

HCEF

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



HOMELESS
CHILDREN'S
EDUCATION
FUND

HOPE THROUGH LEARNING

MISSION STATEMENT

Serving as a voice for homeless children in Allegheny County and ensuring that they are afforded equal access to the same educational opportunities and experiences as their peers.



History

The Homeless Children's Education Fund (HCEF) is a non-profit agency solely dedicated to providing educational opportunities and experiences for children and youth residing in 16 of Allegheny County's homeless shelters. Founded in 1999 as a 501(c) (3) organization by Dr Joseph Lagana, HCEF supplements and compliments the work of the public school system with a host of educational tools, programs and trainings to assist homeless youth to achieve school success.

To do this we have established Learning Centers in 9 shelters with quiet study space, computers, web-based software, art materials and a wide array of educational puzzles and games. Each of the 16 sites has an extensive Resource Center with a professionally- selected collection of books, maps, globes and educational DVDs. All of HCEF's programs are aligned with the Pennsylvania State Education Standards.

Through partnerships, we utilize the wealth of resources in our region to provide seminars and hands-on workshops for shelter staff, parents and children. This engagement has created a "Community of Learners" in and among the shelters. Our work is supported by area businesses, foundations, government administrators and policy makers, and community organizations. Together we provide children with the greatest gift of all: *hope through learning.*



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Children and Homelessness

When a family becomes homeless due to domestic violence, substance abuse, loss of a job or TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) benefits or natural disaster, children are dramatically impacted. Being uprooted from their classmates, friends, and most of their belongings makes it difficult to adjust and to continue their progress in school. It is common that homeless children attend three or four schools during an academic year, at a time when they are learning the most basic skills: reading, writing, math and science. Missing these lessons can have a life-long impact.

All children need school supplies, a computer for research and homework assignments, access to a wide array of books for reading practice, and a positive support system to help when they get discouraged. Parents often need the same guidance to learn techniques to help teach literacy skills and improve upon their own. We have a fertile opportunity to positively impact the lives of families while they are in the shelters.

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services' Point-in-Time survey of January 2007 revealed

- 602 children were residing in emergency or transitional shelters on the day of accounting. The average age of these children was 8 years.
- The demographics of our K-12 population served in 2007:
 - 57% African-American
 - 10% Biracial
 - 27% Caucasian
 - 6% Hispanic and other ethnic groups
- In addition, the HCEF Learning Centers and Resource Centers reported 20,000 uses by staff, parents and their children system-wide.



Programs

Learning Centers and Resource Libraries

HCEF has increased its services to include web-based educational resources that are available to all children, youth and parents while residing in each of the shelters and after they are permanently housed. This will help to provide continuity of resources. They include:

- Scholastic's Grolier Online After School Fun and Learning Center, which boasts a multi-media encyclopedia, science projects, homework help, teacher resources, maps, dictionaries, educational word games and puzzles – and more.
- Bookflix, also by Scholastic, introduces K-3 readers to animated books with a read-along feature to help encourage word recognition and learning. The site also hosts quizzes and learning activities.

Print materials are in abundance with the help of our partner Barnes & Noble. Members of the community donated over 3,000 print books over the holiday season. The books were distributed to individual children in the shelters and added to the collections in the 16 Resource Libraries.

Mini-Grants for Educational Innovation

HCEF awarded \$24,867 through the Mini-Grants for Educational Innovation to our partner shelters for a variety of creative programming and resources. At our annual gathering shelter staff “show and tell” their projects from prior grants and assist each other to note the best-practices at their site. In 2007, mini-grants were awarded for a variety of projects including interactive geography games, violence prevention and self-esteem building materials, African drumming programs and more. An additional \$1900 in Educational Field Trip Mini-Grants was distributed to ensure children have a chance to explore the rich resources available in Pittsburgh.

Educational Mentoring

Workshops for shelter staff and adult role models:

- Art Education
- Storytelling and Dramatic Expression
- Bullying and Violence Prevention
- Computer Literacy Skills and Web-based Resources

Tools for School

HCEFs long-standing Pack-to-School is fully partnered with Citizen's Bank's Tools for School program, which boasted a successful community-wide collection drive. Over 3,000 backpacks filled with school-supplies helped homeless children have the basic materials needed for success in school.

Customized Accelerated Program for Education (CAPE)

New in 2007, CAPE is funded by corporate donations made through the Pennsylvania Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. The CAPE program is delivered in a one-week “summer camp” format at each site with an aim to focus on accelerated academic activities highlighting the gifts and talents of the participating students. The Pittsburgh Dance Ensemble provided African Drumming and Dancing classes, teaching lessons about geography, foreign language, personal discipline and mathematics in a unique engaging way. Jackie Jonas, of Open Stage Theatre, encouraged students with curriculum in Storytelling and Dramatic Expression, with a sharp focus on language arts, visual arts and exploring creativity. Over 250 children engaged in these activities.

Advocacy

From its founding, HCEF has been a persistent and effective advocate of educational opportunities for children through legislation, community partnerships and raising public awareness to the needs of this vulnerable population.

