Human Services Center Corporation

Human Services
Center
Corporation

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

About Us

The Human Services Center Corporation improves the quality of life for children, adults, and families in the Mon Valley area. It fulfills this mission in four ways:

- Serving as a collaborative leader by promoting and supporting a network of providers within and outside the walls of its multi-purpose center.
- Serving as a bridge between human service organizations and those who develop policies and funding that impact the quality of life in the Mon Valley area.
- Monitoring community needs and initiating innovative strategies to fill service gaps.
- Providing essential services to both community members and human service organizations.

In addition to operating the Center, the HSCC provides a host of award-winning programs virtually, from its office in Turtle Creek, in five area high schools, and in the Mon Valley communities.

Communities Served

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

Our Center

The Human Services Center was created in 1982 under an initiative of the Allegheny County Commissioners. As a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, the Center is owned and operated by the Human Services Center Corporation (HSCC). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, over 750 people received services daily. The facility has remained open throughout the pandemic for essential services. Many providers continue to provide their services virtually. The Center is home to 10 agencies, which create a "human services mall." Current tenant agencies include:

Adagio Health Nutrition Services
- Provides individual nutrition counseling and Power Up nutrition education to area schools.

Allegheny Co. Health Dept. - W.I.C. Program
- Supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children.

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

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

Early Learning Resource Center
- Provides referrals for early learning programs like Head Start, Early Head Start, PA Pre-K Counts and information on early intervention services and support.

Eastern Area Adult Services
- Support services to the over 60 population: Meals on Wheels, noon meal, transportation, recreation, socialization.

Healthy Start, Inc.
- Provides maternal and child health services, including Community Education courses.

Learn "N" Play Development Center
- Provides childcare services for infants (6 weeks) to 12 year olds.

Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs
- Westinghouse Valley Food Pantry and pantry referral in the east suburban communities.

TCV Community Services
- Provides counseling, emergency help, crisis intervention, rehabilitation coaching, and socialization classes.

HSCC is one of the "Best Places to Work!"

Staff celebrating the "Best Places to Work" win over a Zoom lunch

The Human Services Center Corporation was selected by *The Pittsburgh Business Times* as a winner of the 2020 Best Places to Work Award! Winners are selected based on an online employee survey administered in June.

Staff at the 2019 Magic of Mentoring Event

Staff Outing - Bowling at Lokay Lanes

HSCC Programs - Youth LIFE

Lights on Afterschool

Lights On Afterschool is the only nationwide event celebrating after-school programming, and its critical role in our communities. This year to celebrate, Mallory Clark, Youth Programs Manager, created a video to highlight the Youth LIFE Program. Click here to view the video!

The Youth Learning In a Fun Environment (Youth LIFE) Program provides after-school programming for first through fifth graders mostly residing in the Woodland Hills School District. In 2020, the program shifted to a virtual platform, which allowed any first through fifth grader in Allegheny County to participate!

Students in Youth LIFE receive academic assistance (homework and virtual learning help), participate in arts and crafts, science experiments, along with social and emotional learning activities.

The program is completely FREE, and space is still available for the 2020-2021 academic year. Sign up here.

Youth LIFE Outcomes 2019-2020

- In recent years, **over 95%** of students with sufficient data utilizing Study Island improved in math or reading.
- In recent years, **over 90%** of all youth participants with sufficient data did not miss 10% or more of school days.
- **100%** (**50/50**) of all 1st – 3rd graders successfully participated in the new social/emotional curriculum, Second Step.
- **100%** (**100/100**) of students who participated in the tutorial services were promoted to the next grade.

HSCC Programs - KOOL

The Kids Outgoing, Outdoing and Learning (KOOL) Summer Program offers academic and social enrichment for youth in first through fifth grades. Like the YLIFE After-School Program, KOOL shifted to a virtual platform, making the program available to any first through fifth grader in Allegheny County!

Focusing on academic, cultural, and social enrichment, as well as community service and recreation, the KOOL Program provides participants with an educational and fun summer experience. Youth participate in reading and math activities on a daily basis, as well as computer tutorials, arts and crafts, and experiential seminars provided by local agencies.

HSCC Community Outreach Coordinators developed an informational video for all parents of participants in the KOOL Summer Program. The topic was "How to Talk to Your Kids About Money." The video can be found here.

