

Article on Foundations Luncheon for Doylestown Observer

Three Doylestown Area Non-Profit Community Youth Programs Receive Grants

By June Portnoy

On October 12, over 150 community service leaders, non-profit organizations and local government leaders attended the Foundations Community Partnership "Partnership in Youth Services" luncheon ceremony held at the Doylestown Country Club.

The event honored 12 non-profit community programs in Bucks County that are making a difference in the lives of local children with monetary grants of \$3,000 each. Three of these programs are taking place in the Doylestown area.

With the help of this grant, Peace Valley Holistic Center in Chalfont will educate special needs children, siblings and parents in coping skills, stress management, audio therapy and natural food diets. This project strives to make life at home and school more productive, meaningful and less stressful, and provide a better quality of life for the entire family.

This Holistic Center uses a three-prong approach consisting alternative modalities for children, teaching parents to use these holistic therapies at home and a holistic approach to legal advocacy. This one-of-a-kind approach is a prototype developed by Dr. Christine Davis, a naturopathic doctor.

By giving parents the knowledge and tools they need to help their child at home, they are no longer interrupting their daily routine by driving their child a long distance to receive therapy several days a week. This significantly reduces the stress felt by the family.

A key component of this three-prong approach is teaching parents how to advocate for their child at school and navigate the educational system. "Parents feel empowered with this knowledge," says Peace Center's Education Law attorney, DonnaMarie Davis who teaches parents these techniques in a peaceful, holistic manner.

The Peace Center in Langhorne hopes to use its grant to continue executing its Task Force at Lenape Middle School, while also implementing it at the other middle schools in the Central Bucks School District.

Through this program, the Peace Center has offered training in diversity awareness to the Task Force at Lenape Middle School, which is comprised of students, teachers, parents and administrators. They come together to develop preventative strategies that deal with incidences involving intolerance and insensitivity, often leading to bullying.

"The key is having students as part of the group to advice the adults about what they believe will work with their peers," says Kathleen Sweeney, **(Need Your Title)**. This Task Force also helps students learn to express their concerns and come up with solutions. In addition, it creates an awareness of being tolerant about people's differences.

The Central Bucks YMCA will use its grant to help support the fees to run its special needs Cub Scout and Boy Scout Troops in Doylestown. These troops serve individuals with mental health and mental retardation, all of whom are developmentally delayed.

For this reason this Boy Scout Troop accepts males from ages 18 to 30, and the Cub Scouts accepts first graders and older until they have finished all their credentials to become a Boy Scout.

All scouts learn about citizenship, community awareness, teamwork and physical fitness, but they are taught at a slower pace that is developmentally appropriate for them. Groups are structured to meet scouts' needs and programs are simplified.

"These scouts live in a world where they feel like the minority every day," says Brooke Johnston, Special Needs Program Coordinator of the Central Bucks YMCA. "But when they come here, they are in a group with peers just like them in a place where they feel like they belong."

Other local non-profit organizations to receive grants during the Foundations luncheon were the Bristol Township Educational Advancement Fund's Healthy Decisions for Healthy Living, Millcreek Elementary School's Stamp-Out Bullying Assembly Project, Neshaminy School District Middle School's Summer P.A.S.S. at-risk youth program, Camp Craniums week-long camping retreat for children with brain injuries, Center for Special Learning Charter School implementing restorative practices, Bucks County Housing Group's new Morrisville youth counselor program and the Bucks County Audubon Society ASD student education program.

"Foundations is proud to offer grants for the twelfth year through the Partnership in the Youth Services program," said Foundations Executive Director, Ron Bernstein.

For more information about the Foundations Community Partnership, visit

<http://www.fcpartnership.org/>