HCEF created the Homeless Awareness and Advocacy Network, a coalition of agencies dedicated to providing a more realistic image of homeless children through community awareness initiatives. In 2007, Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) focused its "One Book, One Community" program on child homelessness, taking a leading role in this initiative. Hundreds of community members, schools, book clubs and individuals across Allegheny County engaged in meaningful discussion regarding the plight of homeless children. Authors Jeannette Walls and Pittsburgh-native Sharon Flake gave public voice to their own experiences on behalf of homeless children as part of this initiative.

In partnership with Pittsburgh Social Venture Partners, the Homeless Awareness and Advocacy Network hosted a Poverty Simulation during National Homeless and Hunger Awareness Week in November. As participants shared in the frustrations and emotional stress often associated with the many challenges of chronic homelessness and poverty, ten women currently residing in shelters spoke about their personal experiences. The Poverty Simulation hosted policy makers, service providers, educators and a diverse mixture of the area's citizenry.

The Homeless Awareness and Advocacy Network currently hosts representatives from our partner shelters, Allegheny County Library Association, Allegheny County Bureau of Hunger and Housing Services, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Diocese of Pittsburgh, Bethel Park Library and Scholastic, Inc.

Awards and Recognition

Under the leadership of Founder, Dr. Joseph F. Lagana, HCEF has been awarded with the following awards in 2007:

- League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, Good Government Award
- Sisters Place, Community Partner Award
- Amen Corner, David L. Lawrence Public Service Award

In addition, Dr. Lagana received the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth's, Sandra Lifetime Achievement Award at its annual conference in Portland, Oregon.

Our partnership with the Bethel Park Library in the establishment of the 16 Resource Libraries and providing institutional library cards to all shelters received special recognition by the Pennsylvania Library Association.

HCEF recognized Dr. James S. Withers, M.D. with the first Linda A. Dickerson Award at the 8th Annual Champions for Children Benefit. Dr Withers, founder of Operation Safety Net, and his colleagues provide street-based medical care and outreach to adults and youths who are homeless.



2008 Program Goals

Diversify educational programs to focus on academic achievement

Establish data-driven project evaluations from 100% of the shelters serving children K-12

Develop education-based training and support in the Learning Centers

Advocate reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Where We Serve

HCEF Learning Centers and Resource Libraries have been established in nine of the region's shelters, transitional and bridge housing centers, and a drop-in center for unhoused youths.

In Pittsburgh:

- Open Arms
- Salvation Army Family Crisis Center
- Three Rivers Youth - The Hub
- Womanspace East, Inc.
- Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

In Allegheny County:

- HEARTH
- Sisters Place
- Womanspace
- YWCA Bridge Housing

Resource Libraries have also been created in the seven facilities where a Learning Center has not yet been feasible.

In Pittsburgh:

- New Beginnings
- San Kofa House

In Allegheny County:

- Allegheny Valley Association of Churches Hospitality Network
- Alle-Kiski Hope Center
- Bridge to Independence
- Crisis Center North
- Healthy Start House



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To learn more about the Homeless Children's Education Fund, visit www.homelessfund.org or call (412) 562-0154.

To make a online donation click the "donate" link on our homepage.

A B C D E

"We are privileged that HCEF has partnered with us throughout the years to provide our kids with the extra support they need to succeed in school and in life. You really understand the devastating difficulties faced by kids who become homeless."

—Child Advocate Womanspace

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2007

Assets

Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	167,012
Prepaid Expenses	1,480
Contributions & Other Receivables	112,000
Total Current Assets	280,492
Investments	789,850
Property and Equipment	23,109
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	20,001
Net Property and Equipment	3,108
Total Assets	1,073,450

Liabilities

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	7,009
Deferred Revenue	8,971
Accrued Liabilities	1,997
Total Current Liabilities	17,977

Net Assets

Unrestricted	
Undesignated	
Operating	350,166
Fixed Assets	3,108
Designated	449,833
Temporarily Restricted	252,366
Total Net Assets	1,055,473

Total Liabilities & Net Assets 1,073,450

Statement of Activities

As of December 31, 2007

Change in Net Assets

Revenues

Contributions	48,371
Grants from Corporations & Foundations	297,695
Special Events—Tickets & Sponsorships	206,385
Interest Income	23,237
Unrealized Gains	18,567
Other	817
Total Revenues & Gains	595,072

Expenses

Programs	211,131
Fundraising	28,038
Administrative	54,763
Total Expenses	293,932

Change in Net Assets	301,140
Net Assets (January 1, 2007)	754,333

Net Assets (Dec. 31, 2007) 1,055,473

This financial statement is based on an independent audit performed by the certified public accounting firm of Schneider Downs. Contact 412-562-0154 to obtain a free copy of the 2007 auditor's report. HCEF is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Donations can be made online at www.homelessfund.org and through United Way Contributor's Choice #963315. The official registration and financial information of the Homeless Children's Education Fund may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania at 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



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