



Community Benefit Report | Summer 2022



‘A Labor of Love’ Anonymous Donor Enables Pre-K Nutrition Program

Eve Bieber of Montgomery County Family Services speaks to guests at the Foundation's charter dinner in June.

Pottstown's youngest learners are starting each day ready to tackle new challenges thanks to the dedication of [Montgomery County Family Services'](#) staff and a \$50,000 donation from a former Foundation board member.

Eve Bieber, Family Services of Montgomery County's director of community prevention programs, shared the impact of the gift at a Foundation gathering in June.

"My staff noticed that about 25 to 30 percent of our Pre-K Counts students were facing food insecurity," said Bieber. "If children are hungry, they're not learning. If they're not getting great nutrition, there are more disruptive behaviors in the classroom."

The Foundation helped make a connection with a former Foundation board member who wished to provide anonymous support for early childhood education and the need established by Montgomery County Family Services staff.

"I wanted to make sure that the money went to that intended purpose, because if kids don't get off to a good start academically before they attend formal school, then they start off behind," said the former board member. "In my mind, that was an important reason to support that program, and I've felt that way for years."

The Pre-K Counts nutrition program is a creative initiative that involves the whole family in building healthy eating patterns. Not only do educators provide food packages to prekindergarten students, but they also provide a crockpot, a cookbook, and virtual cooking classes. The Pre-K Counts nutrition program aims to support healthy meals for 250 families.

"The response has just been incredible. The families have been so grateful and are so excited when we have the distribution to different classrooms,

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A Message from Our President



Dear friends,

The Pottstown community is headed on an upward trajectory as new projects and partnerships hold promise for transforming the region. With so much opportunity for change, equitable growth and development will be key to ensuring prosperity for all.

Education Equity—Advocacy helped secure an additional \$4.5 million in state funding for the Pottstown School District (PSD) for the upcoming school year, but there is still work to do to sustain equitable funding for education. This annual increase in education funding now puts PSD funding effectively at the 35 yard line in comparison to average school funding across the Commonwealth.

Economic Equity—Workforce development is critical in ensuring current residents maximize the greatest benefit from a continuing shortage of employees in our region and benefit from our area's rising economic fortunes. In addition to attracting investments and jobs to the area, we must match employment with education and training, so as new jobs come along, our workforce has the skills and knowledge to seize the best of those opportunities.

Health Equity—As racial and economic disparities in health remain a local, regional and national issue, PAHWF is engaged in conducting the Pottstown Community Survey, which will gather information in neighborhoods where working together with residents, there is opportunity to build next steps towards better long-term health.

In seeking equity that keeps pace with economic development, we are working alongside our nonprofit partners to do the hard work of ensuring that no one gets left behind. Our area's nonprofits will continue to make the Tri-County Area a vibrant, thriving region where neighbors look out for one another—a community that we all can take part in.

David W. Kraybill, President

with the little children carrying big bags of food and wanting to participate," said Bieber. "Families were telling us how much they appreciate it because they're working during the day and can start the crock pot and have something healthy ready when they all get home."

As a former board member, this donor observed first-hand the ways individuals can make an impact on the health of our community, both through acts of service and through financial support.

"It was a labor of love," said the former board member of their years of service with PAHWF. "Since I was involved with the Foundation for many years, I didn't really consider giving it to any other organization. I believe in what you're doing, and I think it's a great organization."

With nearly 20 years of experience in supporting community organizations and programs that promote equitable health and wellness, the Foundation helps connect donors' passions with projects and programs that need support.

To learn more about how the Foundation's purpose can support your passions, visit pottstownfoundation.plannedgiving.org or contact the Foundation's philanthropy coordinator, Sheri Waldman, by email at swaldman@pottstownfoundation.org.

Play Streets Promotes Family Fun

Building community and bringing neighbors together throughout the summer, the Pottstown Play Streets program provided six sessions where play equipment was set up in neighborhoods across the borough to create safe, fun, and healthy spaces for children, families, and neighbors to connect and play right outside their doors.

