

STEP News

Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action (STEP), Inc.

Volume 1, Issue 2



Your Pathway
to Success

Janet Alling, President & CEO... 38 years of unparalleled dedication and commitment to STEP and its mission

Visionary, leader, mentor, innovator, strategist, deft negotiator, peerless communicator, eloquent writer, problem-solver, decision-maker, always concerned for others, analytical, and inspirational ... This is Janet Alling, President & CEO of STEP, Inc.



After 38 years of unparalleled dedication and commitment to strengthening communities and maximizing resources through which hundreds of thousands of individuals and families have achieved social and economic success, Janet has announced her retirement. Hired in 1973 as STEP's Director of Head Start, Janet was promoted four years later to serve the entire STEP organization as Assistant Director, then Executive Director - culminating with her promotion to President and CEO in 2008. It is remarkable that she has served STEP for 38 of its 45 years of existence.

Janet has never been one to claim credit but, rather, attribute the successes and achievements of STEP's customers to others. Nonetheless, the exponential growth that STEP has experienced, in these past 38 years, is directly attributable to Janet's extraordinary leadership skills. STEP's annual budget has grown from nearly one million to nearly \$32 million; the number of customers achieving social and economic success has increased from less than a couple thousand to well over 10,000 annually; and STEP's staff has expanded from less than one hundred to nearly four hundred.

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STEP, Inc.'s mission is to engage diverse individuals, families, and communities in the pursuit of social and economic success.



Early Learning Pathway

STEP, Inc. Central Regional Key Hosts Professional Development Conference



The goal of the Central Regional Key is to create a quality improvement system, in which all early learning programs and practitioners are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes. As part of this goal, the Central Regional Key hosts a Professional Development Conference two times a year.

On March 11 and 12, 2011, over 400 early learning practitioners attended a conference at Toftrees Conference Center in State College, PA.



Service Areas in 20 counties include:

- Keystone STARS
- STARS Technical Assistance
- Early Childhood Mental Health
- Infant/Toddler Initiative
- Professional Development
- Health Consultation
- Community Engagement
- School Age Project

More than 40 workshops, totaling 115 hours, were presented at the two-day conference.



Workforce Development Pathway

Community Action Association of Pennsylvania Self-Sufficiency Award

Vicky Woodring, a participant in STEP's Supported Work Program (SWP), was one of only 14 statewide recipients of the prestigious Self-Sufficiency Award, given by the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg on March 23, 2011. State Representative Rick Mirabito was on hand to congratulate Vicky on her remarkable achievement.

With hard work and perseverance, Vicky raised her family without public assistance, and she attained her GED while overcoming health issues and working to pursue a career in healthcare.



“Supported Work and AmeriCorps programs mentored me, and gave me hope and vision. I want to be able to support my family in completing my RN studies, and I want my children to be proud of me. I now feel like I belong somewhere and this makes me feel very good about myself.” - Vicky Woodring



State Representative Rick Mirabito presents a PA House of Representatives' Acknowledgement Citation to Vicky Woodring, in recognition of her Self-Sufficiency Award.

Through STEP's Community Connect AmeriCorps program, Vicky served as an Information Specialist in the Supported Work Program. She gained confidence and the realization that she could, in fact, achieve her goals.

Vicky has since moved out of public housing, purchased a home, and now works part-time as a Home Health Aide. She is also enrolled in the pre-nursing program at the Pennsylvania College of Technology. Congratulations Vicky!



Your Pathway to Success

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Janet Alling, President & CEO...

38 years of unparalleled dedication and commitment to STEP and its mission

To chronicle the milestones and achievements during Janet's tenure would fill a book, much less a couple of pages in our newsletter. The programs and services initiatives, alone, would fill a book. Here are just a handful of those accomplishments during her tenure:

- Established a permanent home for STEP's operations in Lycoming County (Lincoln Building - 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport), and Clinton County (Clinton County Community Center - 124 Walnut Street, Lock Haven)
- Constructed an on-site Weatherization Warehouse in Williamsport
- Developed 20 affordable housing units for low/moderate income families
- Awarded state-designation of STEP as the official Area Agency on Agency in Lycoming and Clinton Counties
- Secured bi-county sites for Head Start classrooms, Office of Aging Senior Centers, and Outreach offices
- Operated Day Care Centers - evolving into parent-choice child care
- Expanded child care services to include 20 central PA counties
- Initiated Programs/Services: Transportation, Wilderness Challenge, Youth Corps, YouthBuild, Weatherization, Housing, Linkage Lycoming, CareerLink, Central Regional Key, Child Care Information Services, Community Connect AmeriCorps, Homeownership Counseling, Workforce Development
- Realigned STEP's major programs under 5 Pathways to Success: Early Learning, Housing Options, Workforce Development, Community Collaboration, and Independent Living

Janet's primary focus has always been on meeting the needs of STEP's customers and communities. That is her mantra - "Meeting the needs" and "Making a difference in people's lives, and helping them realize their dreams." She has continually evaluated, carefully analyzed, and responded to the changing needs of customers by forging community partnerships, and accessing and leveraging available funding streams and resources. And, she has always recognized the importance of working collaboratively with all stakeholders - "It is our shared responsibility to help everyone in our communities succeed."

