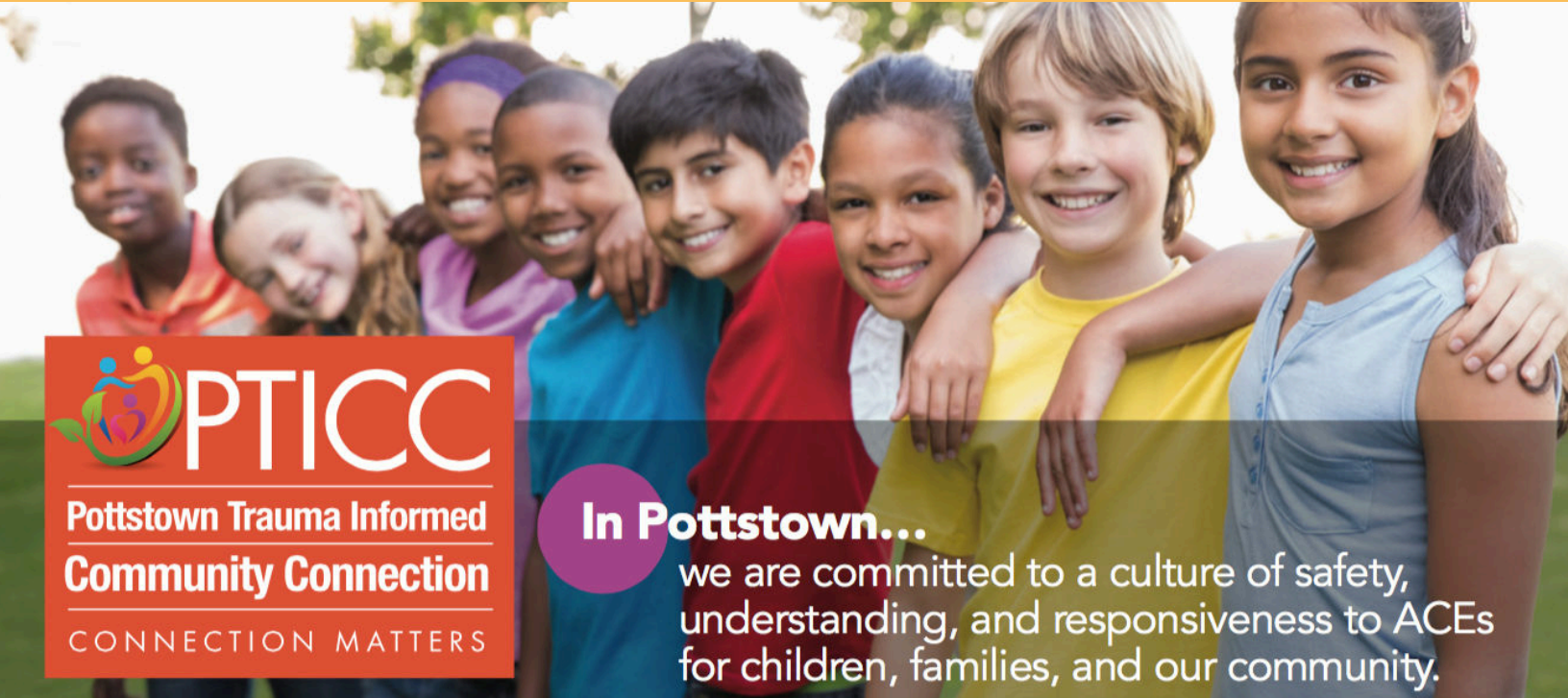



# Well-Informed

Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation | Community Benefit Report | Fall 2016

**PTICC**  
 Pottstown Trauma Informed  
 Community Connection  
 CONNECTION MATTERS

**In Pottstown...**  
 we are committed to a culture of safety, understanding, and responsiveness to ACEs for children, families, and our community.

