

HEADLINES OF HOPE



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July - September 2019 | Quarterly Newsletter

6 Local Teens Overcome Homelessness & Receive \$2,500 Post-Secondary Award



Pictured: Carlos T. Carter (Executive Director), Sarah, Tyriese, Markiece, Jeramaya, Alivia, Shelly Brown (Board Chair)

This July, six deserving teens were awarded with HCEF's Hope Through Learning Award of \$2,500 to help fund the first year of their post-secondary education. The teens all have overcome hardships typical to homelessness: poverty, housing instability, natural disaster, and mental illness, among other issues. HCEF hosted the awards ceremony at the National Aviary on July 19th, where the awardees were honored with their friends and family. Read about each winner:

Alivia graduated from Western Beaver Junior Senior High School and is attending Penn State Beaver. She is studying psychology with the hopes of opening a Christian-based therapy nonprofit post-grad.

Angela is a graduate of North Allegheny Senior High School and just completed a summer program at Lock Haven University. She is majoring in international relations, planning to become a diplomat.

Jeramaya is attending Lehigh University after graduating from Shadyside Academy. He is majoring in finance and plans to become an investment banker.

Markiece graduated from University Prep and is now attending CCAC. He intends to become a medical diagnostic sonographer while pursuing his singing career on the side.

Sarah is attending Waynesburg University after completing homeschooling. She is majoring in creative writing, and she has a passion for film and the arts.

Tyriese is a graduate of West Allegheny High School and is attending Pittsburgh Technical College. He is currently pursuing welding while working part time.

For more information on the 2019 awardees, check out this [Post-Gazette article](#).

The 2019 Backpack Distribution: A Summary



HCEF's annual backpack distribution was a success! Over 20 local shelters and

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community organizations received 2,059 backpacks stuffed with school supplies in early August. HCEF staff and [BNY Mellon](#) volunteers traveled by school bus to deliver the backpacks to the shelter staff and families.

"It was so cool seeing how happy the kids in foster care were when I delivered their book bags," said an Auberle staff member. "The little ones modeled them for me with big smiles on their faces."

"We have heard several of our single mothers say that sending their children to school without a back pack and supplies made them feel ashamed," said a Naomi's place staff member. "So we thank this organization for taking those very feelings away from parents who are less fortunate."

This program would not be possible without the generous ongoing contribution of a major, anonymous donor.

Kids Receive Vibrant New Learning Center to Start the Afterschool Program this Fall



On September 18th homeless housing provider, Sojourner MOMS, was gifted a newly remodeled learning center for HCEF's afterschool, summer, and enrichment programming. In partnership with [Continental Building Co.](#), HCEF spent the whole summer remodeling the space to have colorful kid-friendly furniture, technology, games, books, study spaces, and crafts. This learning center had not been formally remodeled since its opening in 2008. Learning centers are important so that the kids have a safe, fun space to learn at the shelter where they reside. An extra thanks goes to the Grable Foundation and Ayers Foundation for making this possible. Check out our [Facebook album](#) for more photos.

Sydney's Journey in the Summer Program



A five-year-old girl named Sydney* came into the summer program only knowing a few letters of the alphabet. She was shy and withdrawn, reluctant to engage with the staff, and it was looking like she was not going to be enrolled in kindergarten in the

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fall. However, over the summer she made immense progress. Two of our instructors took time to get to know her, allowing her to open up, all while she was rapidly improving her literacy skills. By the end of the summer, she learned half of the alphabet and made enough progress to enroll in kindergarten in the fall. And as a bonus, one of her instructors is a teacher at the school where she is enrolled!

*Due to confidentiality, we have given the child the alias of Sydney

Volunteers Needed: Stand Up for Homeless Children in Market Square



Homeless Children's Awareness Week is right around the corner! This year, HCAW is October 13th-19th. One of the main events will be the Stand Up for Homeless Children art installation on October 18th at noon in Market Square, downtown. HCEF is looking to make this installation bigger and better than before, so we need YOUR involvement. All you need to do is show up for 30 minutes during your lunch break and stand in silence while holding up the portrait of a child. During this time, a proclamation officiating HCAW will be read, and a few words will

be spoken to educate others about youth homelessness. Contact Brian Knight at bknight@homelessfund.org or 412-562-0154 if interested.

