of the causes they care about, use the Wish Book to learn about organizations that are helping in those areas."

For donors who are becoming aware of the Wish Book but missed the most recent giving period, there is good news, according to Center for Philanthropy Associate Erin Wagner.

"This is just an example of what we do throughout the year at the Center for Philanthropy," she says. "We do a lot of match-making and we provide custom research. If a donor wants to know about a particular cause or issue, they can come to us and we'll work with them to find a nonprofit that matches their passion, their interest and their resources."

By **Christian Pelusi**



SUPPORTING SMALL AND MIGHTY NONPROFITS

ALL-IN-ONE DELIVERY

Providing diapers and economic opportunity for Pittsburghers in need

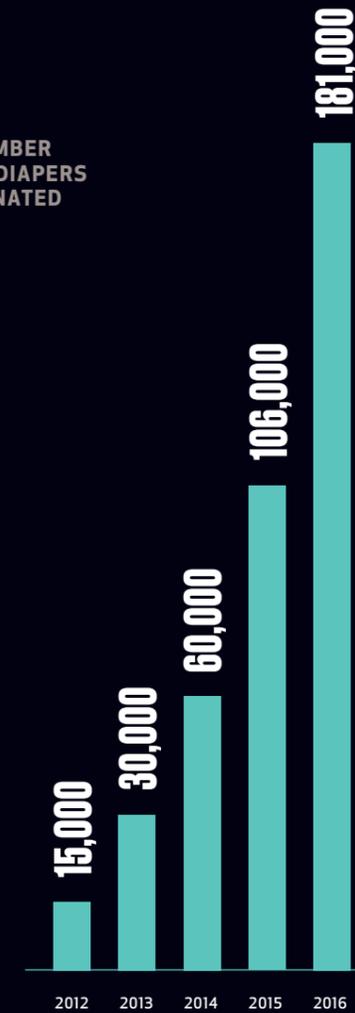
REVEREND PHILIP BATTLE, JR. learned his lesson back in 1994: when mothers and grandmothers tell you they can't get diapers, you listen to them. Then a pastor in the Toledo, Ohio, area, Pastor Battle was meeting at his church with women raising young children on their own and asked them what the congregation could do that no other agency was doing to assist them in raising their children.

"They all responded at once, like a choir, 'Diapers!' My initial reaction was that they had to be wrong. There's no way that could be true, I thought. But it turns out they were right," he says. "It just never occurred to me that something as basic as diapers would be such a problem."

Pastor Battle had to catch up to what the mothers and grandmothers knew from their own life experiences: federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program regulations bar recipients from using funds to purchase any non-food item, including essentials such as diapers or baby wipes.

Left to right: Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank volunteers Willa Mae Hubbard and Arlene L. Harris pack donations for distribution across Allegheny County.

NUMBER
OF DIAPERS
DONATED



Even discount-brand diapers cost \$80 to \$100 per month for each child through his or her first three years.

By the estimates of the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank, the organization founded by Battle and his wife, Cathy, in 2012, the diaper gap is 77,000 per day in Allegheny County alone. The Bank provides adult diapers, too, for low-income older people.

Shortages lead to increased risk of rashes and urinary tract infections, but can also trigger economic crises for low-income families. Most child care centers require families to supply diapers for their own children. Coming up short prevents parents from going to work or school — a significant setback for those trying to climb out of poverty.

The Pittsburgh Foundation is now supporting diaper access through its new Small and Mighty grants program. Small and Mighty developed from an 18-month review

the Foundation made of its own grant-making practices, which found that, though two-thirds of the region's 3,100 nonprofits have budgets less than \$100,000, only 18 percent of the proposals the Foundation funded in 2015 came from small nonprofits. Small and Mighty is a direct outcome of the 100 Percent Pittsburgh organizing principle, which commits about 60 percent of the Foundation's grants to providing those who have been shut out with access to the region's revitalized economy.