KOOL Outcomes 2020

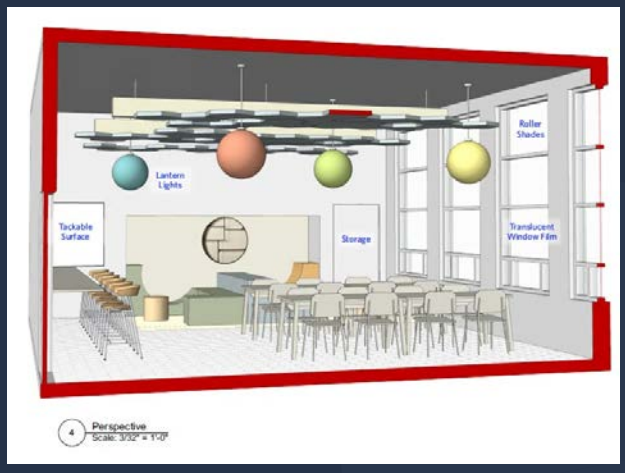
- In recent years, **over 95%** of students with sufficient data utilizing Study Island improved in math or reading.
- **35** participants were served, making our enrollment and attendance higher than most of our peer county providers who offered in-person programming.
- **100%** (**35/35**) students participated in cooking classes in partnership with Adagio Health's Power Up program.
- **100%** (**35/35**) participated in COVID-19 specific social/emotional curriculum.

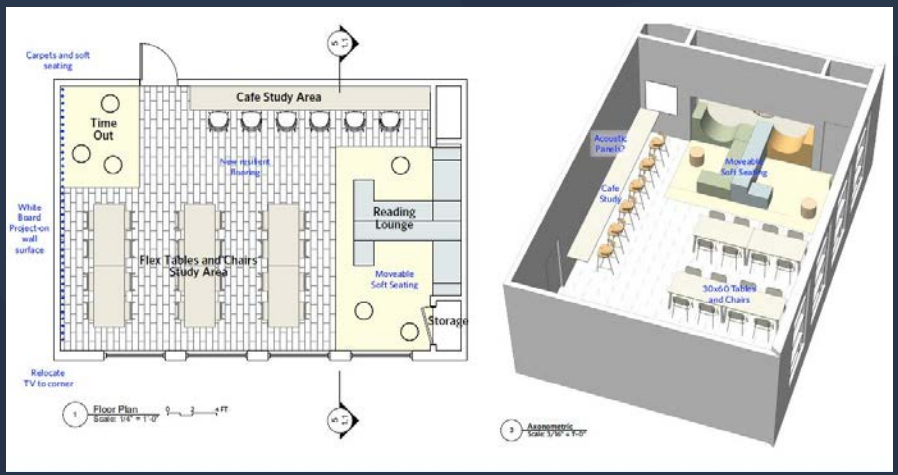
Remaking Classroom A

In 2019, the HSCC was selected as one of 16 finalists to participate in Remake Learning's Blueprint for Learning grant opportunity, with support from The Grable Foundation. The process allows grantees to redesign their spaces in a way to better engage 21st-century learners. HSCC staff submitted Classroom A for consideration. The space is consistently used by HSCC youth programs, and often hosts events of the Mon Valley Providers Council and tenant agencies.

Finalists attended several design sessions in the Fall of 2019, where Remake Learning coordinated design teams that included the National Design Alliance and Reimagine America's Schools.

After the Remake Learning sessions, HSCC was paired with Pfaffman + Associates architects to further develop design plans and concepts. Most of 2020 was spent planning for Classroom A renovations. Construction will take place in 2021.





Concept drawings & plans provided by Pfaffman + Associates

The HSCC is always looking for professionals interested in speaking with ELP participants about their career paths. For more information, call Leah O'Reilly at 412-436-9537.

HSCC Programs - ELP

The Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) is a workforce development program for low-income high school seniors attending the East Allegheny, McKeesport Area, Penn Hills, West Mifflin Area, and Woodland Hills High Schools. Participants are afforded the opportunity to prepare for their future, develop their work competencies, explore hundreds of careers through hands-on experiences, attend field trips, participate in job shadows, and more. Staff meet the students individually on a regular basis to further ensure the special needs of each participant are being met properly.

