

Graduates Credit PCC Support for Success in School and Life



Jenna Wrenn



Michael Phillips



Francis Luc

The Presbyterian Community Center's Pathways for Youth program is proud to acknowledge our three 2016 high school graduates: Francis Luc, Michael Phillips, and Jenna Wrenn. All are graduates of Patrick Henry High School.

Jenna began with Pathways in the 6th grade. Francis and Michael have been with us since 7th grade. Throughout the years, each of them have grown and flourished into amazing young adults with bright futures. Jenna will be attending Longwood University in the fall, pursuing general studies. Michael and Francis will both be attending Virginia Western Com-

munity College. Michael has hopes of going into the medical profession, and Francis is interested in culinary arts.

Jenna, Michael and Francis all credit the Presbyterian Community Center and Pathways for Youth staff for being there whenever they needed someone to turn to throughout their school years. They all emphasize that at PCC there was always someone to talk to. The staff taught them responsibility and kept them focused on making good decisions for their futures. They were all grateful that Pathways staff helped them every step of the way when it came to applying for college, including SAT practice, applications and financial aid information.

We wish them all the best and look forward to hearing about their new journey.

Emily Guilliams, Pathways High School Coordinator

A Season of Many Blessings

Special gifts blessed the PCC this summer, transforming anticipation of great need into one of abundant benefits for the families we serve. A \$10,000 grant from the S. L. Gimbel Foundation for the purpose of buying summer food came first. Combined with "Hunger Buster" drives at several churches, the pantry has remained full, allowing us to increase distribution to families.

Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church began the "Food for Veterans" program to supplement veterans' needs. Pathways for Youth received an "Impact Grant" from the United Way of Roanoke Valley, providing overall support and allowing us to hire a program assistant.

In June, Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church granted \$25,500 to purchase a van for our mission. A generous donor provided the balance of the \$30,000 price. A need that has long occupied the #1 position on the PCC wish list, we will use the beautiful van primarily to transport our Pathways students on field trips and other outings. The inaugural trip took high school students to the Montreat Youth Conference in July.

One of our most special blessings is the graduation of our Pathways seniors. Their hard work sends them into a future full of possibilities. I hope you will enjoy reading about them and the other work of the PCC outlined in this newsletter.

Karen McNally, Executive Director

Middle School Stays Busy



Middle Schoolers visit Fire Department

The middle school students have been adventurous this summer. In June, they attended the Massanetta Middle School Conference in Harrisonburg. This year's theme was "GONE FISHIN." We explored this by using the Bible verse from Luke 5:1-11, where Jesus calls His first disciples. Students were challenged to think about what they need to leave behind to follow Jesus and what it means to be a disciple of Christ. The conference offered keynotes, workshops and fun activities that correlated with the Bible verse and overall theme. In July, we met at PCC and took on several challenging activities through team-building and life-skills training. The incoming 6th graders were treated to some bonding and transition time with the returning 7th and 8th graders. Meanwhile, summer is quickly ending and I am looking forward to the 2016-2017 school year with our middle school students. It's going to be a fun year!

Ebony Hurt, Pathways Middle School Coordinator

Many Thanks to our Generous Donors

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*Donations listed in this newsletter were received from February 6, 2016 through July 14, 2016.
If we have inadvertently omitted your contribution, please contact Tom MacMichael at 982-2911.*

Turning Hardship into a Blessing

Our client, age 59, was working full time when an injury resulted in surgery to remove his toes. During recovery, he and his wife depended on his short-term disability, her full time salary, and their savings to pay bills. When short-term assistance expired, he was denied long-term disability, although he could no longer perform his job. He did not have the money needed for a lawyer to appeal the denial. He then applied for Social Security disability and was approved, although payments would not start until August.

On the morning in May that he came to the Presbyterian Community Center, he could do nothing but cry. He had been given 5 days to pay his rent or be evicted. He had never been in this type of situation and had no idea where to turn for help.

We were able to pay his rent and refer him to another agency for help with May utility bills. We asked him to contact us in June about additional help with rent. When we did not hear from him, we called for an update on his situation and heard a wonderful story. While in line at the agency to which PCC referred him, he struck up a conversation with the gentleman behind him. This man also was an amputee and mentioned that he was looking to rent an upstairs apartment at his home. He found it to be in great shape and very clean. His new acquaintance was also charging less rent. When thanking PCC staff, our client observed that "God is good."



Pantry volunteers Von and Ken Staiger with PCC Director Karen McNally at Feeding America.



Volunteer Cindy Reilly made lunch for middle school students during summer camp.

