

Well-Informed

Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation | Community Benefit Report | Winter 2013



Small Steps for Healthy Changes

Celebrating organizations already making strides toward a healthier new year – one step at a time!



The Schuylkill River Greenway Association encourages people of all ages to be active through its Bike Pottstown program. They've also made it easy for the community to use area amenities in order to try new activities—kayaking, for instance. Their Pedal and Paddle events were extremely popular over the summer.



One way that the **Pottstown Area Seniors' Center** made it easier for members to participate is simply by increasing the number of available activity sessions, especially in the evening and weekend hours. That includes nutrition and weight loss programs, as well as musical appreciation and learning new languages. And, even pausing for a moment to celebrate the organization's oldest member, Sophie Voynar, who celebrated her 106th birthday in 2012.

The Tri-County Area YWCA offers programs that inject fun into exercise. Sometimes that's all the encouragement necessary to make a commitment to fitness. When people enjoy what they're doing, whether it's through Zumba or yoga classes, they'll keep coming back!



Promoting Healthy Living

[EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER](#) | [BOARD PROFILE](#) | [GRANTS IN ACTION](#) | [FALL GRANTS](#)

a message from our director



Dear community,

It's time to celebrate a brand new year!

This January, we challenge you to chart a more successful path. As you read on, you'll find our theme in this report encourages small changes toward healthy results. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't have an amazing and audacious goal in mind. Rather it's simply that all of those small, attainable steps will lead you toward living healthy. For example, cut your weekly Starbucks visits in half. For those daily gingerbread latte addicts, that means you'll save about \$15 each week and avoid almost 1,000 empty calories.

Can you do it? Yes you can! Begin by considering what motivates you:

Feeling good about yourself is a gift that keeps on giving to those around you. Starting your morning with a walk around your neighborhood will leave you feeling energized and upbeat.

Having fun is allowed. And encouraged! Focus on limiting any negative reinforcements around living a healthy, active life. And, find fun ways to live healthy—for instance, taking Zumba classes because it feels more like dancing.

Being a good role model is often the most powerful motivator of all. If you're a parent, you become an inspiration to your child. Likewise, older siblings pave the way for their younger brothers and sisters.

Start your year off knowing this: One of the greatest things you can do is believe that you have the power to make healthy changes in your life. On behalf of the Foundation, we wish you a safe and happy new year!

David W. Kraybill, Executive Director

profile

Laurie M. Betts, M.D., Program Officer for Physical and Preventive Behavioral Health

Dr. Laurie Betts wears many hats when it comes to her work with the Foundation—and she wouldn't have it any other way. She divides and conquers her days by recommending grants for improving access to medical services, as well as providing the impetus for many of the Foundation's initiatives.

She oversees the Foundation's grants priority area of improving access to healthcare. Included in that portfolio are two of the larger grantees, Community Health & Dental Care (CHDC) and Creative Health Services. CHDC provides medical and dental care to a range of patients on a sliding scale. Since they opened in 2008, CHDC has grown to over 11,000 patients. In addition, they are co-located with Creative Health, which is the largest Community Behavioral Health provider in the area. Creative Health sees people regardless of ability to pay. Because they are in the same building, patients can receive seamless and comprehensive care under one roof.

Dr. Betts' work extends to various other grantees, including the Visiting Nurses Association and Legal Aid, which helps people get to the services and medications that they need. She also works with:

- ACLAMO (Accion Comunal Latino Americano de Montgomery County), an organization that serves the Latino population through health fairs, breast cancer screenings and translating services.
- The Maternal and Child Health Consortium, a group that helps pregnant women get both pre- and postnatal care.

"There's a breadth and depth to my job that always keeps me engaged and fresh," said Dr. Betts. You'll see that variety in her initiatives, which cover a range of current topics, including resiliency, childhood obesity and worksite wellness.



Dr. Betts received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Dartmouth College in Policy Studies with a concentration in Energy. She completed the Advanced Foreign Study Program with the University of Toulouse, France. Afterward, she went on to study at UC Berkley and San Francisco State University, before earning her medical degree from SUNY Stony Brook School of Medicine.

Her face is one you've likely seen in the area as she values the role of collaborating with others in seeking out common goals. She is also a public speaker, having just recently given a presentation to the Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce's WOW luncheon. Her topic touched on the many benefits to our brains when we exercise.