Programming for the 2020-21 academic year is a blend of virtual and in-person, dependent upon each school district's guidelines.

ELP Outcomes 2019-2020

- **100%** (**155/155**) of ELP participants earned a high school diploma.
- **92%** (**143/155**) of ELPers entered post-secondary training/education, entered the military, and/or entered the workforce.
- **83%** (**129/155**) of ELP graduated seniors entered post-secondary training/education.

HSCC Programs - Supports for Success

Supports for Success provides employment and education supports for adults working toward self-sufficiency.

Participants receive one-on-one intensive case management, wrap-around supportive services, resources, and referrals. Our program works directly with participants to create a detailed goal plan, obtain a credit report, and create a monthly budget to increase knowledge of money management. Participants also create, update, and maintain a professional resume to improve success in obtaining employment opportunities. Many clients also receive support in finding adequate affordable housing options.

Supports for Success Highlights 2020

- **27** participants served
- **73.3%** (11 out of 15) of participants who identified a savings goal increased their savings.
- **70.6%** (12 out of 17) of participants who identified a goal to improve their credit score, increased their credit score.
- **73.7%** (14 out of 19) of participants increased their financial well-being.
- **80%** (16 out of 20) of participants obtained and/or maintained safe and affordable housing.
- **71.4%** (10 out of 14) of participants obtained and/or maintained employment with a living wage or higher.
- **73.7%** (14 out of 19) of participants obtained and/or maintained employment for 90 days.

HSCC Programs - Supports for Success
Success Story

Shana is a single mother who enrolled in Supports for Success for support to achieve her education and financial goals. At enrollment, Shana had no savings, delinquent education loans, and a credit score of 541. Shana attended college 14 years prior and due to extenuating life circumstances, she was unable to focus on school and maintain a 2.0 GPA. At that time, she was placed on financial aid and academic probation, which impacted her ability to receive financial aid assistance for the cost of tuition and books. With the assistance of the Supports Specialist, she addressed and resolved delinquent student loans, obtained academic forgiveness, and is actively enrolled in a college certificate program. She developed a monthly budget, attended financial counseling seminars, and learned and implemented financial and credit management recommendations that directly contributed to her ability to increase her savings and improve her credit score from 541 to 728. Shana's motivation, commitment, diligence, and hard work is inspirational and we are so proud of her!

"I am so thankful for the Supports for Success program. Before I enrolled, I felt hopeless with no real support. I wanted to better my life, but did not know where to start. I now feel like I'm getting somewhere in life and am excited about achieving my education goal. I am thankful for my Supports Specialist who is always helpful and holds me accountable for my own success and progress. I've learned to budget, improve my credit, and am now more financially stable because of my participation in the Supports for Success program.

On countless occasions I can remember you coming to the school helping with setting up tutoring and even helping with assignments. You have gone above and beyond for me."

HSCC Programs - MVPC

The Mon Valley Providers Council (MVPC) is an alliance that serves as a formal network for information and resource exchange among human services providers in the Mon Valley. It involves its member organizations in Working Groups which address crucial issues in the Mon Valley: Employment and Training, Health, Housing, and Youth. These four Working Groups involve the participation of dues paying member agencies and over 250 staff members of those organizations. Through these standing Working Groups, the Providers Council promotes cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among its member and participating organizations in an effort to fill gaps in human services in the Mon Valley communities.

Virtual Job Fair Webinar:

In August, the MVPC Working Group on Employment & Training hosted a "How to Attend a Virtual Job Fair" webinar for job seekers. The Working Group partnered with Ken McCoy from Equus Workforce Solutions to provide an overview of what a virtual job fair is, what job seekers should expect when attending one, and how to prepare for success when attending one. As we transition to a predominantly online world, the MVPC wanted to provide job seekers with the skills necessary to succeed.

CARES Rent Relief Webinar:

In September, the MVPC hosted a webinar on the CARES Rent Relief Program to provide community members and service providers with information about the program and how to apply. 40 attendees were provided an overview of the program, the qualifications, and a walk through of the application process. Given the increased need for rental assistance as a result of the pandemic, the MVPC wanted to ensure that our community had the knowledge necessary to access this available assistance.

