

⊕ THE CENTER FOUNDATION ⊕

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Annual Report 2012—2013



Look Inside Yourself

*The Center Foundation empowers women, teenage parents, and their families
through mentoring, education, and support*



Events and Happenings

HOLIDAY FROM THE HEART



Our annual Holiday from the Heart Celebration was held on Wednesday, December 19th at the Media Borough Hall. Over 30 low-income families were adopted by local community members and received gifts and enjoyed festivities they otherwise would not have had.

Gifts this year were distributed at the end of a joyous party and dinner that included a visit from Santa Claus himself! Children had their pictures taken with Santa and told him their Christmas wishes. Families who were adopted were incredibly touched by the kindness of strangers. One mother was moved to tears as she collected presents for her family, noting that this would make Christmas possible for them. We look forward to our Holiday from the Heart program every year as a wonderful chance to celebrate the true spirit of the season! This year's party was sponsored by Media Real Estate, the Media Rotary Foundation, and Bryn Mawr Trust.

SUMMER CELEBRATION

Center Foundation staff, participants and their families eagerly gathered at Linvilla Orchards on June 15th, 2013 to recognize the achievements of women in the WomenCare and Young Parents Support Network (YPSN) Mentoring Programs.



This year The Center Foundation congratulated six teenage mothers and one young dad in YPSN for overcoming numerous obstacles to graduate from high school. Five women in WomenCare were honored for completing one year in the program with their mentors and reaching self-sufficiency goals. One partner was able to obtain a full-time job with the Department of Public Welfare while another recently began a part-time job as a caterer. A woman was also recognized for graduating from Delaware County Community College with a degree in Applied Sciences which she will use as a Surgical Technician. One partner reflected on her experience with The Center Foundation saying "My experience with my mentor has been a blessing...My mentor has allowed me to search within myself and unlock some of my hidden treasures/potential. Thank you to The Center Foundation for having this wonderful program to help women like myself..."

The day was full of fun for the 80 guests who enjoyed the Linvilla playground and farm animals along with an exciting hayride around the orchards. A picnic dinner was served and everyone was happy to take time to recognize the hard work and dedication of some special women who made positive life changes. Summer Celebration was made possible with the support of local businesses and organizations

Mentor Spotlight

Ruth Leach - A Special Mentor



Ruth was casting about for something to do, a way to give back, when her younger son suggested calling The Center Foundation. "Overall, I have been really blessed in my life. I felt that some of the mistakes I have made, lessons learned, could help someone else on their way". Ruth attended mentor training in 2008 and has been in two WomenCare mentoring relationships since then.

"I was matched with two great young women and it has been very fulfilling to help them". Ruth remembers being nervous before her first match, wondering what she had

gotten herself into making a commitment of a year to mentor someone when her life was already busy. But she found that "it wasn't a big deal"; there was plenty of time to either meet in person or stay in touch by phone or even texting. She also found that "both women have been very appreciative of anything I have done, even little things." Both also worked hard to make a better life for themselves and their children.

Ruth feels that her role as a mentor is to be the support system that a lot of women do not have; to be positive and encouraging, a friend who can help another woman find her way by perhaps pointing her in the right direction, but knowing that she needs to ultimately make those decisions herself.



Spotlight on our Interns

The Center Foundation was fortunate to have several great interns from Widener University throughout the year. They accomplished so much and it was great to have the extra support!

Mike Corcoran— Mike came to The Center Foundation for his senior practicum working on his B.A. in Psychology and will be continuing his education at West Chester University to get his Masters in Industrial and Organization Psychology. Mike researched local food resources, worked on the 2013 Delaware County Women's Resource Guide, and helped with social media. Mike's plan for the future is to start his own non-profit.

Kelly Kostelich— Kelly interned in the fall and returned in the spring spending two semesters with us while earning her B.A. in Psychology and Sociology with a minor in Gender and Women's Studies. She will continue at Widener to work on her Master's Degree in Social Work. Kelly believes it's important for women to become educated, independent, and self-sufficient. Kelly researched and helped finalize the 2013 Women's Resource Guide and hopes to find a way to impact women in the future.

Vince Perreta— Also a senior Vince graduated with his B.A. in Psychology and plans go to graduate school in the future. Vince hopes to enter the field of Neuropsychology. Vince did analysis of successful relationship building in mentoring and nonprofit social networking; and also assisted in investigating and updating personnel evaluation policies.

Service Statistics

WomenCare®

There were 20 active WomenCare matches during the fiscal year, with 11 matches begun during the year. Of the active matches, 4 successfully finished their year commitment, 3 were matched six months or more and 7 matches have continued into the next fiscal year. Overall the program had an 85% retention rate.

