



**HOMELESS  
CHILDREN'S  
EDUCATION  
FUND**

# HEADLINES of HOPE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | 1ST QUARTER | JANUARY - MARCH



▲ CARLOS T. CARTER

## SOMETHING BIGGER!

After spending 18 years in the banking world, I was in pursuit of something bigger. I wanted a job where I could make a bigger impact on the world leveraging my leadership, compassion and business skills. As I reflect on the first quarter of 2021, I am thankful that I chose something bigger. It is an honor to serve the children and families who face many challenges, but also who are intelligent, resilient and have unlimited potential for success with the appropriate support. Our children are also looking for something bigger and education is key to attaining it.

Although the challenges related to COVID-19 learning loss etc. are great, I am excited for what the future holds! This year we will create and deliver innovative programming that empowers children and families to get excited about their education. More importantly, we want them excited about themselves and realizing their potential. They can be confident that HCEF will support them and their education every step of the way.

Thanks again for your support for our work. With faithful donors and volunteers like you...our families will achieve things bigger than they ever imagined!

Carlos T. Carter  
Executive Director

**CARLOS'  
CORNER**



## SUMMER & MORE

WHO ISN'T READY FOR SUMMER? FOR SAFE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND GRADUALLY SEEING MORE FRIENDS. The youth we serve will have some options this summer. Stay tuned for more details Our two key summer programs are happening-the HTLA scholarship ceremony in July and the backpack distribution in August. **If you know anyone who may wish to apply for a HTLA scholarship, check our website and social for details. \*Due April 30, 2021**

# AN "OKAY WITCH" CAME TO LIFE!



One of the highlights of the winter months in our K-8 after-school sessions was reading the graphic novel, *The Okay Witch*, and meeting the author on zoom! One of our fantastic tutors for the after-school program, Alexa, worked on reading the chapter book with Alicia (\*not her real name), who fell in love with the character. Alexa encouraged her to write a letter to the author and send a picture of it through Instagram.

The author, Emma Steinkellner, was more than moved and decided to buy books from HCEF's Amazon Wishlist, as well as meet on zoom to discuss the book. The students prepared for the meeting by writing questions for the author and worked on reading aloud a scene from the book. Alicia was so excited that she made the backdrop of her zoom look like the illustrations of *The Okay Witch*. Acting out the book gave Alicia self-confidence and shake off the nerves she had before meeting the author.

Ms. Steinkellner commented on how the character's emotions were portrayed just as she imagined. Furthermore, Emma shared her processes of illustrating her books and even some of her new ideas for the sequel! She was generous enough to offer to send signed copies of the new book. Having the students share their excitement of reading and get the chance to meet the author was a memorable experience!

A VERY MEMORABLE ZOOM MEETING ►  
WITH THE AUTHOR OF "THE OKAY WITCH"



## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

## GEOMETRY TUTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE: MEET IAN



▲ IAN MAKING DELIVERIES

Ian's day job is responding to emergencies as an EMT. For his volunteer work at HCEF, he uses many of the same skills: precision, compassion and diligence. Teaching geometry would challenge many of us; now try it virtually, and that is what Ian is up to!

Ian grew up in the Philadelphia area, and has lived in the Pittsburgh region since college. He was matched with a young lady, a high school junior, and has consistently met with her. He explained that he's developed his own method, which involves screen sharing,

working on specific problems and engaging in relationship building. They make a good match; and both are benefitting from working together.

Ian is pictured here helping our youth by delivering educational packets, materials and emergency items. HCEF is fortunate to have Ian in our circle, as are the families and youth who benefit from his commitment to service.

*Our volunteers  
make a difference!*

# TEEN FOCUS: RESILIENCE IN ACTION

Dray is now 18. He's had a few tumultuous years, but is as determined as ever to succeed. We met him when he was a sophomore at Brashear. Dray was living with his sister and also in homeless shelters in the South Hills. Dray's Mom is deceased, and he has had no contact with his father for many years. Hard to imagine being "on your own" at that age.

His unstable housing impacted his schoolwork and increased his pressures to assist with his family's finances. As a result, he went to work while continuing his studies at Brashear never forgetting his goal to graduate, enroll in college and pursue engineering.

Dray was accepted to the Hillman Cancer Academy at UPMC for the summer of 2020 after his junior year. At Hillman, he completed his summer project on breast cancer research in honor of his mother who passed away after a struggle with breast cancer.

Powering through life, school (his senior year at Brashear) and the pandemic, he now is in a place where he can see the result of his consistent focus. HCEF staff assisted Dray with his financial aid applications, his applications to college and a few scholarships. His determination, strength and resilience has made an impact. The wonderful news is that Dray has recently been accepted to start at the University of Pittsburgh fall of 2021! We are proud of Dray, and we remain committed to supporting him during his collegiate years.

*We believe in...*  
**hope through learning!**



▲ A GEORGIA O'KEEFE INSPIRED PAINTING BY A YOUNG GIRL IN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING!

## THANKS ARE IN ORDER.

HCEF has received considerable foundation grant support in the past 6-12 months. Look for a complete list in our upcoming Annual Report. For our Teen Program, special thanks to Hillman Foundation and American Eagle Outfitters Foundation. To help our K-8th grade programs, we've welcomed support from PPG Foundation, Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation, Allegheny County Medical Society Foundation, Ayers Foundation, Grable Foundation and Child Health Association. For support that crosses all programs, a note of thanks to McAuley Ministries, RK Mellon, the Opportunity Fund, Pittsburgh Foundation and the Heinz Endowments.



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**FIRST  
QUARTER**

JANUARY  
FEBRUARY  
MARCH



**HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND**  
VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 SPONSORS!

### PLATINUM:

HIGHMARK BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD  
GATEWAY HEALTH PLAN  
UPMC HEALTH PLAN

### GOLD:

Civil and Environmental Engineers  
Hundred Acres Manor  
Pitt Ohio

### SILVER:

Bender Leadership Academy  
Jo Clark and Frances Woodward  
Eyenavision, Inc.  
Fragasso Financial Advisors  
Keytex Energy  
Manchester Bidwell Corporation  
McKamish  
PNC  
PSEA - PA State Education Association  
Rosen & Perry, PC  
R&R Express  
Waldron Private Wealth  
Paula Zawadzki

### EVENT HOSTS

Troy Blair  
Christopher Brennan  
Chuck and Jill Brodbeck  
Carlos T. Carter  
Kevion Latham  
Angela and James Lowden  
Tim McKenna  
MJ Meenen  
Gloria Rayman and Joe Stromei  
Brian Sheridan  
Harry and Michele Soose  
Alan Steinberg

### WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

*\*as of April 6, 2021*

HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND  
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