When not working for the Foundation, Dr. Betts is mother to three teenagers, as well as an avid bicyclist and runner. She is also the author of the blog, [Foundations for Life: Seeking a healthy balance](#). In a recent post on the importance of passion she wrote: "When I am on my bike, I process everything, feel the wind in my face, and nothing else matters. I am in the zone, and that passion takes me to a place where I come back utterly satisfied, calm, and ready to face whatever else I might be up against that day." It's that appreciation for balance that makes her such a strong advocate for preventive health for the Foundation.

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All in the Family

Sometimes your biggest cheerleaders are the smallest members of your family. At least that's what Rita Paez, director of [Centro Cultural Latinos Unidos, Inc.](#) (CCLU) has found. More than 70 area families have taken part in CCLU's Eight Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle program, as well as its Zumba fitness activity.

Often, it's the children and teens who motivate their parents and serve as language translators when needed. Paez explains that children tend to open up when they are at the Center. "It's a safe place where kids can come in, talk, exercise and play as a family."

This past year has marked a new chapter in inspiring the community to embrace healthier lifestyles one step at a time. And core to the program is promoting a family

approach to a healthy lifestyle. That social and supportive environment serves to create just the right atmosphere for success.

Ultimately, the reward is in hearing a child turn to his mother and say that he doesn't need pizza tonight, instead, opting for a much healthier alternative.

Small Steps for Change:
Through education and encouragement, we get to see the success of others. Often that's enough to motivate others to say, "If she can do it, I can do it, too."



Collaborating to Make a Difference



Sometimes, it's the little things that make for life-changing experiences. Pottstown families are planning family trips to area Farmer's markets. Kids are learning the fine art of cooking by doing more at dinner time. Healthier snacks, like apples or bananas, are taking up residence in office refrigerators. And, savvy shoppers are ferreting out healthy deals through grocery circulars and discount stores.

It's strong evidence that tells Jenn Brown, M. Ed., CIMI and director of [Pottstown Family Center](#), that their efforts are paying off. The Center's goal is to educate people

about the importance of nutrition and making healthier choices. In order to do so, the Family Center has expanded its programs and services with the support of collaborative partners, including The Weller Center, one of only 34 health education centers nationwide providing top-quality, results-based programs.

The Weller Center provided the Family Center with a customized curriculum known as Eat Smart, Play More—lesson plans that are geared directly toward specific community needs and are taught during in-home sessions.

"We find that making simple changes to your diet can be the easiest way to begin a healthier you. For instance, replace one or two glasses of your preferred beverage with glasses of water. Or, begin mixing vegetables into side dishes like Mac n' Cheese or rice.

Even parking farther from store entrances or carrying bagged groceries helps."

"As a result, our hope is that parents begin to make healthier choices in the food they serve their children—from meal planning to food budgets—and ultimately get entire families to be more active."

Jenn Brown, M. Ed. CIMI and
director of Pottstown Family Center



Promoting Healthy Lifestyles



When it comes to [Boyertown Area Community Wellness Council's \(BACWC\)](#) creative and thoughtful programs, what stands out are the stories of area residents who inspire others. For instance, since spring 2011, a married couple has attended Bingo Walking for seniors. Nearly two years later, they still hit the track and have doubled their number of laps. Or, there is the story of a middle-aged woman who had never participated in a formal

weight loss program. She found enjoyment in getting out for evening walks and, over time, lost five pounds. More importantly, she's added exercise to her daily routine.

"We want to make it easier for people to achieve their goals," said director, Carla Haydt. "We also want them to feel as though they're part of a greater community—one that understands and supports them."

With that in mind, BACWC designs smart programs that combine the right mix of challenge and fun:

Running of the Bears: 2013 marks the fifth year for this competition between all of the seven Boyertown elementary schools. The school with the most laps receives the Healthy Bear trophy, a

miniature of the Boyertown Bear painted as a track runner.

Boyertown to Burbank—Walking for the Health of It: The newly revamped online program allows teams to log in each week and calculate the number of miles they have walked in their goal to virtually reach the west coast.

Kids' Celebrity Chef: In this competition, kids get into the kitchens with their parents and learn about healthy foods. They submit their favorite recipes, with the finalists participating in a cook-off.



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Power of Knowledge

Promoting a community culture of health and wellness is top of mind for [Olivet Boys & Girls Club](#). In fact, it was the impetus for the Club's Healthy Lifestyles initiative, which empowers members and their families with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to become more active, while practicing good nutrition.