An additional 32 women were referred or otherwise contacted The Center Foundation expressing interest in having a mentor. Eight of these were referred to more appropriate services. Six women were not yet ready for a mentoring relationship due to family crises, homelessness and other problems, and received case management services from staff as their situations stabilized. In addition to actively matched participants five WomenCare graduates received aftercare services, such as help with job searches and housing.

Referrals to WomenCare came from a variety of sources including the domestic abuse agencies in Delaware, Chester and Montgomery counties, the Del Co. Housing Authority and Children and Youth Services departments, Head Start and from former participants.

WomenCare partners generally focused on one or more of these goals; finding a job, continuing with education plans and handling the stresses of being a single parent. Of the 7 women who were matched at least 6 months to a year, 2 became employed, 2 got new jobs with better working conditions and one person graduated from school with an Associates degree. Another woman learned better stress management techniques.

19 mentors were matched during this year, one was matched twice. Four of the mentors were returning volunteers, having been matched at least once before. Mentor trainings were held in August and October, 2012, and February, April and June, 2013. A total of 29 women were trained to be mentors, 16 for WomenCare. Partner Orientations were held in July, March, May and June and prepared 13 women to be matched.

Young Parents Support Network

There were 58 referrals made to the YPSN program during the fiscal year, 39 of these came from Project ELECT/TAPP, the state-funded teen parenting education program. 10 came from school counselors or social workers in the Ridley School District, 3 from agencies working with adjudicated youth and 2 by YPSN clients; 4 were self-referred. Of the 40 teens able to be interviewed, 18 were matched with mentors; two of these were matched a second time due to issues with their first matches. Of the 18 matches, 12 succeeded in completing a year or beyond with their mentor; 4 teens made it to six months before life circumstances made it impossible for them to meet with their mentors for a longer period of time. Two dropped out without explanation and were not reachable to determine why. During the beginning of the fiscal year there were also 4 matches carried over from the previous fiscal year. During the fiscal year six participants graduated from high school and one received her GED. All other school participants were promoted to the next grade.

Of the 22 teens who were not matched, 12 were not matched because they became unreachable or uninterested in the program after the initial interview. The other 10 were not matched either because they were not stable enough to be matched or there was not an appropriate mentor for them. These 10 received supportive services from the YPSN program manager and the YPSN social work interns. These supportive services included academic and career support, advocacy and referrals.

YPSN Mentee Spotlight

Life in Aftercare for a YPSN Mentee



Korpo Greene graduated from Pennwood High School in June of 2012 and began a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training at Fair Acres in Media soon after. She also began classes at Delaware County Community College, continuing to juggle, school work and parenting even more efficiently than she had in high school. Korpo has kept in touch with the YPSN program, coming in to get help on applications and with academics and calling just to check in and give us updates on how she's doing.

Korpo is currently working as a CNA for ManorCare at Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital. She's working towards obtaining a degree in nursing through the community college but hasn't given up her hope of eventually becoming a pediatrician.

Korpo says she finds being a CNA rewarding because: "It's really interesting hearing all the patients' stories. I wish I had more time in the day to visit with them and listen to them talk about their lives, I learn a lot that way".

When asked why she keeps up with the YPSN program she responded "I keep in touch with The Center Foundation because Rachel helps me when I'm in a slump. She motivates me, encourages me and helps me see my strength." Korpo's successes keep us motivated to keep working with and encouraging all the young parents who come into our program.

WomenCare Partner Spotlight

A Successful WomenCare Mentoring Match: Barbara and Linda

Barbara Conrad and Linda Darrach were lucky to feel comfortable with each other almost from the start of being matched. Mentor Linda who works as a bank manager brought financial, organizational and goal-setting skills to the table as well as a warm, caring manner. Barbara, single parent of a teenage girl and young adult son, had been laid off and looking for work for over a year without success. Conscientious and also caring, Barb began a year of emotional ups and downs, involving a move to help care for an aging parent and a whole array of choices concerning what was best for herself and her family. Linda was there to lend an ear and provide encouragement through numerous job interviews, decisions about further schooling, down-sizing for a move, parenting and having a healthier life style.



Several months beyond the completion of her mentoring match, Barb became employed full time in a civil service job and had moved again, this time to a lovely apartment in a quiet area with a good school district. She and Linda celebrated her achievements in June, 2013 at the Summer Celebration at Linvilla Orchards. Barbara wrote for the reflections booklet: "It was a year of wonderful adventure! A loving experience, I consider Linda part of the family".

Thank You to our Generous Donors

Individuals

Matthew Allen
Aimee Arsenault
Dylan Atkins
Cecelia Bardone
Nancy Baulis
Maura Berenato
Barbara Bryan
Rhoda Burrell
Jeffrey Cadorette
James Calhoun
Margaret Camp
Drew Campbell
Michael Campbell
Sean and Gail Campbell
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Cathy Cardillo
Jeanette Carr
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Sallie-Elizabeth Clayton
Valerie Cook-Henry
Nancy Corner
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Linda Darrach
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