"Our 100 Percent Pittsburgh organizing principle is grounded in the idea that we should turn to affected communities for solutions," says Senior Program Officer Michelle McMurray, who leads Small and Mighty. "But in reviewing our own grant-making history, we now realize we haven't been doing enough to fund small nonprofits that were started in and are run by people who live and work in the community."

In December, \$230,000 in Small and Mighty grants were awarded to 18 nonprofits with budgets of \$600,000 or less. These grants, which range in size from \$5,000 to \$15,000, position nimble nonprofits to significantly increase their impact.

With a \$15,000 operating grant, the Diaper Bank has hired its first employee, a part-timer to coordinate administrative duties, including data management, tracking donations and scheduling pickup and delivery services. Under the supervision of Cathy Battle — who works three days a week as a respiratory therapist, spends Sunday in church, and then serves as executive director of the Bank for the remainder of the workweek — the organization collected and distributed 181,000 diapers out of its Point Breeze warehouse last year.

"Our most dedicated volunteers are 70 or 80 years old, or working full time," says the Diaper Bank's outreach consultant, Diane Wuycheck, "Without operating support to fund the Mission Logistics partnership, we'd be driving diapers around to drop-off sites in personal vehicles."

The extra operating support also has positioned Cathy to unlock a potential donation of 250,000 diapers from Huggies this year.

"One in three Americans is struggling to provide diapers to their babies, who are the most innocent ... and they are our future. We have to do whatever it takes to help them," she says.

By **Kitty Julian** | senior communications officer

ADVISOR
PROFILE

PARTYING FOR A PURPOSE

A Wexford couple has raised more than \$105,000 for six nonprofits, one event at a time

IT STARTED WITH THE 2010 EARTHQUAKE in Haiti that destroyed much of the nation's fragile infrastructure. The situation, especially for children, was dire. The year before, Wexford-area resident John Mackie had joined the board of the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation, a youth ministry that has provided aid in Haiti since the mid-1990s.

As parents of three young children, John and his wife, Shana, embraced the organization's mission to provide Haitian children with medical care, clean water, sanitation and other basic needs that their own family took for granted here at home. When they learned that just 25¢ would fund a meal in that country, the Mackies organized a fundraiser and invited their friends.

"We know how fortunate we are, and we both believe that charitable giving is something we should model for our children so they can see the effort involved and the payoff," says John, an advisor with wealth management firm Hefren-Tillotson.

In March of 2012, the couple hosted their first Party with a Purpose. Their primary goal was to bring people together and provide a platform for raising money and awareness for community needs. While they began with a focus on Haiti, over the years they've also been giving closer to home.

"We cover all the costs and ask that our guests make a donation. We don't care if you donate \$5 or \$50 or \$500. We just want you there," he says.

By the end of the night, they had raised \$4,500 for the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation. Since then, the party has become an annual event.

"Every year since, we've reached the fundraising goals we set," says Shana. "We feel so blessed that people took time out of their lives, giving time, attention and money. We are beyond honored to be a part of this."

Each year, the charitable cause seemed to present itself. In 2013, John was asked to chair the local Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Man of the Year event and, with the help of colleagues at Hefren-Tillotson,

family and friends, raised \$33,000 for the organization. The Mackies' close friendship with Neil and Suzanne Alexander led them to raise \$6,000 in 2014 for the Live Like Lou Fund at The Pittsburgh Foundation to study amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease, which claimed Neil's life the following spring.

The 2015 party raised \$22,000 for Light of Life Rescue Mission for renovations to its women and children's area. Last year, their event benefiting The Children's Institute raised \$23,000 for The Center for Prader-Willi Syndrome. Because the Mackies manage every aspect of the party, the nonprofits can focus on communicating the importance of their work and accepting donations.