"One of our proudest achievements over the past year has been watching our membership grow," said James Smith, Chief Operating Officer for Olivet Boys & Girls Club. "In the beginning, many enter the Fitness Center with some degree of apprehension. However, what has really been inspiring is watching members' confidence levels jump each time they visit!"



Not only has membership been on the rise, but 100% of the 209 Club members participated in a fitness activity during each visit to the Club this past year. And, 88% of members say they feel as though they're making better decisions.

Healthy Lifestyles programs for youths and adults include attending fitness boot camps, learning healthy nutrition habits, and attending strength and conditioning classes.

The culminating activity for Healthy Lifestyles is the "Biggest Loser" community contest, which has been well-received and well-attended by residents.

Small Steps for Change:
That statement represents our focus with regard to changing the community. There's no quick fix. It starts with empowering oneself with the knowledge and skills to live a healthier life. Where there's a will, there's a way!



When was the last time you enjoyed fresh vegetables, having only moments before pulled them from the earth with your own hands? Today, it's a pleasure that's become more and more rare. But, it's one that the [Mosaic Community Garden](#) hopes to rectify. David Jackson, president of the organization's board of trustees, relayed his own personal account with a young boy enjoying his first taste of a radish. "We warned him that radishes are a little hot, so he took a small bite," said Jackson. "When I asked him if he liked it, he took a bigger bite and said, 'Yes!'"

Growing a Green Thumb Network

This past growing season, a host of fresh foods was harvested at the community garden located in downtown Pottstown. What was once a vacant lot is now a thriving patch of land for tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkins, watermelons, squash, carrots, Swiss chard, kale and peppers. The gardens are divided into plots that measure either 3.5 feet x 4 feet or 4 feet by 10 feet. At the height of the season, there were 33 occupied plots, with room for more.

It's hard to pin down a generic definition of who is using the garden, as a diverse swath of the community enjoys its benefits—from elementary school classes to families and local businesses. Many share one similarity: They simply don't have the luxury of land for their own gardens. Others, especially kids, learn valuable lessons through school programs. One, for example, features a professional bird watcher who explains how to use binoculars and identify species of birds.

All benefit from the sense of comradery and support, as the group exchanges best practices on growing techniques. While the garden may remain dormant through the winter months to come, look for its rebirth this spring. There are a limited number of plots available, so interested community members are encouraged to download the application and request their space today (a small fee is included).

"The 'Pizza Garden' project, with the children from the Olivet's Boys and Girls Club, which was held at the gardens, was the best example I've seen of a 'Garden to Table' experience in Pottstown. I have spent my life in Pottstown, and I had never seen the community come together like this before to interactively teach children about what's really on their plates,"

David Jackson

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position June 30, 2012 and 2011

	2012	2011
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$169,670	\$131,755
Long-term investments	74,179,027	79,278,183
Equipment and furnishings – net	18,024	10,383
Other assets	3,358	11,904
Total Assets	\$74,370,079	\$79,432,225
LIABILITIES		
Grants payable	\$122,500	\$212,075
Account payable and accrued expenses	136,680	105,779
Other liabilities in connection with the sale of assets	26,222,110	19,393,541
Total Liabilities	\$26,481,290	\$19,711,395
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	\$47,888,789	\$59,720,830
Total Net Assets	\$47,888,789	\$59,720,830
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$74,370,079	\$79,432,225

Attention Public School Teachers: L.L. Bean Mini Grant Funds are still available!

Funding through the L.L. Bean Mini Grant program, established for local students to experience the great outdoors, is still available.

Elementary and middle-school teachers in local public schools are encouraged to plan field trips and programs focused on physical activity and environmental education.

Funds are specifically designated to benefit kindergarten through middle-school aged students and can be used to access local and free resources, in addition to the field trip's transportation costs.

There is no deadline for submission, and grants up to \$300 will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

For questions, application and a list of local outdoor experience resources, contact: Anna Brendle Kennedy, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, ABrendle@pottstownfoundation.org.



Brain-Body Connection Webisode Series

Did you know it's possible to raise your child's IQ? Exercise and active living can act as "miracle grow" for the brain.

The Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation has produced an informative webisode series titled "Brain-Body Connection." Tune in to hear a local wellness coordinator and educators discuss the benefits of providing short brain-breaks in the classroom. Discussion provides tips for both parents and educators on how to encourage concentration, and improve attitudes, behaviors and academic achievement.



