

BE GENEROUS AND DO GOOD

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

National Volunteer Week



Checking in and wishing you all a happy National Volunteer Week.

These last few months have certainly been a challenging and trying time for many. Our thoughts continue to be with you and your families as we navigate through unprecedented times together.

I have truly been inspired by our volunteers, as my email inbox has been flooded with inquiries about how to help support our programs, participants, and the surrounding community of those in need. We have had to work together to redefine the ways in which we can help our neighbors.

One heartwarming example comes to mind. Volunteers from the Impact Center raised funds to purchase games and art supplies for the residents at ECS' emergency shelter, St. Barnabas Mission.

The team of volunteers went above and beyond, as always, by supplying each of the staff members at St. Barnabas Mission with a pair of comfy socks and a candle because they believe, "the actions of St. Barnabas's staff have always 'lit up' the lives of the residents."

I am honored to work with volunteers that embody ECS' core value of community—the belief that more is accomplished together.

While this year's National Volunteer Week activities and celebrations are limited due to community health concerns, this in no way, shape, or form, limits our appreciation of you.

In this edition of *Be Generous and Do Good*, we celebrate our ongoing partnerships with incredibly dedicated organizations and volunteers, and introduce new volunteers who have used their talents and skill sets to support the work we do here at ECS.

I have enjoyed writing this celebratory edition of our newsletter. It has given me the opportunity to reflect on the remarkable service that has taken place over the last several months, and the continued efforts that our volunteers and supporters provide that helps us make an impact in our programs and in the lives of our participants. Thank you for continuing to be leaders in our work to be generous and do good.

Stay healthy and stay connected. Learn about our latest news, events, program updates, and successes on social media, @ecspshilly.

If you have any stories for future editions of our newsletter, feel free to send me a note at julya@ecspshilly.org.

Julia J...

Julia Loder
Manager of Volunteer Programs

INSPIRATION THROUGH IMAGERY

This special volunteer taught us how art can transform a space. This is her story.

Toward the end of summer, I received feedback from ECS' workforce development team that they were interested in sprucing up the blackboard walls that surround their space to better reflect our work.

We had to act quickly as our next cohort of participants were starting in the fall, so we posted on VolunteerMatch hoping to find someone to help us with this project.

Our request was answered by Liz, an incredibly talented artist, who was excited to use her talents to create more inspiring imagery to help empower the participants that visit this space.

In just two afternoons, Liz and her helpful sidekicks incorporated our vision onto the walls in a way that was better than we could have imagined!

We want to thank Liz for sharing her time and creativity with our organization.

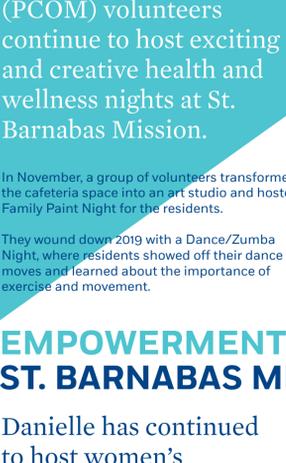
Follow her on Instagram @creativeconceptsliz and check out her blog post about ECS at creativeliz.art/blog.

SEEING YOUTH SUCCEED CAREER DAY

Seeing Youth Succeed (SYS) is a Saturday afternoon, youth-driven program for high school students ages 14-18.

Facilitators guide youth to reach their goals for post-secondary education or entering the workforce, and project-based learning activities help them get there.

At this year's annual SYS Career Day, we had four volunteers, Tanya, Chelsea, Jordan, and Rachel, join us for an engaging afternoon where they shared personal and professional experiences and answered participant questions. Thank you for helping us make this year's SYS Career Day a huge success!



HEALTH & WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

The Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) volunteers continue to host exciting and creative health and wellness nights at St. Barnabas Mission.

In November, a group of volunteers transformed the cafeteria space into an art studio and hosted a Family Paint Night for the residents.

They wound down 2019 with a Dance/Zumba Night, where residents showed off their dance moves and learned about the importance of exercise and movement.



ECS continues to be grateful for the ingenuity and enthusiasm the PCOM volunteers bring to the participants we serve at St. Barnabas Mission.

EMPOWERMENT AT ST. BARNABAS MISSION

Danielle has continued to host women's empowerment brunches at St. Barnabas Mission.

Danielle is the founder of What About That Woman, an organization that helps single moms establish their lives in the world by supplying resources, parenting tips, and a community of support.

From creating vision boards to discussing career development, Danielle has provided our participants a safe space to learn and grow. **We look forward to your next session!**

Check Out What About That Woman on Social Media

Facebook: [What About That Woman](#)
Instagram: [@what_about_that_woman](#)
YouTube: [What About That Woman](#)

THANK YOU, EPIPHANY FELLOWSHIP

This special group of volunteers helped ease the end of summer blues by throwing a party for the residents at St. Barnabas Mission.

Casey, the community service organizer for Epiphany Fellowship, reached out to see if they could host a party at the shelter, as her group frequently meets just around the corner.