Play Streets is being led by Andie Graham, programs coordinator, Pottstown Parks and Recreation, who has hosted community events in and outside of local parks. This includes her successful "Water Wednesdays" initiative, which has brought families out to local streets to cool off at borough fire hydrants over the past three summers.

Chris Wierzbowski, PAHWF grant writer, worked behind the scenes to help spearhead and orchestrate the effort which brought together a coalition of 17 different public and private partners to deliver the pilot in summer 2022.

Andie, Chris, and the rest of the Pottstown Play Streets Coalition received expert guidance and support from Rysheema Dixon and her team at RD Innovative Planning. Ms. Dixon helped develop and launch Wilmington, DE's first Play Streets program in 2018 in partnership with Christiana Care Health System as a solution to gun violence.



Pottstown families come together during the August 11 Play Streets event at Spruce Street Park.

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Community Donates \$114K to Explosion Relief Funds

Pottstown nonprofits raised over \$114,000 in the two months since the May 26 Hale Street explosion resulted in a devastating loss of life and created continuing hardship for dozens of community members in the neighborhood. The generosity of individuals, church congregations, and other organizations across the



With the investigation into the cause ongoing, the site of the explosion remains largely as it was following the blast.

area provided immediate support in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Two community funds were created the day following the explosion: one established by [TriCounty Community Network](#) (TCN) with \$10,000 in initial funding from Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, and another by the Foundation for Pottstown Education in cooperation with the Pottstown School District.

The two funds are addressing the needs created by the explosion, both for members of the White family, who experienced tragic loss of life in the explosion, and neighboring residents who were displaced from their homes by the blast.

All of the \$21,225 raised by the Foundation for Pottstown Education was dedicated to the White family. Of the \$93,528 raised by the TCN fund, \$68,689 has been distributed among the many families impacted by the explosion, with the remaining funds reserved for future support.

The TCN fund committee is handling the task of longer-term support for affected residents, which includes ensuring those still displaced are not left without housing.

Fundraising efforts are ongoing, and donations may be made online at tcnetwork.org/donate-pottstown-explosion-fund. Checks may be mailed to TriCounty Community Network's office at 724 N. Adams Street, #203, Pottstown, PA 19464, with Pottstown Explosion Support Fund in the memo line.

Play Streets (continued from page 2)

Among the community partners participating or supporting Play Streets were: ACLAMO, Family Services of Montgomery County, Genesis Housing Corporation, Maternity Care Coalition/Early Head Start Program, Montgomery County Community College, Phoenixville Federal Bank and Trust, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, Pottstown Children's Discovery Center, Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities, Pottstown Community Action, Pottstown Family Advisory Committee, Pottstown Hospital - Tower Health, Pottstown Parks and Recreation Department, Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection, Trellis for Tomorrow, Tri-County Health Council's Community Education and Collaboration Work Group, and YWCA Tri-County Area.



Board & Staff Updates

Meet Jill!

The newest member of the Foundation's staff, Jill Kauffman, joined the team this winter and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role as grants manager.

Jill is a native of Birdsboro and graduated from Daniel Boone High School. With a passion for the environment and outdoor endeavors, she has visited 19 National Parks, enjoys hiking local trails, and loves spending time horseback riding.

"Growing up in the area has given me a deeper understanding of some of the challenges facing our community and it has been exciting to see the positive work and outcomes our community partners have achieved," she said. "I believe in the philosophy 'leave it better than you found it,' and I'm looking forward to helping work towards improving the health and wellbeing

of the community."

A graduate of Mansfield University, Jill has expertise in communica-

tions, administrative support, customer service, and environmental stewardship. Her career has included a number of nonprofit

roles in development and communications. Over the past decade, she has served in roles at the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Wegmans Food Markets, Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School, and the



Jill Kauffman

Northeast Organic Farming Association.

"One of the most important aspects of my role is to assist our community partners. I understand the hard work and effort that go into grant seeking and management," she said. "I'm excited to bring the experience and knowledge I've gained from working in development and grant seeking to the Foundation to further improve grant processes and the relationships with partners and grantees."

As grants manager, Jill is responsible for assisting community partners as they navigate the grantmaking framework, managing grants processes, coordinating grant information for board members, and providing technical support for the use of the grants database.