Brain-Body Connection – Part 1

features Dr. Missie Patschke, Principal, and Leslie Ruffo, Fourth Grade Teacher, both from [Upper Providence Elementary School](#) in the Spring-Ford School District. Dr. Patschke and Ms. Ruffo discuss the benefits of active learning in the classroom, and family commitment at home.

Brain-Body Connection – Part 2

features Nancy Kupferschmidt, Physical Education Teacher at the [Pottstown Senior High School](#), and David Genova, Wellness Coordinator of the Pottstown School District. Ms. Kupferschmidt and Mr. Genova focus on the importance of incorporating physical activity at the high school level, which will develop into healthy lifestyle habits leading students to healthier lives during their adult years.

For more information regarding these important topics, visit the [Media](#) section of Mission Healthy Living today.

Fall 2012 Grant Round: The Foundation seeks grant proposals that are consistent with our identified mission of improving health outcomes in the Pottstown region. Within our mission, we have established priorities for which our grants are required to serve.

The fall 2012 grant round includes 31 grants, totaling \$691,680 awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, and municipalities. These grants are funded according to the following priorities:

PRIORITY #1: Healthy Behaviors

PRIORITY #1A: Promoting healthy living through nutrition, activities and programs in public and private schools to reduce obesity and encourage healthy living

Brookside Montessori – Growing Up Fit

Daniel Boone Area School District – Healthy for a Lifetime program

Falkner Swamp Nursery School, Inc. – Health & Wellness program

Pottsgrove School District – Wellness Committee Director

St. Aloysius School – Steps To a Healthier You – Fitness and Nutrition

West-Mont Christian Academy – Healthy Snack/Lunch Program Extension

PRIORITY #1B: Improving parks, programming and the built environment to increase access to physical activity

Borough of Pottstown – Manatawny Gateway

Boyertown Rotary Foundation – Fenstermacher Fitness Campus – Phase II

Royersford Borough – Third Avenue Basketball Court Renovation

PRIORITY #1C: Creating and promoting social networks involving healthy living

Boyertown Area Community Wellness Council – Steps to a Healthier Community – 2013

Centro Cultural Latinos Unidos, Inc. – Fun & Fitness Education program

Chester County 4-H – After-School & Summer Programs at Park Springs Apartments

Child, Home & Community – Adolescent Prenatal, Parenting and Support Continuum in Pottstown

Friendship House – The Parent-Child Home program

KenCrest Centers – Resources and Education for Achieving Complete Health (REACH 4)

Pottstown Area Police Athletic League – PAL Operating Program

Pottstown Family Center (Family Services of Montgomery County) – Eat Smart, Play More (ESPM)

Triskeles Foundation – Food for Thought/ Green Intern Program

PRIORITY #2: Physical and Emotional Health

Camphill Village Kimberton Hills – Aging in Community

Carson Valley Children's Aid – Women's Voices, Healthy Choices

Child Advocacy Center of Montgomery County–Mission Kids – Continued Expansion of Mission Kids' Victim/Family Advocate Program

Creative Health Services – Collaborative Family & Childhood Obesity Program

Family Services of Montgomery County – Project HEARTH (Helping Elderly Adults Remain in Their Homes)

Montgomery County Community College Foundation – Dental Sealant Day

Pennsylvania State University Philanthropic Fund – Dining with Diabetes

Perkiomen Valley School District – Construction of Climbing Wall (matching grant)

Pottstown Area Seniors' Center – Enhancing Prime Time Health for Seniors

Visiting Nurse Association Community Services, Inc. – Personal Navigator Program with Expanded Legal Support Services

PRIORITY #3: Strengthen Non-Profits

Montgomery County Planning Commission – Montgomery County 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities – Strategic Planning

Preservation Pottstown, Inc. – Community Gardens



NEW! "Foundations of Life" Blog with Dr. Laurie Betts

Find inspiration and advice by following Dr. Betts as she discusses family life, exercise, nutrition and more. She will cover topics everyone can relate to, so join in the conversation and share your challenges and your successes.

[Click here](#) to follow Dr. Betts today!

Future Workshops on Meeting Facilitation

The Foundation, in collaboration with TriCounty Community Network (TCN), will be planning additional workshops based on "meeting facilitation." Facilitation is a key competency for anyone who leads a team, coordinates a committee or manages a project. You will be provided with the knowledge and opportunities to practice the tools to be an effective and efficient leader.

Scheduling is planned for the new year. Stay tuned!



152 E. High St., Suite 500
Pottstown, PA 19464
Phone: 610-323-2006
Fax: 610-323-0047
www.pottstownfoundation.org