"The Children's Institute is the only place in the world providing comprehensive, hospital-based treatment that combines medical, behavioral and dietary interventions to individuals with Prader-Willi syndrome," says David Miles, president and CEO of The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh. "Through their Party with a Purpose, John and Shana provided a platform for us to introduce a whole new audience to our mission while raising awareness and providing hope."

This year, the Mackies have decided to take a new approach: raise funds to launch and permanently endow the Coach Dave Gray Scholarship Fund at the Foundation. Some 100 people attended their Feb. 9 fundraiser at Grazie's Restaurant in Wexford, which raised \$16,545 toward their \$25,000 goal.

The scholarship, once fully funded, will serve as a tribute to Gray, whose camps and after-school programs in the North Hills have engaged more than 10,000 kids in sports-related activities that encourage healthy lifestyles and self-esteem while avoiding high-pressure competition that can turn some children away from athletics for good.

"I've seen kids across the full range of athletic abilities come into his classes and come



Shana and John Mackie at the Feb. 9 fundraiser for the Coach Dave Gray Scholarship Fund at The Pittsburgh Foundation.

out of their shell because he is so encouraging," John says. "He instills good, positive habits and has this knack for getting the kids to move and engage. He keeps their focus on fun, being a kid and enjoying things just for the sake of enjoying them."

Over time, the fund will continue to grow and provide a lasting tribute to Gray and his methods. While the Mackies and Gray are still working through the details of the scholarship, they are settled on its main purpose: funding to college students committed to creating positive experiences for children and youth.

Gray hopes the scholarship will encourage recipients to seek opportunities to help others without being asked.

"Coaches and teachers in my life took a vested interest in my well-being and made me the person I am today. I encourage other coaches and parents to uplift children. Kids really want to be part of something. Our job as educators and coaches is to help kids fit in and give them a sense of belonging," he says.

"Coach Gray's passion has always been working with kids in the community, and we don't ever want that to stop," says Shana. "Scholarship funds are forever, and they're a way to extend his influence and positive attitude."

Donate to the scholarship online at pittsburghfoundation.org/davegray.

By **Kitty Julian**

DOLLARS
RAISED

\$4,500

Pittsburgh Kids
Foundation
2012

\$33,000

Leukemia and
Lymphoma Society
2013

\$6,000

Live Like Lou
2014

\$22,000

Light of Life
Rescue Mission
2015

\$23,000

The Children's
Institute
2016

\$16,545

The Pittsburgh
Foundation/Gray
2017
(AS OF MARCH 15)

\$105,045

Total

FOCUS ON
WESTMORELANDBRINGING MORE
TO THE TABLE

A Westmoreland County organization offers simple meals for complicated times

EVERY THURSDAY, a group dinner in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, begins like millions of others across America — with a prayer.

But then the meal follows its own unique script. There is a Word of the Day — such as gratitude, hope, beauty or friendship — and diners are encouraged to discuss what that word means to them in their lives as they are at that moment. At meal's end, one of the hosts tells three jokes.

The dinner conversation flows at Feeding the Spirit, a nonprofit that began as a provider of meals to those in need. The organization is now ambitiously striving to be the provider of assistance that enables the down-and-out to work their way up-and-in.

So why the prayer, the special word and the joke-telling at every meal served in the Otterbein United Methodist Church, which has been a welcoming presence in downtown

Greensburg since 1854? “We want reflection, introspection and laughter,” says Deb Thackrah, the organization's founder. “We did not want to be a ‘soup kitchen.’ We wanted to create a safe space where anyone in need could come and feed body, mind and soul.”

Feed the Spirit's mission is to prepare disadvantaged individuals who have been shut out of the region's economic revitalization to become active participants, which dovetails with The Pittsburgh Foundation's 100 Percent Pittsburgh organizing principle, dedicated to doing the same thing on a regional scale. The inspiration for Feeding the Spirit happened for Thackrah six years ago during a run with a friend on a frigid January morning. The two were well along Greensburg's Five Star Trail when they came upon a homeless encampment. They were drawn to one man struggling to sleep on a bench with only a newspaper for a blanket. The scene unsettled them to tears and they

→ Five-year-old Mojave is one of about 100 people who enjoy Feeding the Spirit's dinner at Otterbein United Methodist Church.





