Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania Newsletter of

UNC to Lease Camp St. Andrew for 2016 Summer Season



The Diocese of Scranton and UNC have completed an agreement for UNC to lease Camp St. Andrew for the 2016 summer camping season. UNC will operate Project Hope and also a girls resident camp and girls and boys basketball camps there in July. In addition, the Diocese and UNC continue to discuss a potential permanent transfer of the camp facilities to UNC.

"We are very pleased that United Neighborhood Centers will be continuing the tradition of providing summer camp experiences for youth and young adults at Camp St. Andrew," said Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. "This

organization and its staff, board members and volunteers have served our community well for many years. I am grateful that they are able to build upon the good efforts of those who worked to support the mission of Camp St. Andrew for many years by providing this benefit to young people for the upcoming season and hopefully into the future."

"As firm believers in the importance of quality summer educational and recreational programs for our youth, we are grateful to Bishop Bambera for the opportunity to use the Camp St. Andrew facilities," stated Michael Hanley, CEO of UNC. "Having operated Project Hope at the site for the past 45 years, we know how meaningful the Camp has been to so many, and hope that the support of the community will continue as we prepare for Camp this year."

"We have already been in touch with the former Camp Directors, who are ready and excited to come back again this year," said Michael McHale, UNC Camp Director.

Registration forms for the 2016 camp season are available on UNC's website www.uncnepa.org, or by calling or emailing at 570-346-0759 or bobrien@uncnepa.org.

16th Annual Party Gras Raises Funds for Angel's Attic

The spirit of New Orleans came to Scranton on Friday, February 5 for UNC's 16th Annual Party Gras celebration, presented by Grimm Construction.

More than 200 individuals gathered at the Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel to enjoy a night of jazz music, table games, magic, and Cajun-style food. The annual Mardi Gras-themed celebration raised funds to support UNC's Angel's Attic food and clothing bank, as well as the agency's other crisis intervention services.

"The goal of our crisis intervention services is, first of all, to meet the immediate needs of families facing emergency situations, but beyond that, we also seek to connect them with the support necessary to get back on their feet and achieve long-term stability," said Michael Hanley, CEO of UNC.

More than \$25,500 was raised at this year's event, which featured a raffle drawing for an overnight getaway donated by Mount Airy Casino Resort. Other major sponsors of the event included PNC Bank, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, WNEP-TV, Lamar Advertising, and Geisinger-CMC.







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Employees from The Times-Tribune recently collected and donated dozens of winter coats to UNC's Angel's Attic food and clothing bank.

Letter From the Chief Executive Officer

As I write this, we are already moving quickly toward spring. So far it has been an unusually mild season, which is good for our finances. With almost no snow and mild temperatures, our snow plowing and heating bills are greatly reduced. This couldn't have come at a better time, since with the lack of a State budget for the last six months of 2015, we had to borrow money

Michael Hanley to meet our obligations. I am happy to say that state



funding has again begun to flow so, at least for now, the only harm to the agency has been the cost of borrowing funds. Unfortunately, it looks like the crisis is just delayed with no end in sight. The Governor's office released a statement last week that, if new revenues are not found, there will be a \$1 billion cut in education funds and \$1 billion cut in human services funding. This outright cut would be devastating to the people we serve. I am hopeful the impasse in Harrisburg will be fixed by July, although listening to the rhetoric, it doesn't seem likely.

On a happier note, we continue discussions with the Diocese of Scranton about the future of Project Hope and Camp St. Andrew. We have signed a lease for this summer and are continuing discussion on a permanent solution to keeping both the resident camps that have traditionally been operated by the Diocese, as well as Project Hope, opened for the long term. We are grateful to Bishop Bambera and the staff at the chancery for their cooperative spirit as we worked out the details to save the camp's future. As a testimony to the value of the resident camp program, the first week of Girls Resident camp is now full and the second week is well on its way to reaching capacity.

Thank you to all who have lent their voices to this effort.

Community Health Department Expands

The second year of UNC's Community Health Department was marked by significant growth and encouraging signs of success.

