



Keystone Opportunity Center

Providing Help • Offering Hope

Serving the Indian Valley, North Penn and Pennridge Communities with a comprehensive continuum of social services since 1970

Keystone Staff Members Build Relationships through Listening, Caring and Sharing Stories

As we emerge from the winter months and participate in the excitement of spring, it is a great time to think about our plans for the rest of the year. Sharing stories about Keystone's impact and client successes is a way to ensure the future of our mission. We have the privilege of working in an environment where our daily activities often have a significant impact on the lives of someone else.

Unfortunately, for confidentiality reasons, we are not always able to share these touching stories about how the staff members at Keystone help the client families rise above their challenges as they seek guidance and assistance. Listening to our clients' stories is one way that Keystone staff builds trust and develops relationships.

I would like to recognize the wonderful staff at Keystone Opportunity Center as they continue to serve day in and day out handling the many client challenges that enter our doors or calls for assistance on a daily basis. I want to publicly thank them for the many hours they devote to serving others each week.

Office and Pantry Staff Welcome Clients

These challenges are present at our front desk where our receptionists greet everyone with a smile and ask how they may help, or in the food pantry when a family has a tale to tell and we take time to listen even though there are many other tasks that need to be completed. Many hours are invested by our volunteers to weigh, sort and check expiration dates of all donated food items before they are put on the shelves or packed in bags for the families to pick up. It is a busy place, but we are never too busy to listen.



The Keystone Opportunity staff had a fun pizza lunch to celebrate its 100% participation in the North Penn United Way (NPUW) fund drive. Keystone is a NPUW fund recipient. The Keystone staff and board are grateful for the generous community participation in the NPUW.

Case Managers Provide Resources

Homeless or at risk of homelessness families always have a unique story about their situation. Our case managers work tirelessly to identify what resources are available and help the families develop a plan with specific milestones to work towards self-sufficiency. Case managers also work to connect families to other agencies and services that may be appropriate.

Teachers Encourage Success

Our Adult Education teachers work with about 400 students on individual

educational goals that might include achieving their GED, completing a civics course as they work to achieve citizenship, or taking English as a Second Language classes to improve their communication

skills. Our student advocates assist and guide these students individually to resolve personal or family issues that may be road blocks to completing their education or finding a better career opportunity. The stories of success and improvement in every class are often life-changing.

Families Learn Together

We currently have 35 families that our Family Literacy teachers work with on life skills, parenting skills and work force related skills. This program includes pre-school children and their parents or grandparents spending time together reading or in group

activities designed to prepare each child for kindergarten. Being able to read stories together as a family and share life stories in a non-threatening environment touches the hearts of many Keystone teachers.

Developing Community Connections

Our Development Office spends many tireless hours coordinating Keystone events and coordinating the many communication tools used to keep our story in the news. We hope you can become part of our sharing network and tell others about the many things Keystone does to provide help and offer hope for those we serve.

There are many other staff members and volunteers that keep the story of Keystone Opportunity Center fresh and alive in our community. They are all appreciated for their important roles in helping many of our clients move forward with positive stories to share.

If you have the opportunity to work with or interact with Keystone Opportunity Center staff members, please ask them to share a Keystone story with you and take a minute to say "thank you" for their good work with individuals and families in our community.

E. Richard Aichele, III

Keystone Opportunity Center
Executive Director




Interfaith Hospitality Network Serves the Changing Faces of Homelessness

Because families come in all shapes and sizes, the faces of homeless families continue to shift. Families with children continue to be the fastest-growing population of homeless - increased by 37% between 2007-2010 (HUD statistic). Keystone Interfaith Hospitality Network(IHN) Director, Sue Zomberg reported, "We've noticed an increase in calls from single fathers on the Keystone community assistance line."

To address this need, the Keystone IHN decided to accept a household with a father and son. Zomberg commented, "It was plain to see during the interview process, that this parent's motivation was the same as all other families struggling with homelessness: to provide a safe stable place for their children."