Bierhaus 2 Raises Funds for Homeless Youth



Beer, pizza, music, and a fun night out: all for a good cause. On September 12th, over 100 young professionals and community members gathered at Spirit Hall in Lawrenceville for Bierhaus 2 to raise funds for children experiencing homelessness. At the event, HCEF showed its video [Raising Hope](#), and Carlos T. Carter, Executive Director, and Louis Coppola, event co-chair, spoke to the audience about HCEF's mission. HCEF would like to thank everyone who made this event special: volunteers, committee members, sponsors (particularly Covestro & Gateway Health), guests, donors, and everyone else who helped out!

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Walk, Jog, or Run in the 2020 Pittsburgh Marathon



Registration for the 2020 Pittsburgh Marathon is now open, and HCEF is an official partnering charity this year! What does that mean for you? If you sign up and raise your minimum fundraising goal, you are refunded your registration fee. You can run or walk the 5K, half marathon, full marathon, or relay. [Register here](#) to begin raising funds for homeless children and youth. The race weekend will be May 2-3. Call our office at 412-562-0154 or email MJ Meenen at mjmeenen@homelessfund.org to learn tips and tricks to crowd-sourcing funds.

Uptown Dental Makes an Impact with Back-to-School Drive



Children at HCEF shelter partners benefitted from a back-to-school drive hosted by [Uptown Dental](#) in Mount Lebanon in August. The office's patients and staff filled a collection box with books, markers, crayons, gift cards, and all kinds of supplies to prepare children for the school year. In addition, they raised over \$3,000 in donations! Someone even donated an entire Harry Potter series collection, which now has a home at our new learning center at Sojourner MOMS. Thank you Uptown Dental!

Welcome Mary Dempsey, PULSE Fellow



A big welcome to HCEF's new PULSE fellow, Mary Dempsey! As a graduate from Western Michigan University with a degree in social work, Mary will be working with our Teen Outreach Program. She hopes to start a career in counseling, working with youth ages 12-20. [PULSE](#) is a proud partner of HCEF, and its mission is to transform Pittsburgh by partnering university graduates with nonprofits for a year of service and leadership. We are so happy to have Mary here!

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Welcome Alex Jones, HCEF Office Administrator



HCEF would like to welcome Alex, our new office administrator. Alex holds a degree in Urban Studies with a certificate in nonprofit management from the University of Pittsburgh. She previously worked at the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank, as well as holding an administrative position in college. We are so happy to have Alex here!

Teen Program Receives \$10,000 from Standard Charitable Foundation



Great news for the Teen Outreach Program: Standard Charitable Foundation generously

granted HCEF with \$10,000 to support teens in public schools and shelters who are experiencing homelessness. The teens could not receive the academic resources they need without contributions like these, so thank you! Check out Standard Bank's [blog post](#) about HCEF.

EITC Grant from HCEF Board Chair Benefits Homeless Children & Youth



Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.

HCEF's board chair, Harry Soose, continues to make an impact in the community. His business, [Civil Environmental Consultants Inc.](#), recently gifted HCEF with a \$10,000 EITC grant. EITC stands for Educational Improvement Tax Credits. It's a program in Pennsylvania where certain organizations can choose to give to a nonprofit, and that amount will be deducted from their taxes. To learn how your business can be an EITC granter, call HCEF at 412-562-0154 and ask for MJ or Carlos.

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Save the Date for Upcoming Events!



Champions for Children March 19, 2020

Join us at our annual gala at the Fairmont Hotel to learn about our mission. There will be decadent food & drinks, a top-of-the-line auction, and networking with Pittsburgh's finest.

Eleven Benefit Dinner June 11, 2020

Join HCEF for a five-course meal, including wine pairings and dessert, at Eleven in the Strip District. Tickets will be available on April 1, 2020.



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