## CONNECTION MATTERS

- Connection matters
- Belonging matters
- Your story matters
- ACEs matter

# Pottstown MATTERS: Becoming a trauma-informed community

How often have you witnessed situations that made you shake your head in judgement of another person's actions? For example, it could be a child who seems to be throwing a temper-tantrum or that person ahead of you at the store, yelling at the clerk for no reason.

Sometimes these types of situations are more than what meets the eye. As a society, we tend to judge these occurrences in everyday life and react with "What's wrong with you?", when the question we **should** be asking is "What's happened to you?" Thanks to a new initiative recently launched in Pottstown, the community will be equipped to do just that — combat trauma and spread hope.

(continued on page 2)



# a message from our president



In Pottstown, **connection matters.**

This is the message of the recently launched Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection (PTICC), an initiative formed out of Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness (PEAK). As we break the cycle of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Pottstown, we look forward to learning more about how we can equip our community to respond to trauma and spread hope.

### Community matters.

Congratulations to Upper Pottsgrove and Upper Frederick Townships, the top two winners of our 3rd annual On Your Park, Get Set, Go!® contest this July, and to the winners of MOSAIC Community Land Trust's 2016 Home Garden contest. Thank you for showing your parks and gardens love this summer!

### Impact matters.

As we strive to fulfill our mission, providing opportunities for the community to enthusiastically embrace a healthier lifestyle, it's important to measure our impact. In this issue, we are pleased to share some of the capacity-building work from over the last two-and-a-half years as it relates to our grantees and their programs.

### Leadership matters.

Recently there have been quite a few changes in non-profit leadership in the community with individuals retiring, moving up in their field or graduating to new responsibilities. The Foundation partners with The Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University's School of Business to offer upper-level courses on non-profit management. La Salle brings its dynamic consultants and trainers into Pottstown to provide local professional development and advancement to non-profits in the region. Visit [pottstownfoundation.org](http://pottstownfoundation.org) to learn more.

### Pottstown and the Tri-County Area matters.

Pottstown is an ever-changing community, and we look forward to its continued progress. Here's to a healthy and happy fall season!

David W. Kraybill, President

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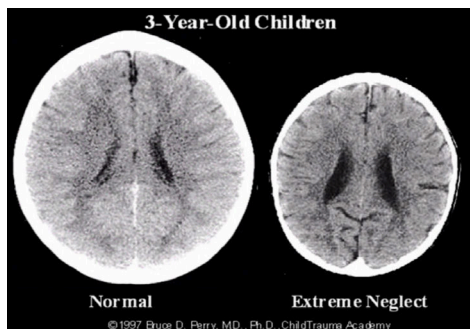
The initiative, Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection (PTICC), came to fruition via the Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness (PEAK), an initiative of the Pottstown School District. PEAK Coordinator and Chair of the Communications and Messaging for PTICC Mary Rieck said the motivation for the launch of PTICC is to combat behavioral health issues affecting children in the district.

"Behavioral health has been a focus of the PEAK initiative for many years as we continue to see violence and aggression in our very young children," said Rieck. "We have responded with different program supports for the staff and children which have helped greatly to deal with the issues that we see."

Rieck noted that one of PEAK's managing partners, United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, had been involved in the Adverse Childhood Experience work in Philadelphia and strived to bring it to the Pottstown area.

"Our PEAK managing partners decided that, in addition to our current behavioral health supports, we need to make a focused, community-wide effort to work together to support our families and children who have been impacted by trauma," said Rieck.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), also known as childhood trauma, are events or series of events that involve a threat to one's physical or emotional well-being, or are overwhelming, deeply distressing, alarming, fearful, or terrorizing. It leaves one feeling helpless; changes the way a person understands him or herself, others and the world; and changes one's neurological landscape. ACEs can disrupt the development of the brain and other organ systems, increasing the risk for stress-related disease and cognitive impairment, according to PTICC.



# 10 ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Family member with mental illness
- Witnessing domestic violence
- Parent with drug/alcohol addiction
- One or more parents incarcerated
- Parental separation or divorce

After much planning by the steering committee, PTICC launched at a community partners' meeting on July 20 at Montgomery County Community College, bringing together 125 people from the community who were eager to learn.