Community Partners Across Pottstown Host Board & Staff

Board and staff members boarded the trolley July 26 to meet with several of the Foundation's community partners. Pottstown Athletic Club, the Rickett's Center, Pottstown Children's Discovery Center, Schuylkill River Greenway's Take It Outdoors, and Pottstown Community Action all hosted sessions to discuss their histories, facilities, and programs.



Newest Board Member Builds on a Lifetime of Service

The newest member of the Foundation's board, Charles Haddad, has been a vital part of the Boyertown community for decades and brings insight, experience, and motivation to build strong connections among neighbors in Pottstown, Boyertown, and the surrounding communities.

Haddad became part of the Boyertown community in 1945, when he was just in 4th grade. His father and mother both came to America from Syria and raised a family among their neighbors in what was at the time a small Pennsylvania Dutch community. They found a strong sense of community as members of the St. John's Lutheran Church congregation, and Haddad has always felt the need to give back to the community that provided a sense of belonging for him and his family.

A member of Boyertown High School's class of 1954, Haddad went on to attend the University of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Army Infantry Officer's School at Ft. Benning, and Villanova Law School.

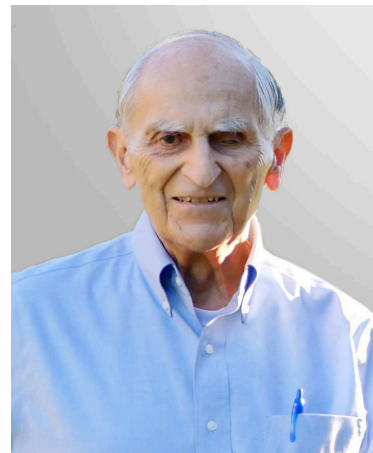
In his professional life, Haddad practiced law as Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia, as First Assistant District Attorney in Berks County, and in private practice before owning and operating a textile company in partnership with his sister. He served as a captain in the U.S. Army, in infantry active duty and active reserves roles, where he gained leadership skills that informed his professional and community endeavors.

"To me, I learned more in the military than I did in college about leadership and taking responsibility," he said. "I use these two guiding principles: take command of the situation and take care of my people, and they will in turn take care of you."

As a community organizer and activist, Haddad worked through the Rotary Club to chair three projects at Boyertown Park and was a charter member of Building a Better Boyertown's Pennsylvania Main Street Program. Haddad is the current board president of a group that helped restore the Boyertown State Theatre, and is a charter board member and chief of staff of the Gen. Spaatz WWII Museum, which opened in October 2021.

"It's been a worthwhile experience for me to support the community that has supported me so much," he said. "In a way, it's a rewarding experience to be able to connect people to where they have to go with their projects and programs."

I feel that I have the ability and the reputation to knock on some doors and get people to listen to programs that are being generated by community groups. I find that I can get people to work together rather than every community group going their own way. It's a matter of synergy. We can do so much together as opposed to doing things separately."



Charles Haddad

Bringing folks together to serve the community has been a common thread throughout his life, and forging stronger bonds across county lines is part of the reason Haddad was excited to join the Foundation's board.

"I think I can connect the Berks County side of Boyertown with the Montgomery County side of Boyertown," he said. "There's so much that Pottstown and Montgomery County can offer that we in Boyertown can participate in a way that's constructive."

Haddad reflected on the ways the Foundation has worked to support projects in Boyertown and looked toward new opportunities for partnership with Boyertown organizations.

"My perception of the Foundation is that it was a god-send for many of the projects I worked on as a Rotarian with projects at Boyertown Park," Haddad said.

"The Foundation was always helpful for providing a catalyst of funding to move things along. And we were able to match the funding from the Foundation with local contributions. I think as we understand more the mission of the Foundation, there will be more opportunities for us in Boyertown to participate in that way."

Stay up to date with the latest news and events. Visit us on the web at
pottstownfoundation.org.



