

# HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND

## Spring 2011 E-Newsletter — Vol. 6 No. 2

### WINNIE SAYS "IT'S ALL ABOUT KIDS!"



#### Kids with opportunities

##### Discover they can . . .

turn a "D" in science to a "B"  
make the honor roll for the first time  
think about what they want to be  
teacher?  
nurse?  
gardener?  
scientist?  
penguin keeper at the zoo?  
or as one 2-year old said after learning  
about them up close: a worm that helps  
plants grow

Kayla Lian

# First we put the dirt  
in a cup then we put  
little seeds, then after  
2 weeks it was growing  
then my plant is 4 inch

##### With educational software they can

play shopper and cashier and  
learn about money and its value  
create their own puppets,  
name them, design their outfits,  
put on a puppet show for mom

##### With educational field trips they can

visit a farm and  
go on a hayride,  
pick their own pumpkin,  
and carve it  
ride the Monongahela Incline  
be surprised by the "really"  
tall buildings downtown  
and by the ice that doesn't melt  
at the PPG Place skating rink

#### Awareness

We at HCEF are proud to be colleagues of those agency staff members responsible for providing the children they serve with strong educational support in the Learning Centers. They are the ones who each summer apply for HCEF Mini-Grants for Educational Enrichment to fund experiences the children's housed peers take for granted. Here are examples of how 2010-11 grants funded field trips, educational software, books for all ages, and necessary supplies.

Some children learned "by doing" how grass grows from seeds. On Just Ducky and RiverQuest tours children learned about the city that is their hometown and the rivers that define it. Some even learned about and then traveled to Lake Erie and Altoona.

Some learned to use unfamiliar software to create a video newscast with text and music. Others used a new Karaoke with a cordless microphone to present speeches before an audience of moms, siblings, and staff.

Some found that African drumming was a comfortable way to express themselves and to participate comfortably in a group activity. It was also a way to learn about African cultures and languages.

Math cubes helped children struggling with math homework. Dramatic play materials allowed children to grow social skills.

***The \$2000 2011-12 Mini-Grants  
will be awarded in August.***

## ADVOCACY

HCEF has always served as a voice for the homeless children of Allegheny County. Now, working with our partners in the Homeless Education Network (HEN), we are ever more actively and effectively advocating for the educational rights of children across the state.

The April 8th Summit II: Collaborations and Models saw Susan Corbett, Pennsylvania First Lady, greet the 325 educators, homeless service providers, city - county - and state officials, representatives of not-for-profit agencies, and area foundation leaders.



See a report of the event, the presenters and their topics, comments by participants, and both text and video links to the important address by David Hickton, United States Attorney, Western Region – U. S. Department of Justice: <http://homelessfund.org/specialinitiatives.html>

## ACTION - Winnie's All Stars

**Jeremy** completed his required City Charter School internship at HCEF. He attended staff and public meetings, created and published a Volunteers newsletter, and provided office support. Jeremy was an efficient and willing colleague and "truly enjoyed" the office culture at HCEF. See the newsletters he created:

<http://homelessfund.org/files/admin/VolNewsltr-1.pdf> and <http://homelessfund.org/files/admin/VolunteerNewsletter%202.pdf>

Says Jeremy: "My time at HCEF really opened my eyes to how serious the issue of homelessness really is."



**Sean**, a sophomore at Quaker Valley High School, raised awareness of children and youth experiencing homelessness by inviting elementary school children to participate in running races. Each child was asked to collect and contribute educational games, art supplies, craft projects, learning toys, school supplies, or cash donations to be given to HCEF for distribution. Sean awarded trophies to the winners of each race.

Says Sean: "It is plain and simple that in general children want to help other children out."



## ACTION - HCEF Speakers Bureau

Our newly formed Speakers Bureau has trained volunteers ready and willing to speak of our mission, its vision, and its work with and in support of children who are homeless.



Scotti, Ashley, Wil, and Larry are eager for opportunities to tell our story, as are Joe Lagana and Bill Wolfe. We urge you to recommend them as potential speakers before groups to which you belong as well as at informal get-togethers.

To invite a Speaker's Bureau volunteer to speak at your meeting or event, please follow this link to our online request form.

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dFEwSzdVN G9BRWUxaFpPa19aVml4b0E6MQ>

## ACTION – Community Organizations

**Join us at Heinz Hall, June 23, 2011, for the 8th annual PSO Community Partners Concert.**

This year's concert features the *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra* with conductor Lawrence Loh and Paul Laraia, guest violist, in the first half of the program and *Boyz II Men* in the second half of this exciting evening of music.



The Community Partners Concert is the PSO's annual collaboration with 25 Pittsburgh area nonprofit organizations. HCEF is pleased to again be one of those partnering nonprofits. Over the past seven years the Community Partners Concerts have raised over \$539,000 through this innovative approach to fund-raising. HCEF is proud to be a beneficiary of the designated ticket purchases.

**Ticket prices range from \$25.75 to \$95.75. To purchase tickets benefiting HCEF on line, please click this link:**

<http://psoculturaldistrict.org/production/28093>

**Tickets may also be purchased by phone (412-392-4900 or 1-800-743-8560) and at the Heinz Hall box office.** If you choose either of these methods, be sure to say that your purchase is to benefit the **Homeless Children's Education Fund: partner number 28093.**

The PSO donates the orchestra's services, and secures corporate sponsors to underwrite out-of-pocket costs associated with guest artist services and concert production. Giant Eagle is the event's lead sponsor.

***Concerts for Causes presents "An Evening of Cabaret" featuring Dane Vannatter, cabaret and jazz singer; Jeff Grubbs on bass; and Daniel May on piano.***

The Sunday, June 12, 2011, concert will be at the home of Sharon and David Watkins in Shadyside. The evening begins with a 6:00 champagne reception followed by the 6:30 - 8:30 performance, wine, and dessert. All costs of the concert are absorbed by Concerts for Causes, and HCEF is the beneficiary of all donations. Call 412-441-6525 for more information. The Boston-based performer has a large and loyal fan base throughout New England. From the *Boston Globe*: "Dane Vannatter's distinctive style leaves an imprint on whatever music he sings. His voice has a floating quality that gets in your head and won't leave, . . . his music is a swinging, soaring adventure!"



### ***A grateful shout-out to***

the Melange Bistro and America's Music Crossroads Center who together presented "*An Evening of Jazz for Homeless Children.*" The event benefited HCEF's "Music for Kids" program, a newly conceived educational opportunity to be offered in the Learning Centers we support



and also to a long-time friend of the Homeless Children's Education Fund who opened her home to Dennis W. McCurdy's *Lonesome No More Productions* for fundraising event featuring McCurdy's *Lonesome No More Band* and West Virginia singer/songwriter Todd Burge, a frequent guest on Public Radio's *Mountain Stage*.





Heartfelt thanks to all who have made monetary contributions to HCEF, have made donations in honor or memory of loved ones, have sponsored and attended fund raising events on our behalf, and have tutored the children. In all these ways you have helped make a difference in the lives of children caught up in the uncertainties of homelessness. <http://homelessfund.org/donate.html>



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"Providing hope through learning"