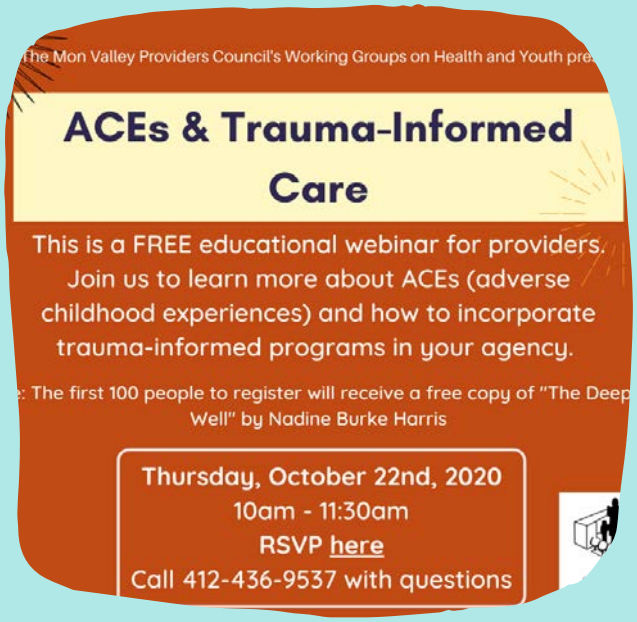
HSCC Programs - MVPC

MVPC Annual Meeting

The MVPC Annual Meeting was held virtually this year in November. Topics included "Establishing Racial Equity in Your Organizational Culture" and "Public Health Issues Facing the Mon Valley." Dr. Trisha Gadson, CEO of Macedonia FACE, shared ways their organization strives to achieve racial equity and provided tips and strategies to providers on how they can establish a culture of racial equity in their agencies. Additionally, Dr. Debra Bogen, the Director of the Allegheny County Health Department, discussed some of the health disparities in the Mon Valley, along with the Health Department's efforts to combat COVID-19.

ACEs and Trauma-Informed Care Webinar:

In October, the MVPC Working Groups on Health and Youth hosted a webinar on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma-informed care. Presenters from the Sprout Center and PAAR provided an overview of what ACEs are and how to build trauma-informed care programming at agencies. This webinar was offered to help support providers as they serve the community during a time of great stress and uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Responding to COVID-19

SNAP Outreach

Early in the pandemic, HSCC supported community partners Just Harvest and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services with fielding calls from those interested in applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Members of our Community Outreach team called 85 individuals interested in SNAP, and helped complete 9 applications over the phone.

CARES Rent Relief Program

HSCC was selected as one agency to assist individuals in applying for the CARES Rent Relief Program. The program was designed to help those who have lost income or experienced a reduction in income due to COVID-19.

HSCC staff fielded over 430 calls about the Rent Relief Program, ultimately assisting 137 tenants apply for the program, along with 40 landlords.

COVID-19 Testing

By partnering with the Allegheny County Health Department and the Squirrel Hill Health Center's Mobile Unit, the HSCC hosted two COVID-19 testing sessions in 2020. Over 200 individuals received COVID-19 tests. During one event, The Generation Connect also provided over 100 food boxes to those in attendance.

Emergency Assistance Program

HSCC was selected as one of four agencies in Allegheny County to provide emergency assistance funds to those individuals having difficulty meeting their basic needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this program, HSCC staff provided assistance to 49 families, for a total of $42,000. Throughout the program, HSCC staff received more than 250 applications for assistance.