Due to a rapid influx of participants, the department's staff tripled in 2015 and now includes three registered nurses, a licensed social worker, five peer health educators, and the Director. As the department has grown, its impact on the community has started to become apparent. In just one year, there has been a 24.56% decrease in emergency room utilization among enrollees. According to a 2013 Atlantic Study, the average cost of an ER visit is \$2,589. Clearly, the program is already showing its effectiveness at generating a high level of cost savings for the community.

As the third year of the Community Health Department begins. UNC is contracting with the Institute of Public Health Research and Innovation at East Stroudsburg University to commence a feasibility study and complete evaluation of the program. This evaluation will help ensure the department is as effective and sustainable as possible in the future.

Around the Agency

The 7th Annual Ethnic Carol Sing was hosted by UNC in December to celebrate the rich cultural traditions represented by residents of the South Side Scranton community. Performances of German, Polish, Spanish, and other ethnic holiday songs and dances were enjoyed by the large audience.



everal "Meet the Nurse" events are currently being planned by UNC's Community Health Department (CHD) to take place at Community Intervention Center in Scranton. From 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. on February 17, March 2, and March 16, CHD nurses will be onsite to share information about how they can help individuals navigate barriers to accessing health care. Anyone is welcome to stop by, or if you would like more information. call 570-346-0759.

Save the Date!

Seniors Got Talent May 15, 2016 - 2:00 p.m.

Lackawanna College Theater

A show that entertains your humor and your heart while benefiting UNC's four active older adult centers throughout Lackawanna County.



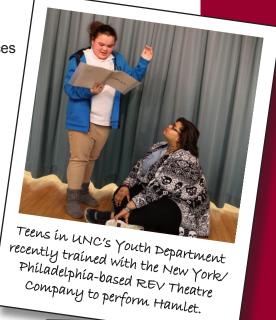
■ NC's Community Services Department recently extended its hours of operations to accomodate an influx of working families in need. The department's location at 410 Olive Street in Scranton is now open two extra hours on Thursdays (8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.), in addition to maintaining the regular hours of 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. during other weekdays. The Community Services Department provides assistance to those who need help meeting basic needs, such as housing, food, and

transportation.

Veterans of all ages were honored at UNC's South Side **Active Adult Community Center** during a special breakfast. The Veterans Day event was hosted by members of the Center as a way to thank those who have served our country. Eric Davis, a board member of Equines for Freedom, spoke about the new nonprofit, which treats veterans experiencing PTSD through equine-assisted therapy.



■ NC's 2015 Annual Report to the community was released in January. For more information about last year's agency activities, as well as donor information, you can view the full report online at www. uncnepa.org/annual-report.



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Lockheed Martin employees from the company's Archbald facility collected dozens of new toy donations for UNC's holiday "toy store".



Employees at Ronco Machine, Inc. in Clarks Summit recently gathered donations of food and personal items for UNC'S Angel's Attic food and clothing bank.

Participants in UNC's Leaders in

Training program hosted a series of

educational Martin Luther King, Jr.

Day activities for children at UNC's

Progressive Child Care Center.

UNC was recently honored with an Excellence in Diversity Award by Penn State University - Worthington Scranton Campus.

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.

2015 Holiday Programs Serve Hundreds of Families

Thanks to community support, UNC's holiday programs for families in need were a success again this year. For Thanksgiving, more than 1,600 families received all of the supplies for a traditional holiday meal. Numerous individual donations helped the agency reach its fundraising total of \$35,000, and more than 300 volunteers helped package and distribute the food! After Thanksgiving, preparations began for UNC's annual holiday "toy store," which distributed more than 3,000 new, donated toys to 576 families this year. Thanks to everyone who contributed to these programs and made the holiday special for those in need!



UNCDC Celebrates Opening of Old School on Luzerne



On January 22, United Neighborhood Community
Development Corporation (UNCDC), the nonprofit housing
development subsidiary of UNC, celebrated the grand
opening of its latest project, the Old School on Luzerne
Senior Apartments in West Pittston. The building includes
22 new, affordable senior apartments, which will allow
residents to live independently longer through a variety of
features, such as onsite preventive health care programs
offered by UNC and The Wright Center, a teaching kitchen
for nutrition programs, and emergency call systems in each
unit. The building is already fully occupied, and brings the
total number of UNCDC apartment units to 112.