In positioning STEP for the future, Janet has demonstrated STEP's commitment by establishing a permanent physical presence in Lycoming and Clinton Counties. She has ensured a sound, computerized internal fiscal operation, and created a work environment that provides a carefully developed equitable pay plan, as well as training opportunities for staff development. "A satisfied workforce can focus on providing the best possible service to our customers." She is most proud of, and confident in the abilities and professionalism of all STEP employees, including the leadership team that will move STEP forward - a team she is especially proud to have played a role in selecting. "Gathering together people who have passion for the mission, to help customers achieve success ... that's one of the neat things."

On behalf of STEP's Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers ... we thank you, Janet, for 38 years of unparalleled dedication and commitment to STEP and its mission. We will carry on your legacy of "meeting the needs" by striving to embrace the attributes that have defined your leadership (including your visionary "sixth-sense" to foresee possibilities for programming and services) so that our customers can achieve social and economic success for years to come.



Community Collaboration Pathway

STEP Employees "Pay It Forward"

MDA Lock-Up



On Wednesday, March 9, a "fun warrant" was issued by the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) for the "arrest" of John LaRose, Director of STEP's Central Regional Key and Child Care Information Services (CCIS) programs.

Dressed in standard prison-issue orange garb, he was hauled off to be "incarcerated" at the Genetti Lycoming "jail".

After about 2 hours, John raised over \$300, and was "bailed out" so he could return to the office.

Funds raised will help MDA continue to provide research, patient services, clinic visits, support groups and an annual summer camp program for children with muscular dystrophy.

Salvation Army Food Drive

STEP's Lycoming-Clinton Head Start staff and senior Noah Schlesinger, from Central Mountain High School, initiated a food drive that was held during the month of February. More than 250 pounds of non-perishable food items was donated to The Williamsport Salvation Army.



Tour de Shunk Bike Run



This past September, Terry Roller, Director of STEP's Housing and Building Initiatives Program, rode in the 100-mile "Tour de Shunk" to support Lance Armstrong's Livestrong Foundation - dedicated to uniting, inspiring and empowering people affected by cancer.

STEP staff raised \$656 to support Terry's ride, and to commemorate our colleagues that have fought the battle against cancer.

United Way

A total of \$4,496 has been donated or pledged to the local United Ways for 2011 by STEP employees!



STEP employees surpassed last year's all-time record amount by over 10%. \$3,535.48 was raised for the Lycoming County United Way and \$960.52 was raised for the Clinton County United Way.

Please remember that, together, we "Gave United". Thank you!



Workforce Development Pathway

STEP's YouthBuild Program

Wins National Award



YouthBuild Trainees, Steve Temple and Steve Williams, study construction math.



Membership to the Affiliated Network requires adherence to standard guidelines, exceeding performance measures, and a referral from the program advisor.

STEP's YouthBuild program received the National Director's Association of YouthBuild USA's Award for Placement and Employment - Post-Secondary Education, during a ceremony on January 26, 2011 in Washington, D.C.

YouthBuild provides a holistic approach by supporting youth to:

- Achieve their GED or high school diploma
- Learn construction trade skills
- Obtain industry-standard credentials
- Develop leadership skills
- Enroll in post-secondary education training



Building Trades Supervisor, Rob Getz, and Economic & Business Development Director, Dan Merk



Community Collaboration Pathway

STEP's Community Connect AmeriCorps

2nd Annual Dr. Martin Lutheran King, Jr. Day "Walk for Service"



Nearly 100 walkers participated in the 2nd annual "Walk for Service". Dr. King said, "Everyone can be great because everyone can serve."

Special thanks go to the following area businesses for their generous contributions:

- Burger King
- Dunkin Donuts
- GIANT Food Stores
- Julie's Coffee
- McDonald's
- Starbucks
- The Salvation Army
- Walmart
- Wegmans
- Weis Markets

STEP's Community Connect AmeriCorps program sponsored their second annual "Walk for Service", and was one of thousands of AmeriCorps programs throughout the country to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 17, 2011. Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act in 1994, designating it as a national day of volunteer service. Fittingly, the focus of AmeriCorps is "service to community".

Approximately 100 people walked from the Salvation Army in Williamsport to The Center, on Campbell Street, where Williamsport Mayor, Dr. Gabriel Campana, who not only walked, offered remarks to a crowd of nearly 150. Hank Mitchell, Director of The Center, delivered the keynote address. A community lunch was served, followed by games and activities for the children.

STEP's Community Connect AmeriCorps members serve at area nonprofit organizations, as well as generate community service projects and promote volunteerism to build stronger communities.

Among local leaders in attendance were State Representative Rick Mirabito, and City Council President J. Marlene Whaley and City Councilwoman Geralyn Fausnaught.



AmeriCorps' motto for MLK Day is "Make it a day on, not a day off".





**We thank
STEP's Office of Aging volunteers who:**

- Deliver Meals-on-Wheels
- Assist in Senior Centers
- Lead exercise classes
- Visit Long Term Care Facilities as Ombudsmen
- Assist with insurance issues as APPRISE Counselors

If **you** would like to volunteer, call
Michelle at 323-3096 in Lycoming County
or Cindy at 748-2906 in Clinton County
for more information.

Janet Alling, President & CEO

Terry E. Roller, President & CEO Designate

Traci Lowe, CFO

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