STAFF
PROFILE

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH 2.0

FOR DECADES, donors have turned to The Pittsburgh Foundation's scholarship program to honor people they love and organizations they admire. Thanks to a dedicated team of staff members, the Foundation now administers 324 scholarships, making the program the sixth largest nationally for community foundations.

Managing that tremendous growth for the past 18 years was Deborah Turner, who retired in February after 23 years at the Foundation. She leaves a substantial legacy. Last year alone, in collaboration with Scholarship Associate Trista Yerks, Turner oversaw 850 scholarship awards totaling more than \$2.4 million to high school seniors, undergraduate and graduate students, and even a handful of K-12 students.

Succeeding Turner is Jennifer Marino, who joined the team in December and now works closely with Yerks, who assists donors with their 140 scholarship funds. Marino's background makes her well-suited for scholarship management. She spent nine years in her previous position as assistant director for financial aid at the Pennsylvania State University's New Kensington and Greater Allegheny campuses. Marino brings a track record of diversity, inclusion and access that reaffirms the scholarship program's goals: to recruit robust applicant pools for our scholarship funds, introduce students to the breadth of scholarship options available, and match qualified candidates with dollars to fund their educations.

To that end, Marino and Yerks are working to improve the online application process, which should further increase scholarship dollars awarded into the community. Currently, students may apply online for 72 scholarships at pittsburghfoundation.org/scholarship. That number will grow to an estimated 160 by the end of this year. The team will then work on transitioning school-specific scholarships, many of which use paper applications, to an online process.

Additionally, Marino and Yerks are building on the significant improvements made last year to the scholarship online search capability. Thanks to the efforts of a cross-departmental team, the site offers students at-a-glance access to brief descriptions, average awards, deadline information, and the ability to search by major, year in school and geography.

"We are expecting that a more powerful and effective scholarship website will provide greater awareness and ease of access for counselors, university administrators, parents and students who wish to apply," Marino says. "Scholarships are often the defining factor in a student's ability to walk across a stage at graduation, and we believe the enhanced online scholarship application process fulfills our donors' intentions of distributing funds in a meaningful way to the students who best meet each scholarship's criteria."

By **Christian Pelusi**

Thanks to Feeding the Spirit founder Deb Thackrah, left, weekly dinners at Otterbein United Methodist Church are more like family dinners where conversation and laughter flow.

impulsively dug into their pockets to offer whatever money they had.

"All the way home, we discussed what our community could do or offer to assist those in need," she says.

Ten months later, Thackrah and her volunteers were serving 35 dinners at Feeding the Spirit's first event. Food donations from area restaurants, businesses, churches and families have enabled the organization to serve some 21,000 meals over the past six years.

While that hardly qualifies as a side service, Thackrah maintains that Feeding the Spirit's main mission has evolved to be one of the Westmoreland County area's leading nonprofits for crisis intervention, pulling homeless individuals and families off the streets and into temporary shelter. Thackrah says she receives calls from North Huntingdon, New Kensington, Derry and even communities in Allegheny County. The reason: shelters are full everywhere and assistance agencies know Thackrah will take any call at any time.

Through donations and without any government funding, Feeding the Spirit also funds rent assistance to keep people from being evicted, medical copays, bus vouchers, clothing and toiletry donations, and gift cards for food and gas.

"We started [crisis intervention] when we saw there were so many gaps within [government-run] social services that people were slipping through the cracks," not because the agencies weren't doing their jobs — they certainly have been, she says — but because there is so much demand for limited resources.

"Providing critical services, Feeding the Spirit has strengthened the safety net that keeps many of our most vulnerable families from falling into despair," says Phil Koch, executive director of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, an affiliate of The Pittsburgh Foundation.

