

HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND

Winter 2009 E-Newsletter — Vol. 4 No. 1



WINNIE SAYS, "IT'S ALL ABOUT KIDS!"

Pittsburgh kids write about HCEF and about children who are homeless in our community

What child doesn't deserve an education?

All children are the future.

Knowledge provides a future for children.

The homeless children want to be seen as equal to any other child. The Homeless Children's Education Fund is there to help.

The children in HCEF programs have dreams like other children in the world.

HCEF gives homeless children hope for the future. They know that someone cares. They can believe that they can do what they hope to do.

HCEF must really care. They made their ideas happen.

HCEF is an important asset to the Pittsburgh community because it lets the children know that people in Pittsburgh want the best for them and want them to achieve their potential. I can think of nothing more important than that.

These words are taken from essays by 5th through 8th graders attending Diocese of Pittsburgh middle schools. Their essays and posters were part of their annual observance of National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week in November 2008. You'll find excerpts from their essays and images of their posters at

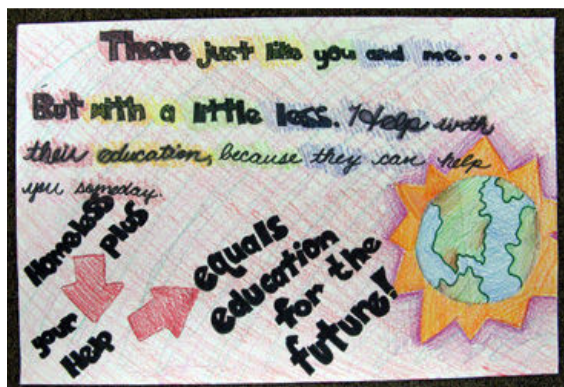
www.homelessfund.org/awareness/essays08.html



Kids are discovering that reading can be rewarding in surprising ways

HCEF's Building Blocks for Success initiative continues at Womanspace East and Bridge to Independence. Children and youth at both centers have reached their reading goals and are being feted with cake, pizza, and a trip to the movies.

Since the start of the 2008-09 school year, 22 students have been reading books appropriate to their reading levels and taking assessment quizzes with the HCEF-provided on-line software Accelerated Reader. Collectively, they have read 148 books and passed 130 quizzes with an average score of 79.9%.



HCEF will be working with the students to raise this overall average score to 85% accuracy with improvement in their reading performance at school also a goal.

To help make this possible, **tutors and volunteers from the community are being recruited** to provide individualized support at the facilities where these children live.

Anyone wishing to join with us in this important work is invited to call Carlin Christy at 412-562-0154.

Kids need champions like Barnes & Noble and their generous customers

Once again customers at the Waterfront and Waterworks stores participated in what has become an annual holiday book drive. This year they **donated 5,752 NEW books to HCEF** for distribution to children living in our partner agencies.

HCEF also paired individual and community donors with our needy children.

One mother wrote in thanks: "I received various gifts for my 10-year-old son and he said this was his 'best Christmas ever.' I have all of you to thank for that."



You can be a Champion for Children by attending the **10th Anniversary Champions for Children Benefit, March 9, 2009, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m., at the Rivers Club in Oxford Centre.**

Invitations will be mailed shortly with a return reservation card. It is also possible to make your reservation on line. An HCEF home page link will take you to the Events page and access to electronic purchase options.

General admission is \$100 per person. **Patron tickets** are \$300 each and include admittance to the VIP champagne reception at 5:30 p.m.

We are honored to have **Ralph and Ruth Anne Papa** serving again as Hosts. They are joined this year by **Morgan and Kathy O'Brien**. Ralph is chairman of Citizens Bank and Morgan is President and CEO of Duquesne Light.

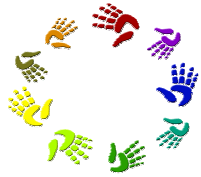
To be honored at this 10th anniversary benefit are **Dr. Gerald Zahorchak**, Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, receiving the Champion for Children Award; **Bishop David Zubik**, receiving the Social Justice in Education Award; and **Dr. Joe Lagana** and the individuals who joined with him to create HCEF, receiving the Linda A. Dickerson Award.



Planning for the benefit is well underway. The menu is being determined. Silent auction items are in hand, and once again the focus will be on “experiences.” **You might be the high bidder** on dinner, show, and an overnight stay; a day’s sailing on Lake Erie with a land-based overnight; **dinner at the Capital Grille with Steeler Brett and Sara Keisel**, not to speak of a **live auction offering featuring a PSO Pops celebrity!** You have to be there to win this unbelievable package. You won’t find its like anywhere else.

See www.homelessfund.org/events/events.html

Kids can be champions for kids too



Joining our list of **Winnie's All-Stars - Kids Helping Kids** are Iris, Hanna, and Michael. As part of a 5th grade community service project



assignment, they designed and made hand-knit scarves and gloves for children who are homeless. Hannah and Iris were the knitters. Michael created the individual greeting cards that accompanied these cold-weather gifts.

Bella and Nat became All-Stars with the raising of \$30 from the lemonade stand they set up in their neighborhood last summer. It was Bella’s idea, but she had no trouble enlisting her older brother in the endeavor. They have plans for a bigger and better operation next summer. As Bella says, “The shelters will still need money next year, right?”



Thanks!

To our community champions for kids:

- ★ the Haunted House at Hundred Acres Manor, which contributed \$46,000 to HCEF
- ★ the Carnegie Mellon student-run Banghra in the Burgh dance competition with proceeds earmarked for HCEF
- ★ the friends who sponsored and participated in fund-raising efforts throughout 2008

To all who contributed to our recent annual fund campaign:

Individuals, families, businesses, and United Way donors contributed in record numbers and dollars, a great many of them for the first time.

And thanks, as well as best wishes, to our Super Bowl-bound HCEF Steeler Champions:

Brett and Sarah Keisel, active members of the HCEF Board of Advisors, are regular attendees at the Champions for Children Benefit and yearly contribute Steeler tickets, their time, and Steeler memorabilia for the auction.



Joining the Keisels in support of the 10th anniversary Champion for Children Benefit are event Patrons **Troy Polamalu and his wife Theodora**.



Winter 2009 E -Newsletter (Vol. 4 No. 1) from the

Homeless Children’s
Education Fund
2100 Smallman Street 2nd Flr
Pittsburgh PA 15222
412-562-0154
www.homelessfund.org

“Providing hope through learning”