"It was much higher attendance than anticipated and everyone on the steering committee was very happy with the interest in the topic by so many different community organizations," said Rieck. "This is a topic that obviously resonates with many people in the community who are working with our children and families."

At the start of the meeting, Rieck stood before attendees and asked how many of them knew someone who had been divorced. After several people raised their hands, she informed them that those individuals had been exposed to trauma. ACEs are prevalent, across all populations, leading to a national public health crisis and may cause poor social, economic, and health outcomes, according to the presentation shared at the PTICC launch meeting.

PTICC's main focus is how to support families and children in the Pottstown area so that they can build relationships that lead to success in school and life, according to Rieck.

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## Ted Talk: How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime by Nadine Burke Harris



## Marissa's Story: Breaking the Cycle



## Get Involved!

Visit [www.pottstownmatters.org](http://www.pottstownmatters.org) for more info.

Follow PTICC for updates:

 Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection

 @PottstownTICC

 @PottstownTICC

Register for ACEs Connection @ <http://www.acesconnection.com>

Register for the Pottstown ACEs Connection @ <http://www.acesconnection.com/g/pottstown-aces-connection>

Look for Part II of Pottstown MATTERS: Becoming a trauma-informed community in our Winter 2016-2017 issue!

(continued from page 2)

"Our first step is increasing the awareness of ACEs by the organizations and agencies who work with or impact children and families," said Rieck. "As we think differently about the challenges faced by our children and families, we will be able to support them and connect them with needed resources."

PTICC also strives to help build social connections among parents as one of the protective factors against child abuse and neglect. "For families that need additional support or resources, PTICC wants to ensure that families are connected with the local resources and help to close any gaps in those services or resources," said Rieck.

So, what exactly does being "trauma informed" mean? It is something PTICC and the community continues to learn about.

"I think it means that when you are interacting with a person, whether child or adult, to remember that the surface level behavior or language may have a deeper cause that they may not fully understand," said Rieck. You need to look beyond the surface and remember to think, "What may have happened that is precipitating this response?"

PTICC recently had a two-hour Trauma 101 training for all of the Pottstown school district support staff, including the food service staff, maintenance, bus drivers, volunteers, and other support personnel.

"After the training, the district building and grounds supervisor commented that his staff really liked the training. It helped them to understand what some of our children face and reinforced the importance of their relationship with the students," said Rieck. "It is very satisfying to hear that this work is connecting with people at all different levels."

Rieck sung the praises of the PTICC steering committee and its work in getting the initiative off the ground in the community.

"We have representatives from 16 different community organizations and programs that meet each month to guide the work forward," said Rieck. "Every person is absolutely committed and spends a lot of their personal time focusing on how we can have a greater impact."

"I think it means that when you are interacting with a person, whether child or adult, to remember that the surface level behavior or language may have a deeper cause that they may not fully understand," said Rieck. You need to look beyond the surface and remember to think, "What may have happened that is precipitating this response?"

There will be two more Trauma 101 trainings this fall where attendees can get an overview of how trauma impacts the brain and development. The community partner meetings will also be continued on a quarterly basis and are open to the public. The next meeting is scheduled for October 19 from 9-11 a.m. at Montgomery County Community College. PTICC will also be forming special interest groups to focus on particular areas or segments of the population.

To those wondering why they should get involved, Rieck believes doing so will help Pottstown community members understand the adults and children they interact with or have some connection to.

"This could be family members, friends, the public, or to also help you understand yourself better and why you may react in certain ways in situations," said Rieck. "This is not a socioeconomic issue — trauma and ACEs impact children and adults in all zip codes and all income levels. This work will help all of us to better serve the children and families in Pottstown."

For general information or if you have a particular interest related to the subject, contact Rieck at 610-970-6655 or [mrieck@pottstownsd.org](mailto:mrieck@pottstownsd.org).