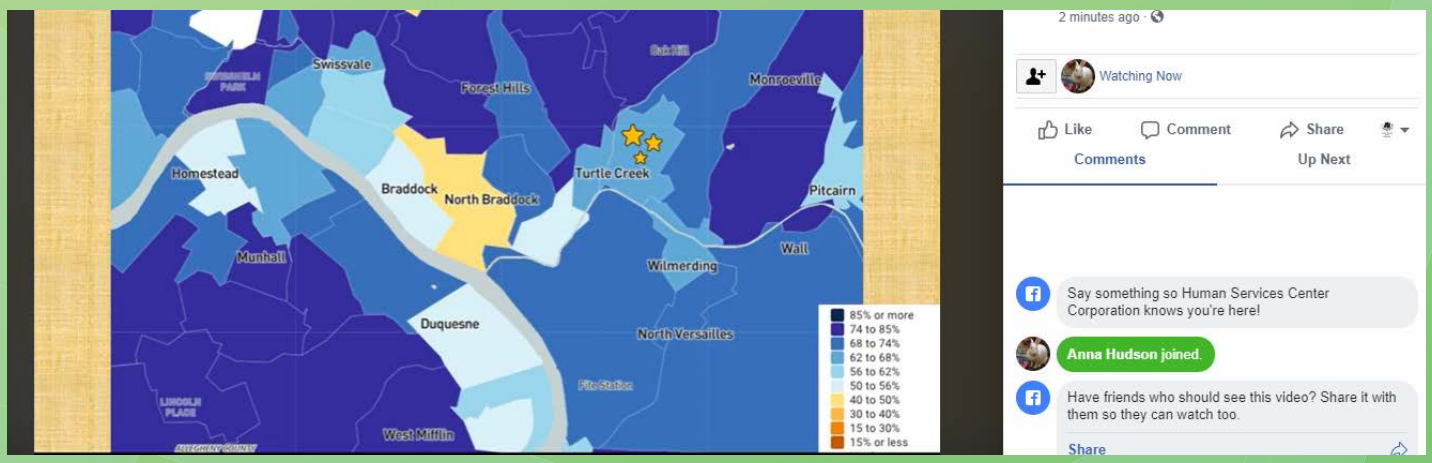
2020 Community Outreach Highlights

Computer Classes

This year, HSCC was able to provide a series of computer classes to 6 individuals. Classes catered to those who were just beginning to develop their computer skills. Throughout the four classes, individuals learned skills such as how to turn the computer on and off, how to use a computer mouse and keyboard, browse the internet, and create and navigate an email account.

Flu Shots

Partnering again with Eastern Area Prehospital Services, HSCC hosted an outdoor flu shot clinic in October. Over 30 received the flu vaccine during the event.



Census Outreach

Census Outreach looked a bit different after the onset of the pandemic. It became even more critical to discover new ways to reach Mon Valley residents, and encourage them to complete the Census. In April, HSCC hosted a Census Virtual Town Hall on Facebook Live. The session shared a brief history on the Census, why it's important to complete, and how to do so. Over 200 individuals viewed the video!

2020 Community Outreach Highlights

IBM Initiative

The HSCC is one of the regional nonprofit partners working on the IBM SkillsBuild Reignite Initiative to assist job seekers in the Pittsburgh region. By working with IBM, an HSCC SkillsBuild Channel has been developed, with trainings on working with computers, managing email, and job preparedness skills like resume writing and interview preparation. 30 people have already signed up for a SkillsBuild account where they can access the channel, as well as the other professional development trainings the site has to offer. Future offerings include live seminars for job seekers to further their skills.

HIV/AIDS Awareness

Like most HSCC programming, HIV/AIDS Awareness events were held virtually this year. In October, the 20th Annual Mon Valley HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk was held via Zoom. Guests shared information on prevention and testing. After the presentation, attendees were encouraged to walk in their own neighborhoods. To honor World AIDS Day, HSCC participated in 1Hood Media's World AIDS Day discussion on health equity and HIV with Project Silk and True T PGH! The video received over 500 views on Facebook.

Abbie Godollei, Outreach Coordinator, participates in a World AIDS Day discussion on health equity and HIV.

20th Annual Mon Valley HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk via Zoom

HSCC Programs - Financial Literacy

The goal of the Financial Literacy Program is to increase the financial knowledge and skills of Mon Valley residents. By providing community workshops, Mon Valley residents are able to develop their financial knowledge and skills in areas such as budgeting, savings, credit, banking, and taxes.

HSCC has also built partnerships with financial empowerment organizations such as the Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center, Mon Valley Initiative, Fund My Future, and United Way's Free Tax Prep Coalition. Through these partnerships, HSCC is able to refer individuals to free one-on-on financial counseling sessions, homeownership resources, children's saving account information, free tax preparation, and more.

While HSCC intended to provide all of its workshops in-person in 2020, that was not the case. After the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, all workshops were hosted via Zoom. Attendance grew exponentially, as new audiences were reached. **Over 400** individuals attended HSCC's workshops in 2020! Sessions included two credit workshops, tax workshops with Emerging Leaders Program participants, Coping with COVID-19, Budgeting, sessions with the Youth LIFE After-school Program and KOOL Summer Program, among others.

