

UNC Leading Voter Registration & Engagement Initiative

Did you know there are 3.7 million people in Pennsylvania who are eligible to vote, but not registered? They are the “sleeping giant” of Pennsylvania politics. These voters tend to be young, lower income, and ethnically diverse.

UNC has joined a national, non-partisan effort to give the struggling families we serve more of a voice in politics. This effort starts with registering to vote. The more UNC clients that vote, the more elected officials will respond to their needs. UNC has started incorporating voter registration as an optional part of our intake process. During this process, clients are also asked if they need assistance with transportation to the polls, which UNC will help coordinate. Beyond registration and transportation, UNC is also working with partners to promote education about the candidates and issues. We will survey our clients to find out what issues are most important to them. We will share that information with candidates and ask them to respond to them.

Studies show that registering social services clients to vote improves their outcomes (such as recidivism rates). Clients feel like a stronger part of the community and engage more with friends and family on political issues. Non-profits like UNC are trusted messengers, a unique voice in these partisan times. Our goal is to help people overcome barriers and inspire their participation in our political process without advocating on behalf of any certain candidate, party, or position.

Whatever your political beliefs, as citizens we all have not only a right, but an obligation to participate in choosing our leaders and speak up about issues that are important to us. See you at the polls!

UNC Wraps Up Successful Summer Camp Season



UNC wrapped up a very special summer camp season at the end of July! In addition to continuing to operate Project Hope, the agency’s day camp for children from low-income families, UNC also took the lead for the first time in operating girls’ and boys’ overnight camps formerly run by the Diocese of Scranton at Camp St. Andrew.

In total, more than 800 children had the opportunity to participate in a fun, safe, and educational camp experience thanks to the hard work of our staff and the support of our community. An extra bus was added, enabling UNC to transport more Project Hope children to and from camp each day. These children received nutritious meals, summer tutoring, and plenty of outdoor fun that they would not otherwise have been able to access. Overnight campers were excited to return and continue the legacy of the summer experience at Camp St. Andrew that has been part of their families for generations in many cases. These participants built new friendships and made life-long memories.

UNC is continuing to discuss the future of Camp St. Andrew with the Diocese of Scranton and we expect to be able to make an announcement soon. One thing that remains apparent to UNC as we wrap up another summer camp season, is just how important and meaningful this type of experience is for participants. Please check our website, www.uncnepa.org for further updates.



Summer
2016



Team "Free Brady" was the winner of UNC's 2016 Kicks for Kids kickball tournament. A total of 18 teams competed to raise funds for UNC's Project Hope day camp.



The PNC Foundation recently awarded a \$5,000 grant to UNC to support the agency's Project Hope day camp for children from low-income families.



Four teenage participants in UNC's Illumination Youth Arts Program recently presented several of their photographs for display at the new Governor's Northeast Office in Pittston.

Letter From the Chief Executive Officer

Summer is winding down, and a busy summer it was. As many of you know, we leased Camp St. Andrew from the Diocese of Scranton for the 2016 season. We continued the resident camps, serving a record number. Project Hope, UNC's day camp, also operated again at the site and we were able to add a bus, increasing the number of day campers as well. We continue to discuss the future of the camp with the Diocese and expect to make an announcement soon.



Michael Hanley

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you will see we are encouraging civic engagement with a nonpartisan education initiative. This is not new at UNC, we conducted a similar project in 2012. Going forward we will continue this program year-round, encouraging clients and staff to engage local officials. We will not endorse candidates, nor tell people how to vote.

Finally, we have temporarily moved our offices to the Keystone Industrial Park to accommodate a new collaboration at our Alder Street site. The Alder Street building was originally medical offices, so when Scranton Primary Care approached us about opening a clinic in South Side, it seemed a natural fit. Our Community Health Department will remain at the site, working with Scranton Primary to improve the health of the community. We expect to move our administrative offices back to South Scranton in about two years with renovation of the Peoples Security Bank building, where we will be engaging in another unique collaborative. More news on that soon.