# The Foundation's Impact:

In an age where big data is driving sharing in new ways, measuring impact is a key evaluation measure to ensure the Foundation is continuing to fulfill its mission, enhancing the health and wellness of area residents, providing education, funding, and programs that motivate people to adopt healthy lifestyles, year after year.

For the past two-and-a-half years, the Foundation has been working with Algorhythm, a consulting agency based out of Philadelphia, to better assess and understand the effectiveness of the grantee programs it funds. Algorhythm's mission is to empower social impact organizations by finding the right insights and putting them in the right hands at the right time.

Through Algorhythm, the Foundation provides two types of assessments to grantees to help them effectively evaluate their efforts. The first is the programmatic assessment tool, which offers an assessment of the programs grantees develop using Foundation grant funds. The second is an organizational capacity tool known as iCAT, a planning and evaluation tool to strengthen non-profits.

Ana Ramos-Hernandez, Algorhythm's Chief Data Whisperer and the Foundation's lead consultant, discussed the differences between the program and the iCAT tool in terms of what the Foundation hopes to achieve.

"The program tool really is about measuring the extent to which best practices are being implemented by the grantees," said Ramos-Hernandez. "We researched each topic area to identify the best practices among the programs in the area."

At the beginning of each grant cycle, Algorhythm and the Foundation's grants staff work together to assess the extent to which the programs being funded include these researched best practices. At the end of the funding period, which is generally a year later, the Foundation assesses the extent to which those best practices actually took place, according to Ramos-Hernandez.

"The first phase is based on what grantees are proposing they're going to do with the Foundation's grant funds and we assess whether they're planning on using best practices," said Ramos-Hernandez. "The



The iCat tool dashboard. Data shown is for example purposes only. Courtesy of Algorhythm.

second phase is really about what they (the grantees) actually did and the extent to which they actually used best practices."

Essentially, the Foundation strives to collect uniform shared measures from all of its grantees via this evaluation. Program staff bridges the connection between grant review and evaluation, integrating Algorhythm's tools with the overall grants process to help grantees best utilize the Foundation's grant funding. The Impact Committee, comprised of the Foundation's grants staff and board members, meets regularly to decipher the data and determine how to best integrate this information into the grants process.

"This is something that the Foundation hadn't been able to do in the past," said Ramos-Hernandez. "The grantees were reporting based on what they felt they were doing; but not all grantees were reporting on the same thing, so it was very difficult to run comparative analysis."

The program tool also allows the Foundation to match and measure what a grantee proposes compared to what they actually accomplished with the funds.

"We all know that when an organization submits a grant, they're going to put their best foot forward. Oftentimes we find that organizations overpromise what they can

actually do, for example, how many people they can recruit and how many activities they can implement with the resources and within the time frame they have," said Ramos-Hernandez.

Additionally, there are circumstances in which organizations deliver more than they promised they were going to, Ramos-Hernandez noted. This tool gives the opportunity to see those differences.

"It becomes a conversation starter for the next grant cycle, showing what went well with the previous grant and what best practices aren't being implemented, so that in the future, they can."

The program tool allows the Foundation to tell stakeholders what grantees are doing, according to Ramos-Hernandez.

"So, the Foundation, as a funder, is not only delivering resources that furthers the work in terms of healthy habits in the community, but it now knows that the way it's delivering said resources is how it should be delivered."

The iCAT tool is an opportunity for an organization to assess itself using a 360-degree evaluation. This means that everyone in the organization has the

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# grants / board profile

(continued from page 4)

capacity to participate in the evaluation, including board members. As a result, they are more cognizant of how much they actually know about the organization and how much more they need to learn.

Nelly Jimenez-Arevalo, Executive Director and CEO of ACLAMO Family Centers, is currently using the iCAT tool.

“When I first found out about the iCAT tool, I got very excited and my excitement grew after I was able to get a large group of our agency to participate,” said Jimenez-Arevalo. “I am very methodical, and I like outcomes and improvement processes. Therefore, it was a gift to be able to see it on paper and share this tool with others.”

