STEP Round Hills Campus
Early Learning opportunities, new programming options, and more...
Featured Article

Employee of the Quarter

Connie Baker, STEP Housing Project Development & Technical Manager

October 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

Connie embodies STEP’s values in all that she does. From her exceptional work ethic to her empathy for others, she excels in her abilities as a model employee. She is the first to arrive at work and the last person in the department to leave. She puts the customer and STEP first in all that she does, while challenging herself to complete tasks on time and to a high degree of accuracy.

Connie prides herself in excelling in her daily activities. She interprets, identifies, and makes recommendations to upcoming regulations that greatly assist the department in complying with ever-changing grant guidelines – her expertise has not only reduced time expenditures, but also received acknowledgment from other agencies and HUD monitors that her client files and systems could be used as a model for documentation. She strongly believes that if something is worth doing, it’s worth doing right the first time. Connie always puts the customer first, ensuring they have a positive STEP experience!

“\textit{The Housing Department relies heavily on Connie’s abilities and STEP greatly appreciates all that she does both for the department and our customers.}”

Jeff Dawson & Fred Englert, STEP Housing Options Pathway
Pathways to Healthy Aging

Engagement
The Borough of South Williamsport and STEP are developing recreational and economic improvements to the South Williamsport Community Park. Utilizing a grant from the PA Department of Aging and matching funds from the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, the project will provide a new sidewalk trail connecting the Susquehanna River Walk to the ADA-compliant Fitness Pathway loop, pave the existing stone parking lot, and integrate seven senior fitness stations along with a fleet of flat-footed bicycles.

Success
"We are really excited about this community partnership! Being in such close proximity to the park and River Walk enables us to develop innovative programs that bring a new dimension to our centers for healthy aging."
Jane Thompson, STEP Health, Nutrition, & Fitness Centers Manager

Cooking Outside of the Box

Engagement
An extension of STEP’s Healthy Aging through Local Harvest program is making its debut at the Central PA Food Bank in Williamsport this March! "Cooking Outside of the Box" will be held Thursdays beginning March 2nd from 12:30 - 2pm, at 3301 Wahoo Drive, Williamsport. Workshops are hosted by STEP’s Wellness & Nutrition Initiatives Coordinator, Abbey Eschbach, who will lead the program featuring fun, interactive learning, including: food preparation, new recipes, and taste testing. The classes are free and open to the public; call Abbey at 570-601-9511 to register.

Success
“As we grow older, our dietary needs continue to change. For some seniors, so can their ability to afford fresh and nutritious foods. This partnership with STEP will allow us to help food insecure seniors create inexpensive meals that will keep up with their nutritional needs.”
Eric Orndorff, Regional Director of the Central PA Food Bank
STEP Round Hills Campus

Early Learning Pathway to Success

Partnership Engagement

Thanks to the STEP Board of Directors, STEP’s Early Learning Pathway programs are gaining some much-needed classroom and storage space. In the not-too-distant future, the former Round Hills Elementary School in Old Lycoming Township will be home to classrooms and Early Learning administrative staff, with the potential to house other STEP services and provide space to implement new programs.

STEP’s Housing & Building Initiatives team has been on site performing updates to prepare the classrooms for Head Start students. A newly remodelled classroom is shown after receiving new paint and ceiling tiles.

Success

“Because STEP Round Hills Campus will house classroom staff, supervisors, Family Advocates, Early Intervention staff, and support staff all under one roof, STEP Head Start will be able to provide comprehensive services to families and children at the highest level.”

David Spring, Director of STEP Head Start

Classrooms on the Move

Early Learning Pathway to Success

STEP Head Start has recently opened its doors at two new locations: an Early Head Start classroom on Four Mile Drive in Loyalsock Township and a Renovo Pre-K classroom at the Bucktail Areal Middle/High School. These new locations allow for STEP to continue serving children and their families, while opening the door for STEP to form new and important partnerships with the communities.

Pictured above left: STEP Early Head Start building located at 1685 Four Mile Drive, Williamsport. Above right: STEP Early Head Start students enjoy their new facility’s gross motor room.

Pictured above left: Bucktail Area Middle/High School building. Above right: Bucktail High School Vocational students construct a storage shed for STEP’s Renovo Pre-K program, housed at the school.

Pictured below left: STEP’s Renovo Pre-K students show off their attendance challenge certificates. Below right: The Attendance Challenge school-wide scoreboard is displayed.

A blueprint of the former Round Hills Elementary School illustrates a wing of classrooms.

Pictured above left: Bucktail Area Middle/High School building. Above right: Bucktail High School Vocational students construct a storage shed for STEP’s Renovo Pre-K program, housed at the school.