Check out a few of HSCC's Financial Literacy Workshops on YouTube! Click the links below to view the webinars.

Understanding Student Loans

Make Credit Work for You

Budgeting & Accounts

Home Buyer Webinar

How to Talk to Your Kids About Money

The HSCC is looking for volunteer tax preparers for its Free Tax Preparation site in Turtle Creek! For more information, call Stephanie Eson at 412-437-8229.

HSCC Programs - FTP

Each year, HSCC partners with the United Way's Free Tax Prep (FTP) Coalition to provide an FTP site. Individuals and families on a low-income or fixed budget may be eligible to have their federal, state, and local taxes done for FREE. Due to the nature of our program, our volunteer tax preparers pay special attention to Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit eligibility to make sure that individuals and families are able to get their maximum tax refund.

In 2020, HSCC's physical site, providing in-person tax preparation appointments, closed March 17. On April 15, HSCC began providing facilitated-self assistance through TurboTax. Starting May 26, HSCC began to offer virtual services through the end of the tax filing season on July 15, 2020.

- **584** returns completed (2nd highest number of returns for a single site in Allegheny County)
- **$857,836** total refund dollars
- **179** Earned Income Tax Credit Returns
- **$335,490** Earned Income Tax Credit dollars
- **28** volunteers
- **164** hours of tax preparation provided to the community

Average household income of persons whose tax returns were completed: **$16,213.75**

Average amount of tax refund: **$1,486.90**

Our Board

Dave Priselac, President
Lynn Tatala, Vice President
Aerion Abney, Treasurer
Jo DeBolt, Secretary
Mark Bezilla
Scott Bernotas
Alexander G. Dick
Joe Dombrosky
Dr. Hayley Hellstern
Dr. James Huguley
Dr. Charlene Newkirk
Darla Poole
Michelle Smith
Damion Wilson

Our Staff

Dave Coplan, *Executive Director*
Leah O'Reilly, *Director of Programs*
Mallory Clark, *Youth Programs Manager*
Stephanie Eson, *Operations & Community Programs Manager*
Iris Grilho, *Supports Specialist*
Teresa DePace, *Youth Development Associate*
Kate Eldridge, *Youth Development Associate*
Kaelynn Hillegass, *Youth Development Associate*
Taylor Savala, *Youth Development Associate*
Luke Zappa, *Youth Development Associate*
Elizabeth Fries, *Outreach Coordinator*
Abbie Godollei, *Outreach Coordinator*
Bob Mitnik, *Building Superintendent*
Jeff Davenport, *Building Assistant*
Luis Algarin-Mercado, *Building Assistant*
Raymond Robertson, *Building Assistant*
Ursula Campbell-Escalante, *Front Desk Receptionist*
Anna Hudson, *Resource Navigator*
Nicole Polliard, *Lead Education Associate & Resource Navigator*
Rose Smeltzer, *Pantry Coordinator*

Youth LIFE & KOOL Staff
Gigi Guarnieri
Nicole Polliard
Sharyn Polliard

Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge the following for their generosity and support of the Human Services Center Corporation in 2020. Contributors to the MVPC Annual Fund Drive and individuals who have through the United Way's Contributor Choice program are recognized in the January edition of *The Communicator*, which s available on our website at www.hscc-mvpc.org or upon request.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Anonymous Contributors

Christ United Methodist Church

Citizens Bank

Eden Hall Foundation

G.C. Murphy Foundation

The Grable Foundation

The Heinz Endowments

Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Kennywood

McElhattan Foundation

McKeesport Healthier Communities PartnerSHIP

McKeesport Hospital Foundation

Richard King Mellon Foundation

Opportunity Fund

Partner4Work

PA Department of Community & Economic Development

The Pittsburgh Foundation

PNC Foundation

PNC Charitable Trust

Sandcastle

Steel Dynamics

The Techs, a Division of Steel Dynamics

United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania

UPMC Health Plan

Robert and Mary Weisbrod Foundation

Our Supporters - Volunteers

The Human Services Center Corporation gratefully acknowledges the following volunteers for their service and support; each individual listed volunteered at least 25 hours in 2020.

