



1923-2013

UNC 90th Anniversary

We're celebrating 90 years of strengthening our community! Stay tuned for exciting news and events throughout the year!

Committee Members

Drew Hailstone- CHAIR	Thaddeus Kenny
Sondra Myers	Kevin Rogers
Morey Myers	Michael Gilmartin
Dawn Brennan	Dr. Dan Ginsberg
Gail Waters	Mayor David Wenzel
Jane Oppenheim	Elizabeth Burns
Ruth Gerrity	Sr. Margaret Gannon




New voters for Election Day thanks to UNC drive



Beginning September 1 and continuing through October 9, UNC announced a new voter registration initiative across the agency and Lackawanna County. "Encouraging civic engagement is an important part of the mission of UNC," said Michael Hanley. "There is

no more effective means of civic engagement than the ballot box." The agency actively registered voters at all ten centers and helped 100 community members register to vote. Additionally, UNC helped community members register to vote in all City of Scranton public housing developments in collaboration with Friends of the Poor and worked to coordinate transportation to the polls on the day of the elections. On September 25, the agency celebrated National Voter Registration Day with more than 1000 other non-profits across the country. A rally was held at the West Side Senior Center with over 60 in attendance and speakers included Andrea Mulrine, the President of the League of Women Voters of Lackawanna County, and Attorney Bill Fisher. A trivia contest was emceed by Gary Drapek, President of the United Way of Lackawanna County, which was won by UNC's childcare team.

All questions regarding this publication should be referred to Allison Woody, Director of Grants and Communications, at awooddy@uncnepa.org. If you wish to no longer receive this newsletter, please contact Bob O'Brien at (570) 346-0759.

UNC NEWS

Newsletter of United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania

Seasonal holiday programs help over 2000 families

UNC once again conducted its annual Thanksgiving Food Basket program and Christmas Toy Store in 2012. Our Thanksgiving program served 1500 families this year, distributing a holiday meal full of all the trimmings for those most in need this past holiday. About 200 volunteers came together at St. John Neumann Church in Scranton on November 20 and helped to unpack, stuff, hand out and, in some cases, even deliver food baskets to registered families throughout Lackawanna County. The agency's annual Christmas Toy Store, which helps families put presents underneath the tree for their children, was held during this past holiday season. UNC staff and board members worked to distribute 1,800 toys to 530 families in need thanks to community donations and Toys for Tots.



Hitchner Building officially opens in West Pittston



A view of the new Hitchner Apartment Buildings in West Pittston in October 2012. The building is now home to 18 apartment units.

UNCDC has officially opened the Hitchner Apartments in West Pittston, almost one year after breaking ground on the property. The apartments took the worn down, historic former Hitchner Biscuit Company building and turned in into 18 affordable housing units that include one, two and three bedroom apartments. Currently, all units are being rented. On November 9, the agency hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony and offered tours of the apartments to local community members. Over 65 people attended the grand opening including West Pittston Mayor Tony Denisco, former West Pittston Mayor Bill Goldsworthy, PA Senator John Yudichak, PA Representative Phyllis Mundy and many more including several members of the Hitchner family. There is also memorabilia from the Hitchner Biscuit Company throughout the property. For more photos of the property, please visit UNC's website or Facebook page.

UNC and Wells Fargo team up to revitalize South Intermediate



from Wells Fargo, welcomed over 50 volunteers from both the neighborhood and the company to work on such projects as creating an outdoor classroom, painting hallways, redoing the basketball court and more.

On October 27, Wells Fargo teamed up with the Scranton School District and UNC to celebrate all the good things happening in South Scranton. The day included a community fair and revitalization work of South Intermediate School. The event, aided by a \$46,000 donation

Join us on Saturday, February 9 from 6-10PM at the Radisson Hotel in Scranton as we celebrate our annual MARDI GRAS celebration!

Tickets are \$70/person and can be purchased at UNC's administrative offices or online at www.uncnepa.org/ donate. All proceeds benefit Angel's Attic, UNC's food and clothing bank.