Pictured below left: STEP’s Renovo Pre-K students show off their attendance challenge certificates. Below right: The Attendance Challenge school-wide scoreboard is displayed.
Santa's Seniors

You made my Christmas.” That's how one senior recipient of a gift box reacted to the special delivery that came with her lunch a few days before Christmas. The gift boxes contained ready to eat or easily prepared foods, cold weather necessities, bottled water, personal care items, and unique cards made by local students and crafting groups, and were accompanied by a poinsettia donated by Helminiak's Greenhouse & Landscaping. Donations were gathered primarily in the beginning of December, then sorted, packed, and distributed to 419 area Meals on Wheels consumers during the week of Christmas.

2016 marked the second year of STEP administering the project, utilizing resources and volunteers/service members from STEP Office of Aging, AmeriCorps, and Head Start. The Sun Gazette, The Lock Haven Express, and Backyard Broadcasting all provided extensive publicity and coverage for the donation drive. The media outlets also served as donation drop-off locations, gathering a staggering collection of individual donations to help fill the boxes, which were generously donated by Miller Brothers Auto Sales, Bill's Happy Camper, and the Central PA Auto Auction. To add a unique touch to the gift boxes, a craft group from STEP's Clinton County Community Center made note cards, students from STEP Head Start classrooms and Dickey Elementary created hundreds of holiday cards for the recipients, and seniors from the Mill Hall Senior Center provided handmade towels.

The donations were sorted and packed by 40 volunteers from STEP's Office of Aging programs, STEP AmeriCorps service members, and community volunteers giving a total of 140 hours. The Pennsylvania State Police delivered boxes in Montoursville and Renovo. STEP's Meals on Wheels volunteers delivered boxes on their routes throughout Lycoming and Clinton counties.

Many thanks to all of our Santa's Seniors contributors, including: Miller Brothers Auto Sales; Bill's Happy Camper; Central PA Auto Auction; Frito-Lay; Kellogg; Elmcroft of Loyalsock; Ralston United Methodist Church; Reese’s Print Shop; Weis Markets (various locations in Lycoming and Clinton counties); ManorCare; Phoenix Physical Therapy; Steinbacher, Goodall & Yurchek; First Quality; Muncy Inmate Organization (PA Department of Corrections, SCI Muncy); Lock Haven University chapter of Xi Epsilon Sigma; Brigandi, Cleghorn & Associates; Clinton County Dental Clinic; Susque-View Nursing & Rehabilitation; Novitas Solutions, Inc.; the employees of Restless Oaks restaurant; and Celtic Home Health & Hospice. Countless individual donations were delivered to STEP and to the media outlet offices. Special thanks to Dunkin Donuts (Newberry), Weis Markets, Giant Food Stores, and Little Caesars, who contributed refreshments for the many volunteers who sorted and packed the donations.

Pictured from left: Volunteers BethLynn Lowell, Sandy Ammerman, and Jane Hill deliver a hot meal, gift box, and poinsettia to Meals on Wheels recipient Inez Allen of Lock Haven.

Success

“It is clear that items we sometimes take for granted are greatly appreciated by Meals on Wheels recipients. These boxes are a wonderful gift from the community.”
- Granddaughter of Meals on Wheels recipient Louise Smith -
MLK Day of Service

On Monday, January 16, 2017, STEP AmeriCorps, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Lycoming College, and Beloved Community Council hosted a Peace Walk and organized service projects throughout Lycoming and Clinton counties as part of the nationwide Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. MLK Day 2017 marks the 10th year that STEP AmeriCorps has held activities for the day of service.

The Peace Walk began at 9:00AM at Lycoming College’s Lamade Gymnasium. Participants marched a 1-mile loop, escorted by the Williamsport Trolley with musical accompaniment by Lycoming Brass.

After the march, a Service Project Rally was held at Lamade Gymnasium before participants dispersed to 15 sites throughout Lycoming and Clinton counties. Sites included the following agencies: West End Christian Community Center, Saving Grace, American Rescue Workers, Sojourner Truth, Central PA Food Bank, Footprints of Montgomery, Inc., New Love Center Food Pantry, Family Promise of Lycoming County, Inc., The Salvation Army in Lock Haven, The Salvation Army in Williamsport, West House, Center City Food Pantry, Firetree Place, and Transitional Living Center. At the sites, volunteers served the community by constructing, organizing, cleaning, serving meals, making repairs, and performing other hands-on activities.

“We had more than 200 participants for the Peace Walk and 175 volunteers who donated their time and talent to 15 area non-profit organizations. Thank you to all who took time on MLK Day to 'make it a day on!'”

Emily Gale, STEP AmeriCorps Program Manager
The mission of STEP is to engage diverse individuals, families, and communities in the pursuit of social and economic success.

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2138 Lincoln Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
Tel: 570-326-0587
Fax: 570-322-2197
E-mail: step@stepcorp.org
Web: www.stepcorp.org

124 East Walnut Street
Lock Haven, PA 17745
Tel: 570-858-5800
Fax: 570-858-5808
E-mail: step@stepcorp.org
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