She explained, "Now that he is in IHN, Dad is saving money, attending nutrition and computer classes and receiving counseling." He shared how he is at the point where "I can spend my brainpower on getting a better job...when I was in the motel I worried about how long we could afford to stay there and where would we go next." The father said his son "likes his school and talks about it... but he never did before."

Thanks to the hundreds of volunteers in 32 IHN congregations throughout Indian Valley and Upper Bucks, Keystone will continue to serve the needs of children and families in the area so they can move from crisis to stability and toward self-sufficiency. 



Father-son family benefits from IHN program.



Devon Lassiter, Housing Stability Specialist(left), congratulates Keystone clients and provides a house-warming gift basket, at their lease signing in March. Lassiter's position is a partnership with Philadelphia Health Management Corp. She joined the Keystone in January 2013. Her position is funded through a grant from the North Penn United Way. Using the "Housing First" model, Lassiter works with Montgomery county housing clients and landlords to get families and individuals out of shelter situations into affordable permanent housing.



Interfaith Hospitality Network 2012 Statistics

WHO we served

- 16 families with 39 individuals, including 20 children
- 2 families were 2- parent families
- 11 families were headed by single mothers
- 2 men with Veteran status
- 4 heads of household between 18-24 years old

WHY they needed help:

- Job loss/ less income prompted 8 families to become homeless
- Domestic violence was the root cause for 3 of the families
- 5 families came from doubled up homes, overcrowded living conditions
- *5 families had persons with a disability*

WHERE did they go?

- 3 moved to "Fair Market Rent" apartments
- 3 families moved to HUD supported apartments
- 4 families moved into Keystone Transitional Housing
- 1 moved to residential supported housing
- 1 young adult moved to a foster care program
- 1 adult left before completing program
- 1 family moved in with relatives
- 2 families approved for affordable permanent housing
- *With IHN guidance nearly doubled the number of employed adults in the program*

WHAT did IHN provide?

- Over 12,500 hours of hospitality from 32 IHN congregations in Bucks and Montgomery County Social services, Counseling, Employment and Rental Readiness, Nutritional & Parenting classes



2013 GolfOuting

Don't miss the excitement at Keystone's 10th Annual Golf Outing!

Monday, July 8, 2013

1:00 pm - Shot Gun Start

Talamore Country Club


TO REGISTER go to www.keystoneopportunity.org

Presenting Sponsor



Keystone Pilots New Education Program at Indian Valley Boys and Girls Club

The new **Parents and Children Together (PACT)** program, run by the Keystone Family Literacy department, provides two evenings each week for parents to meet with their children after work for a meal and to review homework or spend time doing a literacy activity. The free program with focus on family learning and literacy, is open to families living in the Souderton Area School District.

Part of the two-hour session includes group activities for the children while the adults participate in focused educational sessions to improve literacy and language skills, as well as more advanced, individualized learning. The program is held at the Indian Valley Boys and Girls Club with funding provided through a grant from the North Penn United Way. Interested families should contact Family Literacy Director, Sue Barrow at Keystone—215-723-5430. 



Janet McBride, Family Literacy Student Advisor, teaches the parent groups in the **Parents and Children Together** program and also meets with families individually during the family literacy sharing time.


For part of the two-hour **PACT** sessions, the children spend time with staff and volunteers reading and doing literacy activities while the parents participate in an adult education class.

Lots of Learning at Keystone

During the 2011-2012 school year, the Adult Education department at Keystone served 407 students in a variety of classes including English as a Second Language, Civics, and GED. Here's the report card for the year:

14 students achieved GED certification
27 students achieved U.S. Citizenship
20 students received individualized tutoring with 868 volunteer tutor hours contributed
75% of all students advanced at least one educational functioning level

While all this learning was going on, the capable Keystone teaching staff was also learning and sharing ideas to help them become even better at what they do. Several Keystone teachers attended the 2013 Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) Conference held in State College in March. Staff development and professional networking were important parts of the overall experience to help the staff work towards the agency's educational goals.