Food Pantry Volunteers

Dee Walter

Don Smeltzer

Jaime Smeltzer

Jessica Smeltzer

Jim Smeltzer

Kaitlin Smeltzer

Kelly Belin

Kelly Chandler

Kaitlin Smeltzer

Mike Smeltzer

Todd Smeltzer

Free Tax Prep Volunteers

Barbara Campbell

Bob Drost

Carla Santoliquido

Chuyi Qin

Darwin Christian

Denine Hood

Lou Gerthoffer

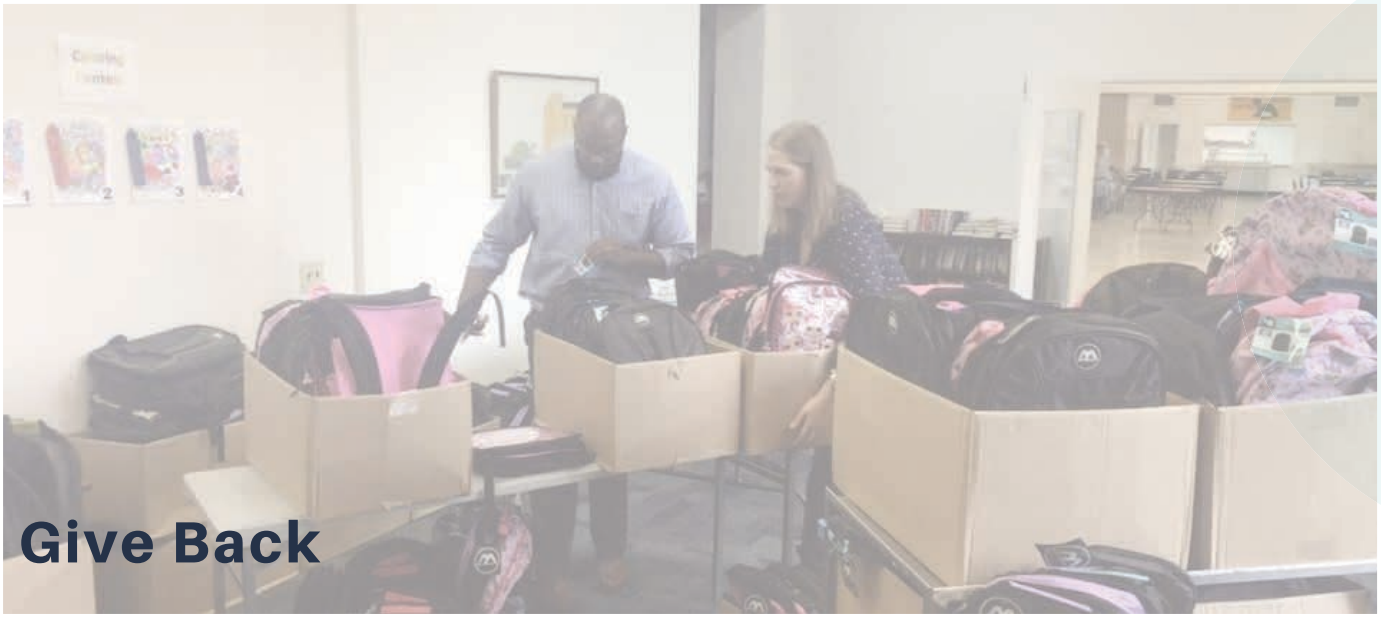
Meg Papa

Peggy Leard

Ralph Santoliquido

Rose Walker

Looking to get involved in 2021? Call HSCC at 412-436-9537 for available volunteer opportunities!



Give Back

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 Corporation, but the primary ways to get involved are volunteering, donating, and providing corporate support.

For more information for how to assist the HSCC, please visit our website at hscc-mvpc.org, or call us at 412-829-7112. Questions can be directed to Dave Coplan at dcoplan@hscc-mvpc.org.

Human Services Center Corporation

HSCC I - 519 Penn Avenue | HSCC II - 413 Penn Avenue

Turtle Creek, PA 15145

Phone: 412-829-7112 | Google Voice: 412-436-9537

Fax: 412-829-4363

Website: hscc-mvpc.org

Facebook: facebook.com/humanservicescenterturtlecreek

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