



Fall
2015

Volume 19 Issue 3

Chocoholic Frolic Raises \$14,000 for SCOLA



Lovers of all things chocolate packed the Scranton Cultural Center on Sunday, October 18 for UNC's 11th Annual Chocoholic Frolic, presented by Toyota of Scranton. Fifteen vendors were onsite to offer tastings of both sweet and savory chocolate dishes, such as white chocolate pumpkin gnocchi and cannoli cream puffs. However, what made the evening especially sweet was that all proceeds from the event support UNC's Scranton Council of Literacy Advance (SCOLA) Learning Center.

"By building English and literacy skills, SCOLA students are more productive, more informed neighbors. They can better contribute their ideas and energy to our community," said Gus Fahey, UNC's Director of Community Education & Revitalization. "Our volunteer tutors are amazing," he added. "They help SCOLA students imagine and realize American Dreams, one at a time, all over our area."

More than \$14,000 was raised to support SCOLA at this year's event, which drew approximately 300 attendees. Barbour's Bakery and Carl Von Luger Restaurant tied as winners of the Chocolate Challenge, garnering the most votes from attendees for favorite vendor of the night.

Thank you to everyone who supported the event and helped to "sweeten" the lives of many!

Preparations Begin for 2015 Holiday Programs



As the holidays draw near, many families are preparing for abundant feasts and old family traditions. However, for others, the holidays can mean a struggle simply to provide a festive meal or gift for a child. To provide assistance for families in need during this holiday season, UNC will once again host its annual food and toy distribution programs.

For Thanksgiving, UNC will partner with WNEP-TV's Feed-A-Friend Program and the Upper Valley Project Hope Committee to serve families with children in the Scranton and Carbondale areas. Registration for the program is currently taking place and each family that signs up will receive a package of food containing everything needed for a traditional Thanksgiving meal. The packages will be distributed on November 23 and 24 at locations in Scranton and Carbondale. More than 2,000 families are expected to be served, with the help of numerous volunteers.

Additionally, planning has begun for UNC's Holiday Toy Store, which is offered in mid-December through donations provided by Toys for Tots and other community partners. The Toy Store provides new toys for families who would not otherwise be able to afford presents for their children. Last year, nearly 400 families received more than 2,500 toys.

For more information about either of these programs, or to volunteer, please contact UNC's Community Services office at 570-343-8835. To make a donation in support of the programs, please visit www.uncnepa.org.



Employees from TMG Health visited UNC's Bellevue Child Care Center in October to host a superhero day. The group arrived in full costume to read and play games with the children.



The Scranton Area Foundation recently presented a check for more than \$13,000 to UNC's Leaders in Training program for the 2015-2016 school year.



Members of UNC's West Side Active Adult Community Center recently elected their 2015-2016 Council. The group will support the programs provided at the Center and help evaluate and meet the needs of its members.

Letter From the Chief Executive Officer

While winter is fast approaching, at UNC our thoughts are firmly fixed on next summer. The closing of Camp St. Andrew by the Diocese of Scranton will have a significant impact on Project Hope, our day camp that has served low income, at-risk kids for 45 years.



Michael Hanley

We are in the difficult stages of determining next steps in regards to the camp, which at one time served 700 children every summer. Over the years, due to continued cuts in government and other funding, Project Hope has had to turn away more and more families, serving just 300 children in 2015. While there are those in the community who rallied to support the program, including the Diocese of Scranton and the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the shrinking of Project Hope has continued as a direct result of a reduction in public and private commitments to our children.

The closing of Camp St. Andrew is part of a larger trend of disengagement from organized children's programming during the summer, and the impact of this trend will certainly be felt in the future. Studies have shown that investment in children through education and recreation programs reduces the need for future investments in juvenile justice and special education. However, as a society, we are short-sighted, preferring to reduce costs in the short term at the expense of our children's future.

I encourage each of you to speak up on behalf of our children to your elected officials, to be aware of the cuts to these services and what the long term impact will be. Children are our future, but we should never forget the role we have in shaping them today. In the meantime, know that UNC is determined to maintain summer youth programming. We will share more information as soon as solid plans are in place.