UNC NEWS

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425 Alder Street Scranton, PA 18505

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Letter From the Executive Director

As we move into the New Year, we are very excited to begin planning for our 90th Anniversary Celebration. It was in 1923 that members of the Bethel AME Church recognized the need for a community center to serve what was then the predominantly African American neighborhood in Central City Scranton. Since that day, we have expanded into a broad-based agency serving thousands of families, youth and senior citizens each year from 12 different locations in Lackawanna County. We have grown through these years because of our unique ability to identify emerging community needs and proactively develop programs and services to address those needs. This led to the formation of our first child care center, as society began to change in the early 1970s with a growing number of two parent and single parent working families. The late 1970's brought the recognition of a need to address older adults living alone and in isolation after the death of a spouse or friends; our response was the establishment of the first senior center in West Side. During the 1990's, our housing programs began to respond to the needs of homeless families and individuals and we developed our Leaders in Training Program as a positive alternative for teens being exposed to gangs for the first time. Most recently, the Community Development Corporation was formed to increase the availability of affordable housing.

As we enter our 90th year, we applaud the growing recognition across the country of the relationship between poverty and health care. Study after study has shown a direct correlation between the cost of health care and the prevalence of poverty. The lack of health insurance, as well as a lack of health education and follow up support for low income families and individuals, results in a lack of preventative care and delayed treatment until the need is critical and the cost of treatment is exorbitant. In the months ahead, continuing our tradition of addressing critical community needs and as part of our 90th Anniversary Celebration, we will be offering a number of community education opportunities to examine this issue in more detail and explore innovative community responses.

We are grateful for all the support and encouragement this community has given to UNC for so many years. Indeed, we would not be here without it. As we move into the next phase of our history we will continue our commitment to achieving long term social impact by continuing our work to: reduce the number of people living in poverty, increase the number of people having opportunities for educational and employment success and increase the number of people having opportunities to live safe, healthy lives. With your continued support I have no doubt that we will be successful. Thank You.



Michael Hanley

Successful Chocoholic Frolic aids SCOLA

The Scranton Cultural Center was filled with chocolate on October 21 for the 8th Annual Chocoholic Frolic. Thirteen vendors of all things chocolate participated including Patsel's, Gertrude Hawk, Manning's, Nichols Village, Carmen's at the Radisson, POSH and many more. Foods varied from chicken chocolate mole to bacon chocolate chip cookies, from ice cream cake to cocoa flavored porketta. The event, presented by Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, was attended by over 450 people and benefited UNC's adult literacy programs through the SCOLA Learning Center. The 9th Annual Chocoholic Frolic will be held on Sunday, October 20, 2013.



Around the Agency

Beginning in the Fall, UNC and Penn Foster joined together to allow youth in our Shutterbugs Photography program to work towards their professional photography certificate. The teens are earning their certificate free of charge thanks to an anonymous donation.



UNC Executive Director Michael Hanley recently accepted the 2012 Sister Siena Finley Ethics Award from the Ethics Institute of Northeastern PA. Monsignor Joseph Kelly was also a recipient. Mr. Hanley was joined by family and UNC staff at the awards dinner.

The Elm Street Revitalization team hosted their fourth annual Ethnic Carol Sing in December. The event was held at South Intermediate School and featured singers from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds who came together to celebrate the holiday season through song. Some of the languages represented included Spanish, Polish, Slovak, Creole, German, Chinese and others.



United Neighborhood Community Development Corporation won the 2012 Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce's Pride and Progress Exterior Renovations SAGE Award for its work on revitalizing the Willow Apartments and SCOLA Learning Center located on Cedar Avenue in South Side.

The True Colors Alliance and Lackawanna College partnered together on National Coming Out Day to present a seminar on anti-bullying. The seminar featured young speakers telling their personal stories, as well as guest Wayne LeForm who spoke about his experiences growing up and getting married. The event was made possible through UNC's alliance with Washington, D.C.-based Advocates for Youth.



The agency recently received a new grant from the Women's Sports Foundation in New York. The \$7,000 award will allow UNC to implement the foundation's Go Girl Go! curriculum based around self-esteem and body image for young girls, ages 5-12. The grant will be used in all three of our childcare centers. In addition to the educational components, the money will be used to begin new physical education classes including rock climbing, volleyball, dance and taekwondo.



The older adults at all four of UNC's senior centers- Mid valley, Carbondale, West Side and South Side- came together at McDade Park to celebrate the end of summer. Over 250 older adults attended the event.



UNC's Illumination Youth Arts program has been partnering with local arts organization the Pop Up Studio to create interactive art installations. In December, they held a First Friday event entitled the "Xmas Games" at the Connell Building.



Lackawanna County Commissioner Patrick O'Malley donated a flag to the West Side Senior Center and presented it to members of the center who are veterans.