Three Keystone teachers were selected to present sessions at the conference which included more than 1,000 adult education staff from across the state. Gee Hendricks and Joan Strouse shared their experiences as ESL teachers in a session called, "Look Who's Talking: Integrating Speaking and Listening Practices into the ESL Classroom." Patrice Karcher, Keystone's Professional Development Specialist, focused on "Goals," teaching teachers "How to Set Them, Adjust Them, and (Finally!) Reach Them." 

Tutor Training Set for May 18

If you are interested in helping a Keystone student succeed, join us for the Tutor Training session from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on May 18. Your investment of time could mean passing the GED test for a high school drop-out or improving English and literacy skills for an immigrant hoping to achieve a dream of safety and security in the United States. Interested volunteers must have a college degree or be working towards graduation. Tutors are needed for English Language and Literacy, Math, and General Adult Education. **Contact Keystone's Tutor Coordinator, Tina Nadzan for more information or to register for training—215-723-5430 x128.**

Bookshelves Encourage Family Reading

Youth Group members at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Telford, made Keystone-shaped bookshelves to share with Family Literacy class members. The families received the shelves at Christmas with a goal to fill them with children's books to read together at home through the second half of the school year. 





Community Collaboration Provides Permanent Housing Solution

What do you get when you combine a local business with a vacant property, a community congregation with a heart for mission and a social service organization committed to providing affordable housing options for families in need? The answer is an amazing collaborative effort with Univest Corporation, Indian Creek Church of the Brethren and Keystone Opportunity Center focused on renovating a three bedroom apartment to be managed by Keystone as a "permanent housing" unit.

The property, located in Souderton, is owned by Univest Corp., whose support of Keystone's mission has a long history. Discussions between Keystone and Univest culminated with a creative solution for both organizations. A long-term lease of the facility by Keystone provided an additional housing unit for the nonprofit organization to pilot the new "housing first" model of moving homeless families directly from shelter into permanent housing. The lease freed

Univest Corp. from the responsibilities of managing the property while partnering in a project which fit their "local" community focus.

The third partner in the plan, Indian Creek Church of the Brethren, of Harleysville, was seeking a local mission project and stepped up to the task of renovating the apartment with a strong team of capable volunteers. Work on the unit began in early 2012. The renovation involved months of work by the team from Indian Creek as well as Univest employees, who spent the "Day of Caring," sponsored by the North Penn United Way, helping with everything from painting and spackling to window replacement and dry walling. With a spirit of caring and willing workers, the house was ready for occupancy by the end of 2012.

While patiently waiting for the eligible tenants to be selected by Keystone, the community groups

responsible for the project gathered to celebrate their joint efforts. The Harbor House was dedicated with a "House Blessing" on January 24, 2013 and the first family moved into their new home in February. Keystone looks forward to working with the family as they continue to work toward their goal. 🏠

Photos l to r:

The Harbor House property includes a second-story apartment to be used by Keystone families and a first floor office which will be renovated for use by Keystone at a future date.

Members of the Indian Creek Church of the Brethren volunteer work team spent nearly a year completing the punch list to make the home ready for residents.

The pastor of Indian Creek Church of the Brethren, Mark Balilies, shared a House Blessing with Keystone staff and board members, Univest Corporation staff, and church members in January 2013 just before the first family moved into the apartment.

New Grant Coordinator Brings Professional Expertise and Personal Passion to Keystone

Stuart G. Bush, Ph.D., joined the Keystone Opportunity staff in late 2012 as the Grants Coordinator. His primary role includes writing, budgeting, tracking government and private foundation grants. But, as often happens in the non-profit world, he has also been wearing many other hats, filling the role of information technology support supervisor, database

manager and staff technology trainer while collaborating with staff in Development, Volunteer Coordination and Property Management.



Dr. Stuart Bush
Keystone Grants
Coordinator.