Indeed, Feeding the Spirit's work is so emblematic of programs and services funded through 100 Percent Pittsburgh that the organization was awarded \$5,000 from CFWC's Greensburg Foundation Fund to support nonprofits serving Greensburg and an additional \$15,000 in funding

through its Healthy Community Impact Grant initiative, which Koch describes as one of the CFWC's portals for translating the 100 Percent Pittsburgh effort to vulnerable groups in Westmoreland County. Thackrah and others managing Feeding the Spirit believe they are providing services that restore clients' ability to access opportunities that improve their life prospects. Their volunteer network can provide more time and attention toward meeting individual needs than agencies are able to provide, and the result is a greater chance of success in helping individuals get their lives back on track.

John, one of the organization's memorable success stories, came to his first Feeding the Spirit meal in May 2013. He had been living out of his car for two years while in the throes of alcoholism and depression.

Feeding the Spirit helped him locate an apartment and funded his first month's rent and security deposit. Volunteers collected furniture and other necessities. The group effort on his behalf brought John to tears. But the real validation came over the next several months as he joined Alcoholics Anonymous and landed a job that paid enough to cover his living expenses. He even returned to painting, one of his favorite hobbies.

As a thank-you to Thackrah, he gave her one of his watercolor paintings with a note on the back: "Thank you for all you do with Feeding the Spirit and for helping a broken man begin to rebuild his life. God Bless You."

By **Christian Pelusi**

Left to right: Deborah Turner, now retired; Jennifer Marino; and Trista Yerks shepherded \$2.4 million in scholarship awards last year.





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Jim Holliday summited Denali in Alaska on June 23, 2006 and captured this image of the survey marker, 20,320 feet above sea level.

Please do not hesitate to contact The Pittsburgh Foundation if you are interested in establishing a new fund. The Foundation's office is open through Dec. 29, and funds can be set up in 24 hours or less.

For current donors, please contact your donor services representative prior to making a gift. Please refer to the following dates for year-end giving to your fund:

Stock/cash transfers must be received in the Foundation's account by Friday, Dec. 29 at 5 p.m. Please make the Foundation aware of your stock gift ahead of the transfer.

Checks must be postmarked by Saturday, Dec. 30.

The Foundation's office will be closed Friday, Dec. 22 and Monday, Dec. 25.

The office will be open until 3 p.m. Friday, Dec. 29.

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NEW FUNDS December 1, 2016 – March 1, 2017

- Anastasis Charitable Fund
- Annalee Maloney Memorial Fund
- Bennett Prize Fund
- Betty E. Hags and Joseph W. Hags Memorial Trust
- Bonnie W. and Thomas L. VanKirk Charitable Fund
- Breakneck Fund
- Brian C. McCarrier Family Foundation Fund
- Condie Nursing Scholarship Fund
- Dick and Jean Farrell Trust Fund
- Elaine E. Berry Charitable Fund
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- Gough Family Fund
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- Hatch Family Charitable Fund
- Heidenreich Charitable Fund
- Landy Family Fund
- Lee Taylor Fund
- Leviski Charitable Fund
- Longwood Servers Scholarship Fund
- LVE/William N. and Virginia B. Tuscano Fund
- Marilyn Stein Art and Literacy Fund
- Miller Charitable Fund
- Oliver A. Muhonen Fund
- Peter J. and Marian P. Barron Fund
- Preckel-McAuley Scholarship Fund
- Rich and Nancy Lamanna Environmental Aegis Fund
- Richard and Kathleen Farrell Family Foundation Fund
- Rimmel Family Fund
- Sims Family Fund
- Suresh Family Foundation Fund
- Tessa and David Nicholson Family Fund
- Turner Dairy Employee Scholarship Fund
- Turner Dairy Family Charitable Fund
- Turner Dairy Student Scholarship Fund
- VASTI Fund
- Wright Family Fund

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