In Memory: Monty Plymale



Monty Plymale

Monty Plymale, a long-time volunteer with the PCC, passed away on February 7. Monty was a member of Northminster Presbyterian Church. He spent Tuesday mornings at our mission interviewing clients and helping with their needs. Many times, after Monty filled a bag with groceries or helped find funds to pay a bill, he would provide a ride home to someone with no transportation.

He could also always be counted on to offer his truck and deliver "Hunger Buster" food to the Center. Monty was a delightful and kind person and is missed by all of his friends at the PCC. Persons making donations to the PCC in memory of Monty are listed below.

Baker & Esworthy Family
Richard & Janet Burrow
Walt & Marie Haines
Ed Hall
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Atwood & Mary Anne Huff

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Harriett Wood
Holly Woodson

Reading Challenge for Elementary Students

Reading was a priority for the elementary group this year. Each Thursday was "Read Day." After finishing their homework, they could be read to by their tutor or read with a partner. Often, I would read to the whole group, using a book such as *The Egypt Game* by Zilpha Snyder, which went along with our Egypt unit. For every 5 hours of reading attained, students received a reward such as a trip to Hits Treats for free ice cream. Those reaching 20 hours were awarded a \$10 Barnes & Noble gift card. The main objective was to develop the fun aspect of reading and a desire to want to read for pleasure. **YOU CAN HELP** us with donations of current children's literature, such as *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books, or any graphic novels for elementary age. All donations would be appreciated!

Susan Frank, Pathways Elementary Coordinator

PCC Mission Snapshots

- A client along with her two young children had to relocate to Roanoke to escape domestic abuse from her boyfriend. She quickly located a full time job. She works a night shift and her aunt provides childcare during the day. Recently, the ex-boyfriend found her and she had to obtain a protective order. Then unexpected medical expenses caused her to fall behind in her bills. PCC helped with rent and has provided groceries during the summer. She and her children have been "adopted" for Thanksgiving and Christmas assistance by one of our partner churches.
- A 29-year-old client first came to the PCC in June to ask for food. She lost her job because she could not afford car repairs. Her apartment, which she shares with her 5-year-old son, was infested with bed bugs. In addition to providing financial aid and groceries, PCC helped her to find a new apartment. She called recently to let us know she had just started a new job that pays \$13 per hour.
- Another woman has been a PCC client since 2011. Her husband is disabled and her now 21-year-old son was born with a severe handicap that left him totally dependent on his parents. Unable to work since her son's birth, she devotes all her time to his care. Household income is through the husband's disability, a stipend for their teenage daughter, and food assistance. The son lost his disability income when he turned 21 because the mother was unaware she had to file for guardianship. They now have a lawyer to help with reinstating the payments. PCC has been able to assist this family with food and emergency financial aid for the last five years. This lovely lady always thanks our staff for their help and friendship.



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The Summer of Stocked Pantry Shelves



This summer has blossomed into a multitude of blessings for the PCC mission.

Amid the hardship and despair of PCC clients struggling to make ends meet, there has been a bright light shining from PCC Emergency Services which provides hope and help for those in need. This radiance comes from the kindness and generosity shown from supporters sending financial contributions and from our many advocates and volunteers who assist in the day to day activities necessary to provide PCC services.

Because of the outpouring of generosity, this will fondly be remembered as the "summer of the stocked pantry shelves." And because of the unusually large supply of food on hand, families have been able to come more frequently for food orders while their children are out of school for the summer. This alone has boosted the spirit of staff and volunteers who spread the word to PCC clients. Offering a wonderful assortment of staples and special selections in the food orders has brought many beautiful smiles from the children as well.

So, where did all this food come from? From YOUR weekly deliveries of food; from YOUR church Hunger Busters; from YOUR financial support that allowed funds for food purchases; from Feeding America's wonderful allotment of commodities; and from an extremely generous grant from the S. L. Gimbel Foundation in California.

On behalf of the children receiving food orders this summer...Thank you, thank you all, for making this summer bright and a very special thank you goes out to each pantry volunteer who helped load, unload, stock and restock the summer food.

Cheryl Poe, Director of Volunteers



Patrick Henry High School student Carter Mason didn't need basketball camp this summer. His help loading and unloading pantry food kept him in great shape.



Volunteers celebrate completing the annual pantry inventory.



Joe Lam and Kerry Wolfe share more than their time with PCC clients on Wednesday mornings...they share garden tips and a joke if we are lucky!!!

The Presbyterian Community Center is an equal opportunity provider.