For the grantees, the evaluation gives them the data they need to tell their story, according to Ramos-Hernandez.

“In many cases, it’s the story they already knew,” said Ramos-Hernandez. “However, they had no data to prove it to their board members or to their funders and so this is the opportunity for them to finally have concrete data about their areas of strength and areas of weakness.”

Jimenez-Arevalo said she is grateful to have access to a tool like iCAT to help improve her organization.

“This is a work in progress, but now we have a tool that shows us what areas we should work on to improve the agency,” said Jimenez-Arevalo. “For me, personally, it is important to help us strategize with our board a plan that makes us stronger as an organization.”

The iCAT helps communications, decision-making and fundraising, said Ramos-Hernandez. It also allows organizations to have a much more honest conversation with the Foundation about the funding needed for capacity building. Additionally, it assists grantees in determining how to best utilize the Foundation’s resources while also ensuring that the organization is getting something it really needs.

Jimenez-Arevalo said the iCAT is going to help ACLAMO become more effective in the work they do in the community.

“Thank you to the Foundation for giving non-profits like ours the opportunity to go through this process. Otherwise, we would not have the resources,” said Jimenez-Arevalo.

To Ramos-Hernandez, the evaluation as a whole serves two purposes:

“To be able to communicate what it is that the Foundation is doing and to what extent it’s doing it well,” said Ramos-Hernandez. “Also, it helps identify gaps among grantees, allowing comparison with uniform data across all grantees to better determine areas to focus on and help them.”

The Foundation was one of the first organizations to test out the iCAT tool prior to its launch and Ramos-Hernandez commends it for its work with the process as a whole.

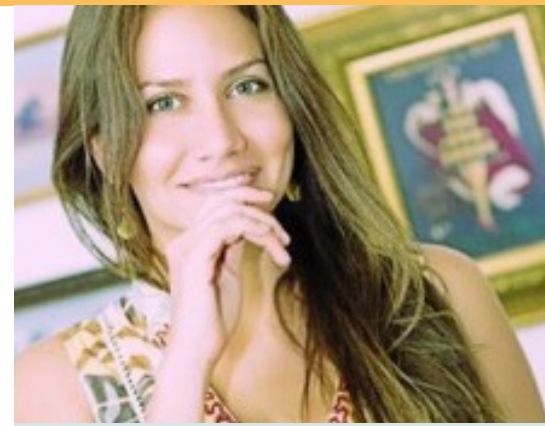
“It takes a certain type of organization to embark in this process,” said Ramos-Hernandez. “An organization that understands the data is important, but that also understands that data is important for the purpose of learning and that some of the things that you’re going to find, you’re not going to like.”

Ashley Pultorak, the Foundation’s Program Officer for Capacity Building, Collaborations and New Projects, conveyed appreciation to the grantees who have taken the time to utilize the resource.

“As community partners, we know that harvesting and processing this information requires a commitment of time and resources from our grantees,” said Pultorak. “We respect their ambition to grow and do our best to foster a culture of learning, growth, and creativity as we collectively seek to improve the health of our community. Having data to complement their qualitative success stories not only enriches our portfolio but showcases this region as one that is driven to make a real impact with those we serve.”

The most significant example of this in Ramos-Hernandez’s eyes is the effort that the Foundation has put forth in terms of ensuring that the grant application process as well as the evaluation process start meshing into one.

“There have been a lot of changes to the evaluation form and the grant application process for the purposes of making it one cohesive strategy, and I think that’s to the Foundation’s merit,” said Ramos-Hernandez.



## Meet Sonia!

In January 2016, the Foundation welcomed Sonia Frecon as one of two new members to its board of directors. She currently serves on the Marketing/Communications Committee.

“I love the mission and all the work the Foundation does,” said Frecon. “I was very inspired... the first time I came to the Foundation it felt like good energy. Everyone was very passionate and motivated.”

A licensed dentist in Peru and a practicing dental hygienist in the U.S., she is a graduate of New York University School of Dentistry. She is also a practicing health coach in integrated health and lifestyle therapy.