As you can see, nothing stands still at UNC, we are consistently searching for ways to create a stronger community. This would not be possible without the support of many, including yourself. Thank you!

— *Michael Hanley*

UNC Moves Administrative Offices

UNC recently took a step forward in its ongoing plans to revitalize South Scranton. The building housing the agency's administrative offices at 425 Alder Street in Scranton was originally a medical practice. This location is now being returned to its original purpose through a partnership with The Clinics at Scranton Primary Health Care Center. Scranton Primary will open a federally qualified health care center at the location in the coming months, with UNC's Community Health Department also remaining at the location to provide onsite services to individuals utilizing the clinic. The clinic will be a significant benefit to the South Side community, which currently has no primary medical services in the neighborhood and limited public transportation.

These plans will temporarily displace UNC's administrative offices to the Keystone Industrial Park in Throop. However, plans are already being made to move the offices back to a South Scranton location within the next few years. UNC's administrative offices will retain the same phone number: 570-346-0759. Please call with any questions.

Around the Agency

UNC's Elm Street Revitalization Program partnered with The Friends of Connor's Park to install a mini lending library in the park for the use of neighborhood children and families. The library, designed to resemble the TARDIS time machine from the "Dr. Who" television show, was created and donated by Bill Moran.



The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton RailRiders will feature UNC as the "community organization of the night" at their 7:00 p.m. baseball game versus the Pawtucket Red Sox on Saturday, August 20. UNC staff and clients will participate in interviews and throw out the "first pitch." A fireworks show is also planned immediately following the game. Please contact the RailRiders if you would like to purchase tickets.

Save the Date!

Chocoholic Frolic

October 16, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.
Scranton Cultural Center

Tastings of all things chocolate from local vendors are the highlight of this event benefiting UNC's adult literacy and English as Second Language programs!



REV Theatre Company has once again taken up residency in Scranton to partner with UNC on a special youth theatre production. Approximately 30 children, ages 7-13, are currently taking part in the three-week intensive drama workshop. The youth are learning both onstage and behind the scenes aspects of theatre, including choreography, character development, and set design. The workshop will culminate in a free performance of The Lil' Red Show, based on the story of Little Red Riding Hood, on August 27 at 6:00 p.m. Come see the show!

UNC's Youth Arts Culinary Class recently participated in a cooking competition modeled after the television show "Chopped." The students were broken into teams of two and had to cook a dish incorporating a variety of surprise ingredients, including ramen noodles and broccoli!



UNC recently launched a redesign of its website: www.uncnepa.org. The new site is easier for clients and the community to navigate and learn more about UNC, our programs, and services. Check it out and let us know what you think!



Pictured above are the winners of UNC's 2016 Seniors Got Talent. The event, which was attended by more than 300 individuals, supports UNC's Older Adult Programs.



The MAXIMUS Foundation recently awarded a \$2,500 grant to UNC to support the agency's Leaders in Training Program for at-risk youth.



UNC recently recognized seven students from the organization's free English as a Second Language & Citizenship education classes who became new US citizens during the most recent program year.

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.

Farm to Fork Supports Community Health Department

UNC recently hosted the second annual Farm to Fork at Spring Hills Farm. Nearly 100 guests enjoyed a farm fresh, gourmet meal prepared by Chef Gene Philbin of Peculiar Culinary, and served in a tent overlooking the fields, while AVIVA Strings provided background music.

Farm to Fork supports UNC's Community Health Department, which helps low-income, at-risk individuals to access and navigate health care. Major sponsors included Lamar Advertising, PNC Bank, AmeriHealth Caritas Northeast, and Grimm Construction.



UNC's Bellevue Child Care Center Achieves STAR 4 Status



UNC's Bellevue Child Care Center, led by Center Director Margaret Adolfson and UNC Director of Child Care, Michael McHale, recently received recognition as a STAR 4 center from the Keystone STARS quality rating system.

STAR 4 is the highest ranking a center can achieve within the STARS program, which is an initiative of Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning that ranks child care centers in categories such as staff qualifications, learning programs, and family partnerships.