The group enthusiastically jumped right into planning, prepping, and hosting a party that included yummy snacks, games, and dancing. After the party, Casey shared with us that her volunteer group "really enjoyed connecting with [their] neighbors at the shelter." We enjoyed connecting with Casey and her team of wonderful volunteers!



VOLUNTEERING IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

We host quarterly speed networking and mock interview events for the participants in our workforce development program, the RISE Initiative.

Volunteers play a vital role in providing constructive feedback to participants on their networking and interviewing skills. In our most recent cohort, we had four incredibly talented volunteers that used their professional skillsets to help our participants move towards achieving their career goals. Thank you to Nicole, Rachel, Melissa, and Angel for sharing your time and talent with the participants we serve.

And thank you, Melissa and Kelly, for going above and beyond by editing participant resumes! Your suggestions and comments were incredibly helpful and valued by our participants!

P.S. Participants in our Mindset program are now offered additional learning opportunities through MindSet Community Meetings. A special shout out goes to two ECS Board Members, Julia DeMoss and Cordelia Biddle, for attending one of our first meetings and for offering our participants thoughtful advice on goal-setting.

PARTY PLANNING EXPERTS

We continue to be grateful for our partnership with the Impact Center.

Since the inception of our partnership back in September, the Impact Center has thrown at least one party every month at St. Barnabas Mission. With over seven parties under their belt, we have reason to nickname them the party planning experts!

The Impact Center's team of passionate staff have introduced ECS and St. Barnabas Mission to individuals and families from all over.

Three wonderful families from Temple Shalom hosted a fun-filled afternoon of basketball, bubbles, and assorted games. They even had a creative corner where children and their moms made bright fall pictures to hang in their rooms.

The Impact Center also introduced St. Barnabas Mission to students from Haverford High School's club "Girl Up," which is a club committed to empowering women in their school, locally, and in other countries.

In the winter, students from Girl Up came to the shelter on two separate occasions to spread holiday cheer. These groups of volunteers engaged joyfully with the residents in making holiday decorations, playing games, face painting, decorating cupcakes, and even went above and beyond with having a sundae bar!

In the New Year, students from Holy Child School of Rosemont and their mothers celebrated Valentine's Day at St. Barnabas by making handmade cards, enjoying tasty treats, and playing a few games of love bingo!

We cannot thank these volunteers enough for bringing such positive and passionate energy to the residents we serve at St. Barnabas Mission. We look forward to many more celebrations!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

We want to thank our newest workforce development volunteer, Steve, who conducted the first ever mock interview with a MindSet participant!

He even came back for a follow up interview in the New Year to help our participant continue to build his interviewing skills. Steve's efforts helped our MindSet participant land two in person job interviews. With a background of working over 40 years in business and HR, we are grateful he has chosen to volunteer with ECS and share his skills with our participants!

We were overjoyed when he graciously offered to co-facilitate a perseverance workshop for our participants. Rance willingly shared his story, provided advice, answered questions, and even offered to be an ongoing resource for our participants. We want to thank Rance for taking on a more major role than our traditional volunteer opportunity, and for helping us help our participants.



KEYS TO SUCCESS JOB & RESOURCE FAIR

The Annual Keys to Success Job & Resource Fair connected people with various employment networks.

Many ECS participants in our partner shelters, transitional housing programs, and workforce development programs attended this event. We want to shout out the five super volunteers, Loren, Pat, Naomi, Danielle, and Kendall, who were willing to help in any way possible to ensure the event ran smoothly.

This group of volunteers was friendly, focused, engaged, and ready to work! We want to extend our thanks and appreciation to each volunteer for their support. The Fair was even better because of them!

HOLIDAY DRIVE RECAP

The pure joy that radiated from each child as their holiday wishes were granted was simply magical.



Avery Osborne, assistant director of development, led ECS' annual holiday gift-in-kind drive this year. Leading up to the holiday season, Avery collected gift wish lists from the children we serve in our Out of School Time program and for those who reside at our emergency shelter, St. Barnabas Mission. With over 700 children in our programs, we rely on our gift-giving partners to help us spread the holiday spirit.

The pure joy that radiated from each child as their holiday wishes were granted was simply magical.

Parishioners from twenty-one different parishes divided up the wish lists, shopped, labeled, and sent us more gifts than we could have ever imagined! This group of individuals truly exceeded our expectations.

We were able to wrap all of the gifts in less than a week with help from ECS staff and our star volunteer, Leslie R., ECS' former gift-in-kind manager (now retired). Gifts were then delivered to each of our school sites and to St. Barnabas Mission, where our gift recipients patiently awaited their arrival.

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME VOLUNTEER SHOUT OUTS! We want to shout out Christina, Loren, Gabrielle, and Adam for completing their first day of volunteering in our Out of School Time program!

“Through volunteering I’ve learned that every person has significance and deserves respect, no matter their age. My only mission, beyond making sure she has the basic things she needs, is to make her smile that beautiful smile.”

LISA KILHEFNER
DOLPHIN COMPANIONS

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