“I love preventative health,” said Frecon. “I love being able to help before it happens rather than fix what is already there.”

Frecon is involved with the Wellness Council of Boyertown and organizes monthly healthy movie nights at The Other Farm Brewing Company.

“It brings the community together with healthcare professionals to learn about a variety of health and wellness topics such as sleep apnea, diabetes— you name it,” said Frecon.

Frecon and her husband, Hank, are expecting their first child in October. To support her own health and wellness, She enjoys Zumba and yoga, which she says has helped her during her pregnancy and with carpal tunnel pain. Frecon also enjoys biking and hiking. She and her husband recently hiked the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu in Peru, which took them four days.

To others seeking to lead a healthier lifestyle, Frecon stresses the importance of finding a health and wellness regimen that you enjoy.

“You have to do whatever works best for you — everybody’s different.”

Frecon said she would like to be more hands-on in the community. “I know the Spanish-speaking community struggles a lot and it’s really hard for them to get a grasp of things,” said Frecon. “I would love to help them host workshops or whatever I can do. I’m very inspired to help as much as I can.”

[www.pottstownfoundation.org](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org)





## Meet Adam!

The Foundation welcomed Adam Conish, CFA, to its board of directors in January 2016. He currently serves on the Finance Committee of the board.

Conish is the Managing Director of the Endowment and Foundation Practice at The Glenmede Trust Company in Philadelphia.

As an investment manager, he deals with endowments in foundations and was interested in joining the Foundation's board in a different capacity.

"It feels really good to be a part of the Foundation because my background gives me a very different view of what foundations do," said Conish.

To Conish, the most rewarding parts of serving on the Foundation's board are being exposed to the various programs that the Foundation has instituted and the level of care that his fellow board members display.

"They're very engaged and that's something that was important to see because you have people who are on the board who take their jobs seriously," said Conish.

Due to his background in finance, Conish believes he can have a direct impact on how the Foundation and the Pottstown Memorial Medical Center Pension Plan Fund, which the Foundation oversees, are managed by offering his professional input.

"Dealing with foundations, endowments and pension plans gives a different perspective, even outside of investment management, like fiduciary responsibilities, and best practices," said Conish.

To support his own health and wellness, Conish recently started a new fitness regime, including running and a healthy diet. His advice to others seeking a healthier lifestyle is to take baby steps.

"It all begins with your body, both physically and emotionally," said Conish. "Starting out with even the smallest of plans to try to get back in shape and eat healthier is the first step on a long journey."

## Board Retirements

As of June 30, 2016, two of the Foundation's board members, Dr. William Taddonio and Debbie Zelle, have concluded their terms and retired from the board.

Dr. Taddonio joined the Foundation's board in February 2007. In his nine years on the board, he has served on the Strategic Planning Committee and chaired the Nominating Committee. Debbie Zelle joined the Foundation's board in March 2014. In her two years on the board, Debbie has served on the Grants and Marketing and Communications Committees.

"We are very fortunate to have had both Bill and Debbie serve on the Foundation's board of directors with their extensive medical knowledge, expertise, and passion for the community,"



## Regional Recreation Coordinator Transitions to New Role as Pottstown's Assistant Borough Manager

Justin Keller has completed his tenure as regional recreation coordinator of the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee (PMRPC) to replace Erica Batdorf (Weekley) as the Borough of Pottstown's assistant manager.

"In his two short years in the position, Justin has secured significant grant funding for recreational purposes across the region," Kraybill said. "His commitment to collaboration and parks and recreation has been a driving force within the six municipalities he served. We thank him for the great work he has done and wish him the best in his new position with the Borough of Pottstown."

A search is underway for Keller's replacement.



*Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee  
with Justin Keller (center)*



# contests / staff profile

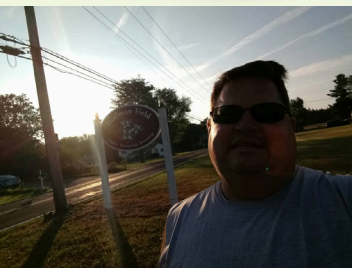


The challenge was 12 parks in one month. Our “parKticipants” achieved it and then some! Congratulations to our 2016 winners:

## Healthiest Park Prize:

**1ST PLACE:** Hoffman/Kulp Fields of Upper Pottsgrove Township  
\$5,000 in grant funds for improvements

**RUNNER-UP:** Bob Wayland Memorial Park of Upper Frederick Township  
\$2,500 in grant funds for improvements



Hoffman/Kulp Fields,  
Upper Pottsgrove Township

## Activity Challenge Prize:

**1ST PLACE:** Bob Wayland Memorial Park of Upper Frederick Township  
\$5,000 in grant funds for improvements

**RUNNER-UP:** Hoffman/Kulp Fields of Upper Pottsgrove Township  
\$2,500 in grant funds for improvements



Bob Wayland Memorial Park,  
Upper Frederick Township

# Home Garden Contest

New categories, expansion into the Borough of Boyertown, and beautiful gardens are just some of the highlights of the 2016 contest! Visit [pottstownfoundation.org](http://pottstownfoundation.org) for a complete list of winners and photos of this year's entries.



Courtesy of Sandi Yanisko



## Meet Danielle!

For the past two summers, Danielle Stong has interned with the Foundation, working alongside staff to organize the annual Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds Institute (HBHM). A 2016 graduate of Ursinus College, Danielle holds a B.A. in applied economics.

Finding a perfect mix of two of her favorite things during her internship, Danielle was introduced to the Foundation by former coach and PAHWF Program Officer for Capacity Building, Collaborations and New Projects, Ashley Pultorak.

“I liked that the internship incorporated both of the things I’m passionate about— event planning and physical activity through events like HBHM,” said Stong.

Danielle began interning with the Foundation in July 2015 to assist Pultorak and PAHWF Controller Laura DeFlavia in the planning and execution of HBHM.

Additionally, Danielle contributed to the organization of PAHWF’s On Your Park, Get Set, Go!® contest, helping to collect and tally weekly votes from 12 participating parks across the region.

While attending Ursinus, Danielle was a member of the field hockey team and currently coaches with the High Styx Field Hockey Club. She hopes to further her coaching career locally at the middle school level. In addition to field hockey, Danielle likes to run and workout at the gym to support her own health and wellness.

Danielle also enjoys reading, cooking and spending time with family and friends in her spare time. In the future, she hopes to continue working in the event-planning industry, but as the summer comes to a close, she says she has enjoyed her time at the Foundation.

“It didn’t feel like an internship. It was almost like I had a permanent position here,” said Stong. “I was treated with respect and given significant tasks that I really liked.”

# Wellness Achievement Celebration

Nineteen local school buildings competed in the Medical University of South Carolina's (MUSC) School Wellness Checklist® Challenge in its second year of existence in the area. The contest aims to reduce childhood obesity through innovative wellness initiatives in schools. The checklist serves as an action guide for participants, implementing evidence-based strategies to improve the overall school health environment, leading schools to make nutrition and physical activity changes. To learn more about the contest, visit [MUSC](http://MUSC).



Held at our new venue — Pottstown Middle School — HBHM 2016 brought together educators to learn new and innovative ways to adopt physical activity as a learning tool in the classroom.

## What did HBHM 2016 look like?

**160**

educators attended

**35**

organizations represented

**13**

area school districts represented



Each school was awarded \$1,000 by the Foundation to be used towards wellness programs of their choosing. As the contest winner, Franklin Elementary received an additional \$2,000 as well as a trophy to be displayed on its campus. Thank you to all participating schools for their hard work in creating healthier environments where their students can learn and thrive!

### Congratulations to the top four schools:

1. Franklin Elementary School of Pottstown School District (pictured above)
2. Brookside Montessori
3. West Pottsgrove Elementary School of Pottsgrove School District
4. West-Mont Christian Academy



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