Spring 2022 Grant Round:

The Spring 2022 grant round built upon the implementation of the [Foundation's new Results Framework](#), in which our goal is to foster a culture of transparency, equity, and learning in the community and with our partners. During the latest grant round, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation awarded \$1,220,000 to 34 projects and programs in the Pottstown Area. Grants are categorized under two core pillars (Developing Youth Potential and Promoting Equitable Health & Wellness) and divided among a total of six program areas.

Developing Youth Potential: Early Childhood Development
\$140,000 was awarded to fund three projects.

Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County

Ensuring a Healthy Start and Benefits Access for Underserved Families

Montgomery Early Learning Centers

Increasing Opportunities for Outdoor Activities & Gross Motor Enhancement

Pottstown School District

PEAK Whole Child Wellness

Developing Youth Potential—School Programs (K-12)
\$403,000 was awarded to fund nine projects.

Pottstown Children's Discovery Center

No Kid Left Out: Growing a Love of Learning

Pottstown School District

Healthy School Communities – HS gym project

Boyertown Area School District

Brain Body Mind Connection

Brookeside Montessori

B-Well Program

Daniel Boone Area School District

District Wellness

Owen J. Roberts School District

Fit for Life Strategic Wellness Program

Pottsgrove School District

2022-23 Health & Wellness Grant Proposal

Pottstown School District

Healthy School Communities

Spring-Ford Area School District

SFASD: Wellness Matters 2022-23

Developing Youth Potential—Youth Preparedness
\$192,000 was awarded to fund five projects.

Pottstown Area Police Athletic League

Supporting Program Implementation & Offering Opportunities in Youth Sports

Greater Pottstown Tennis And Learning Association

Game, Set, Advantage

Julian Dorsey Foundation

Eliminating Seasonal Youth Program Gaps within Pottstown

Pottstown Penguins Ice Hockey

Developing Core Values through Youth Ice Hockey

Project Purpose: Mentoring with a Purpose

After School Homework Help

Promoting Equitable Health & Wellness—Built Environment
\$299,000 was awarded to fund nine projects.

Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee

PARRC Interactive Map and Story Map Project

Save Alliance Foundation d.b.a. GreenAllies

Teaching Kitchens—Nourishing a Community

Adventure Grove Inclusive Playground, Inc.

Hoffman Field—Adventure Grove Inclusive Playground Master Plan

East Coventry Township Parks and Recreation

Parker Ford Riverside Park Engineering Project

Expressive Therapy Concepts, Inc.

Smashville Badminton: Kids and Adult Fitness Program

Montgomery County Housing Authority

Bright Hope Community Play Space

North Coventry Township

Coventry Woods-Chestnut Hill Trailhead Improvements Project

Township of Upper Pottsgrove

Upper West/Sprogels Run Trail Improvement Project

West Pottsgrove Township

Pool Property Master Plan

Promoting Equitable Health & Wellness—Health Access & Delivery
\$106,000 was awarded to fund four projects.

Pottstown Public Library

Informed Patrons are Healthy Patrons

Accion Comunal Latinoamericana de Montgomery County

ACLAMO's Pottstown Community Health Connections Program

Mitzvah Circle Foundation

Critical Needs for Healthy Families, Diaper Bank, & Period Supply Programs

Pottstown Family Center (Family Services of Mont.Co)

Project HEARTH (Helping Elderly Adults Remain in Their Homes)

Promoting Equitable Health & Wellness—Health Equity
\$80,000 was awarded to fund four projects.

Chester County Food Bank

Fresh2You Mobile Market

Meals On Wheels Of Chester County, Inc.

Purchase of nutritious meals for homebound residents in northern part of Chester County

TriCounty Community Network, Inc.

Resident Engagement, Equity, Power

United Way of Boyertown Area

Supporting Gilbertsville/Boyertown Area Residents to Attack Homelessness and Near Homelessness

Key Grant Cycle Dates

- Application Due: October 3, 2022
- Final Approval and Declination Notifications: Week of December 5, 2022
- Grant Term Start Date: January 1, 2023
- Spring 2023 Letter of Intent Opens: January 1, 2023

Learn how the new Results Framework is helping drive long-term, sustainable change in cooperation with our community partners:
pottstownfoundation.org/framework