After spending 25 years in various corporate research positions at Rohm and Haas Company, Bush decided to shift his focus to the nonprofit world. "I have chosen to use my leadership and technology skills in support of nonprofits with missions I love. I love Keystone's focus on housing the homeless, feeding the hungry and educating adults and families." He is also serving on the board of *A Woman's Place* in Lansdale.

Some of Bush's goals at Keystone include "collaborating with my Keystone colleagues to use our collective insight and problem solving skills with the goal of going from good to great as a nonprofit organization. Together we can rationalize and improve systems throughout Keystone and refocus our efforts on best delivery of our mission. Immediate focuses include grant management, information technology/data base, social media/website, and improved program linkages."

While the times are challenging for nonprofits, the needs being served by Keystone are paramount. According to Bush, "We need to be strategic and nimble in order to deal with the rapidly changing landscape. Fortunately Keystone has built a strong local reputation over the years and we can, I believe, leverage this strong base into a positive future."

His passion for the mission of Keystone comes through in all he does. "We need to ensure that Keystone not only survives, but prospers. The need in our community is too great to do otherwise!" When asked why he supports the work of Keystone, his answer is straight on, "Dedicated and caring staff, active and growing volunteer corps, working to deliver on a great mission doing good works in the world. How could you not support Keystone?"

Bush has two grown sons, Seth and Cole, and he lives with his wife, Mary Ellen, in Doylestown. 🏠



Strong Inner Light Helps Family Move Forward Out of Darkness

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

— Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

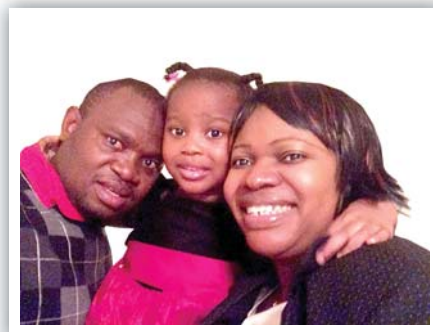
One Keystone family has been an inspiration and example, letting their inner light shine in the face of challenges and deepest sorrow.

The story of Willy, Nathalie and little Rosee Puati-Kayiba was filled with lots of bright moments as they were chosen to receive three coveted U.S. visas in a State Department "lottery" distribution system which allowed them to immigrate from the Congo to the United States in May of 2011. Their dreams of living in a country that would give them safety and opportunities to succeed were coming true.

When they first arrived in the States, they knew very little English and did not have a home or means to get established. Their situation looked bleak, but a light shone on them again, with the help of their pastor, they found a place to stay and help getting a job. Willy, who had worked as a chemist in a brewery in the Congo, found a job at a local meat packing company and was recognized early by his new employer for his diligence.


Although Willy was making more than most at his job, it was not enough to sustain his family. They came to Keystone looking for help with their English education and housing needs. Again, things were looking bright as Willy and Nathalie began to excel in their Keystone English as a Second Language classes and a housing opportunity became available just as they were preparing to welcome their second child in July 2012.

It was a joyful time for all as Keystone staff celebrated with the family and helped prepare a nursery for the new arrival. Three days before the baby was due, Willy and



Keystone Opportunity family Willy, Rosee and Nathalie Puati-Kayiba (l-r), benefit from variety of services and care offered by the organization.


Nathalie discovered their unborn child had died. The news was devastating for the family and their friends at Keystone. Yet in their darkest hour, the Keystone staff witnessed the beauty and grace of a strong inner light that continues to shine for the Puati-Kayibas family.

Willy continues to advance in both his job and his English education, while Nathalie has progressed three levels in her English language ability. She recently passed her driver's permit test and embraces her role as Rosee's mother. As they move forward with their dreams and goals, their light will continue to shine as an example for many. 

