

Looking Back

Thank you to the employees of Liberty Mutual, Acme-Hardesty, Arlington Heritage Group and the many individuals who supported Sponsor-A -Star in December 2020. Your thoughtfulness brought holiday presents for some of most vulnerable people we serve, including children and adults with disabilities who have no family support.

Many people also donated gift cards and more than 50 winter coats, hats and gloves for individuals who are homeless. Thank you to our coat drop-off site partners Brookwood and Jasper's Backyard. For more opportunities to help homeless individuals in Montgomery and Bucks counties, visit the **Intersect: Community Needs** page on Facebook.

Looking ahead: Save the Date – October 19, 2021 – for 'Chip In' the Access Services Charity Golf Event at RiverCrest Golf Club in Phoenixville PA. A day of golf followed by a delicious dinner! For more information, contact Juliet Kinch via email: jkinch@accessservices.org.

Job Opportunity

Part Time Group Home CLA Staff in Bethlehem, PA

Provide one-on-one supports to adults with developmental disabilities/autism who live in our Lehigh Valley group homes. Our person-centered staff work with the individuals' personal goals and help those individuals maintain or increase their level of independence and live their best lives. Visit www.accessservices.org to apply.

Contact Joyce (610) 866-6667, x1272 JMoeller@accessservices.org



500 Office Center Drive, Suite 100
Fort Washington, PA 19034

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
YORK, PA
PERMIT NO. 200

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

Individuals Aren't Issues



Today faith communities are encouraged to respond to a dizzying array of issues. To name just a few, congregations are asked to address mental illness, disability, homelessness, substance abuse, racism, human trafficking, domestic violence, suicide, abortion, and poverty. We could name many others.

Faced with all these issues, pastors could be forgiven for throwing up their hands and thinking there's no point. Perhaps it's better to simply keep our heads down and focus only on the upcoming worship service. How should we respond to faith leaders and congregations feeling this way? We might be tempted to share more statistics describing the vast impact of any one of these issues. Unfortunately, research has told us that this doesn't tend to work. Studies on the Identifiable Victim Effect (IVE) have revealed that people tend to offer greater help to specific,

identifiable victims than to anonymous statistics. A better approach, then, for encouraging faith community involvement in societal concerns is to emphasize that individuals aren't issues. There are, in fact, real names and faces behind every statistic.

An alternative tool for helping faith communities respond to individuals rather than issues is the **Intersect Community Needs** Facebook Page. This care portal connects the needs of real people with congregations looking to serve their local community. While any faith community can join this particular portal, similar approaches can be replicated anywhere that faith communities and service providers are collaborating for the common good. While no one faith community can address all the issues our society faces, every congregation can respond to local individuals in need of tangible expressions of God's love.

Contact Dave Eckert, Director of Intersect
(215)-540-2150, x1286
DEckert@accessservices.org



ACCESS SERVICES

Creating better ways to serve people with special needs

Access Services, a 44 year-old nonprofit organization, operates in eleven Pennsylvania counties, offering services for children, adults, and families. The mission of Access Services is to empower and serve people in need of specialized supports by providing innovative services that improve their ability to live fulfilling lives in the community.



February 2021

Visit <https://www.accessservices.org>

Expanded Community Settings



Since July 2020, we have been members of the Access Services family. I do hope that this message finds you in good health, emotionally strong and looking forward to 2021 with greater hope and optimism.

Since the Covid pandemic is far from over and the impact has been felt by all of us in different ways, it made me reluctant to ask supporters and donors for financial help, but I was wrong for second guessing the commitment that our donors feel for the work that we do. Your generosity has fueled us and is helping us meet the needs of individuals with disabilities during this unprecedented time.

Over the last year, our direct support staff have proven that they are essential workers. Some families may call them "angels", but they need equipment and supplies in order to provide meaningful services. Since we are no longer in one central location but in various family homes and safe community settings, it makes us now continually in need of new educational supplies, developmental activities, updated technology and iPads, materials to teach leisure skills, exercise equipment, and wellness activities are all in high demand. Should you want to learn more about Altec, Access' new division of day employment services, please visit our website at www.altecservices.org. I hope you will appreciate what you see there. Thank you.

Deb Kunsch, Co-founder and former CEO of ALTEC Services

Increasing Our Remote Capabilities and Supplies

Many things have changed since the onset of the pandemic, but the need for employment and life enrichment services that ALTEC Services offers to people with intellectual disabilities remains the same.

Pre-pandemic, the ALTEC site was a hub of activity for individuals preparing for work opportunities in the community or participating in other on-site activities. It was a place for individuals to build their vocational skills, improve communication, and focus on wellness.

During the pandemic, we moved from operating on-site to safe community settings and in individuals' homes. In December 2020, ALTEC supporters were asked to help meet some of the expenses of this change and they generously responded. How was the funding used?

New iPads: Technology helps our staff to work with individuals in their homes, but we are limited by aging equipment that can no longer be updated. The purchase of new iPads helped staff access and share educational resources, virtual field trips, and other activities with their clients.

Health and Wellness Items: Stretch bands, light weights, and other portable exercise equipment was distributed so that individuals can continue to work on their wellness goals at home.

Educational/Recreational Supplies: Staff mailed or brought craft and educational supplies to homes for use in Zoom sessions. Creativity and education occur virtually in groups via Zoom using these items, and individuals interact with their peers during sessions.

Cindy Smith, Senior Director, is looking forward to opening the ALTEC site for vocational services in late February, pending health guidelines. A new heavy-duty treadmill will be available for use. "The treadmill is a great tool to stimulate the physical and mental wellness of the people we serve."

Our goal is to raise \$2,000 by February 28th to purchase 6 additional iPads. We hope you'll support the amazing programs of ALTEC Services in our peer-to-peer campaign. You can learn more at:

www.accessservices.org/donate