— *Michael Hanley*

Community Health Department Invited to Participate in Information Exchange

UNC's Community Health Department was recently invited to be part of a unique opportunity with the Keystone Health Information Exchange (KeyHIE). Founded in 2005, KeyHIE is a national leader in health information technology, with one of the oldest and largest health information exchanges in the United States. Traditionally, involvement in the exchange was for hospitals and healthcare facilities exclusively. However, realizing the importance of the services offered by UNC's Community Health Department, and in addressing the social determinants of health, KeyHIE will be integrating the unique identifiers which are captured by UNC into its exchange in 2016. After this integration is complete, Community Health Department staff will have convenient access to gather a broader range of health information to better serve current consumers, as well as provide a more complete picture for other healthcare entities serving the same individuals.

Around the Agency

Family pottery classes were recently introduced at UNC's Oppenheim Center for the Arts. In addition to providing a fun, creative outlet for participants to learn the basics of hand molded pottery, the class is also meant to encourage stronger family relationships.



Scranton Mayor William Courtright recently signed on to support the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, a national initiative embraced by the Lackawanna County Continuum of Care, of which UNC is a member agency. The Continuum of Care is grateful to have the support of the Mayor and is on track to meet its goal to end veteran homelessness in Lackawanna County by the end of 2015.

Save the Date!

PARTY GRAS

February 5, 2016
Radisson Lackawanna Station

Join us for dancing, dining, gambling, fortune telling, and more to benefit UNC's crisis intervention services and food/clothing bank.



UNC's Community Health Department is currently offering free assistance for individuals interested in signing up for health insurance during the next open enrollment period. Certified Application Counselors on staff are helping individuals determine what options they qualify for and assisting with the application process. Appointments are being offered at UNC's Community Services building, St. Francis Commons, and Lackawanna County Housing Developments from November - January.

UNC's Mid Valley Active Adult Center in Jessup hosted an open house for the community in October. The event highlighted the services the Center provides for older adults year-round and featured activities such as a Tai Chi demonstration, line dancing, yoga, and a jeopardy game.



The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce announced UNC's nomination for two 2015 SAGE (Scranton Awards for Growth and Excellence) awards. Both nominations recognize UNC's Cedar Point Apartments and are in the categories of Pride and Progress Exterior Renovations and Pride and Progress New Construction.



UNC hosted two end of summer picnics for members of the organization's active adult centers. The picnics featured games, food, dancing, and music!



Teen participants in UNC's Leaders in Training program took a field trip to Niagara Falls in August. During the trip, the group learned about international travel and toured the Falls.



More than 30 preschoolers from UNC's Progressive, Bellevue, and Green Ridge Childcare Centers enjoyed a special field trip to the pumpkin patch in October.

UNC NEWS

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Questions regarding this publication may be directed to Christine Zavaskas, Director of Grants and Communications, at czavaskas@uncnepa.org. If you wish to no longer receive this newsletter, please contact Bob O'Brien at (570) 346-0759.

Project Hope Plans Alter with Closing of Camp St. Andrew

With the Diocese of Scranton's recent announcement that Camp St. Andrew will be closing, many people have asked about the future of UNC's Project Hope day camp, which was previously hosted at the site for more than 40 years. UNC is currently in the process of exploring potential alternative sites for the 2016 program. In the meantime, please know that UNC is committed to continuing to provide quality summer programming for low income and at-risk Lackawanna County children. More information will be shared when concrete plans are in place.



South Side Winter Farmers' Market Open For New Season



Last year, UNC expanded the South Side Farmers' Market to include a new indoor market during its traditional off-season. The idea came from vendors who participate in the summer months and wanted to continue to provide fresh local food during colder times. Due to its success last year, we are proud to announce the return of the Winter Market, which began on October 10 and will run every Saturday through May 7, 2016 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The market is located at 509 Cedar Avenue and features 11 vendors offering items such as fresh meats, artisan breads, herbs, cheese, raw juices, cupcakes, and vegetables.