



MONTHLY UPDATE | JULY 2026

HCEF: IN MOTION

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS



Summer learning at HCEF can happen anywhere, and sometimes it even comes with cupcakes.

Across shelters, libraries and homes, students are building skills through learning experiences designed around how they learn best. From **Caden** practicing vowel sounds and word building, to **Azira** strengthening her addition skills, to fractions coming to life through a cupcake baking math lab, every lesson creates another opportunity for growth.

And sometimes, the most important part is simply having someone beside you. At The **Salvation Army Learning Center**, an AmeriCorps Foster Grandparent volunteer turned a shape matching activity into a moment filled with connection, encouragement and one very big smile.

Different places. Different lessons. One goal: keep learning moving.



OPENING DOORS, BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Senior Teen CEO students, students who've been in the Teen CEO program 3 years or more, are learning that career readiness is about more than preparing for a job. It is also about the people you meet, the experiences you gain and the doors that can open along the way.

Entrepreneur, former Tollgrade Chairman and CEO, and HCEF supporter **Chris Allison** joined students to share lessons from his extensive business and entrepreneurial journey. Chris led Tollgrade through significant growth and has continued investing his experience in entrepreneurship and the development of future business leaders. With our Teen CEOs, he shared lessons from building businesses, navigating startups and turning ideas into opportunity.

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OPENING DOORS, BUILDING CONNECTIONS (CONTINUED)



Our Senior Teen CEOs then took those lessons beyond the classroom. Led by HCEF President & CEO **AJ Jefferson**, students explored the art and science of networking before putting it into practice with six leaders from across AJ and HCEF's network: **Mat Davis**, Acting Fire Chief for the City of Pittsburgh; **Samantha Hartzman**, Chief Impact Officer at Duquesne Light Company; **Majestic Lane**, Deputy Executive Director of the Urban Redevelopment Authority; **Piper Smith**, Architectural Designer at Gerald Lee Morosco Architects; **Allie Quick**, Founder of Bridging Generosity; and **TeeJay Vision**, Owner of TeeJay Vision Films and TeeJay the DJ.

Different industries. Different journeys. One shared belief in our young people.

From sharing expertise to opening networks, these experiences show the many ways our community can help young people see what is possible and build the relationships to pursue it.

“TALENT CAN PREPARE YOU FOR AN OPPORTUNITY. RELATIONSHIPS CAN HELP YOU FIND ONE.”

HCEF BRILLIANCE ON THE MOVE

Leadership doesn't stop at serving students. It also means continuing to learn, grow and lead.

Terrel Williams, Teen Outreach Program Manager, graduated from **The Advanced Leadership Institute's (TALI) Emerging Leaders Program at CMU**, **LaMeka-LeShe Myers**, Individual and Corporate Giving Coordinator, was recognized as a **Young Black Motivated Kings & Queens 30 Under 30** honoree, and President & CEO **AJ Jefferson** graduated from **Leadership Pittsburgh** and received **Seton Hill University's Distinguished Alumni Leadership Award**.

Their accomplishments reflect the leadership, growth and commitment that continue moving HCEF and our mission forward.



HCEF: In Motion is a monthly snapshot of real time updates and the work happening across our community and beyond.

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