Food Pantry Continues to "Meat the Needs" of Local Community

Thanks to the diligent efforts of Keystone food pantry staff members and volunteers, the anticipated shortage of government supplied meats and other products through the end of 2012 was avoided. Cash donations for the "Meat the Need" campaign raised over \$6,000 allowing the pantry to purchase needed protein supplies from a variety of sources. Many creative community food collections helped keep the pantry shelves stocked and local meat packing companies like JBS, Inc. and Alderfer-Leidy's Meats partnered with the pantry, donating meat products or offering items at reduced rates to purchase.

For 2013, the pantry has more than 600 families and individuals registered to use the pantry services. The pantry is currently serving approximately 220 Souderton Area School District households per month. The need for food and other pantry items continues and donations are always welcome. Check out the Keystone website www.keystoneopportunity.org/foodpantry for

current item lists and community food drives. Residents in the Souderton-Telford postal service area may participate in the "Stamp Out Hunger" postal food drive on May 11. 

The annual Souderton Area School District food drive gathered over 3,600 lbs. of product for the pantry in February. This group of eager Indian Valley Middle school volunteers helped sort and pack the items collected at their school.



JBS employee Tom Oelschlager (right) delivered over 300 lbs. of ground beef in March. Food Pantry Coordinator Cindy Dembrosky and volunteer Carl Throop welcomed the beef delivery.

The Souderton-based plant of JBS, Inc., the world's largest protein producer (beef, chicken, pork), makes regular meat donations to Keystone's food pantry. They also provided funds to purchase grocery bags (pictured) with the pantry grocery list printed on the bag to make shopping for the pantry easy for donors.





Keystone Opportunity Center

P.O. Box 64183, Souderton, PA 18964

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SAVE THESE DATES

Be a part of Keystone's fun community events. Bring your family and friends along to help support the mission of Keystone Opportunity Center.

Check www.keystoneopportunity.org for registration forms and more information.

Meal-A-Month Dine Out For Keystone

Go to keystoneopportunity.org/events/mealamonth or call 215-723-5430 to find out about monthly benefit meals at local restaurants.

Starting May 13th - WALKING TOURS

Learn about Keystone programs, enjoy free coffee at Main Street Java and get your morning exercise at one of Keystone's Walking Tours- 7:30-8:30 a.m. May 13 & 24, June 14 & 28, July 26, Aug. 9, Sept. 13 & 27, Oct. 11

May 11th - STAMP OUT HUNGER POSTAL FOOD DRIVE

Residents in the Souderton-Telford area whose postal carriers participate in the food drive may leave donations for the food pantry at their mailbox for carriers to bring to Keystone. Check with your carrier or post office for details.

July 8th - 10th ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

Gather a foursome and join the fun at the Talamore Country Club. Event begins at noon with lunch, 1:00 p.m. Shot Gun start and dinner at 6:00 p.m.

keystoneopportunity.org

Unlock the Doors

of opportunity for **community members** in need

BECOME A KEYSTONE
Key Holder



Seeking new donors—individuals, groups, companies or congregations—to make a three-year giving commitment.

You can help ensure on-going resources to offset the loss of public funds by making a significant investment in your community's future. Help secure the future for your home community and open doors of opportunity for those willing to work toward the goal of self-sufficiency.

Call 215-723-5430 x121 to discuss your "Key Holder" potential, or sign up at www.keystoneopportunity.org under Donations: Key Holder Connections.



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A publication of...

Keystone Opportunity Center

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Please call or email us at office@keystoneopp.org to add or delete names from our mailing list, report duplicate copies, or request a newsletter for a friend.

E. Richard Aichele, III - Executive Director

Brenda Oelschlager - Development Officer,

Newsletter Editor

Leinbach Design - Newsletter Design & Layout

The mission of Keystone Opportunity Center is to help community members in need by offering a comprehensive array of social services that educates, encourages and empowers them to become self-sufficient.

Find Keystone Opportunity Center of Facebook and "Like" us.

Keystone Opportunity Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community organization, donations to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration and financial information of Keystone Opportunity Center may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll free, within PA: 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Keystone Opportunity Center • Spring 2013