



Newsletter

STEP AmeriCorps:
Service during Pandemic



Autumn
2020

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» Contact STEP



STEP, Inc.
2138 Lincoln Street
Williamsport, PA 17701
570.326.0587

**STEP Clinton County
Community Center**
124 East Walnut Street
Lock Haven, PA 17745
570.858.5800



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STEP INC. *Star Awards*

This fall, STEP's Employee of the Quarter program transitioned to a peer recommendation and recognition program called the STEP Star Awards.

Employees are encouraged to submit the name(s) of fellow coworkers who are going above and beyond to make STEP's mission and vision a reality. Employees nominated for a STEP Star Award are recognized with a personalized STEP Star certificate and a STEP Star pin. Each month a name is drawn from that month's recipients for a \$25 gift certificate of their choosing.

Our very first STEP Star award winners are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Mendi Bush
Information Assistant | Jeff Bower
Transportation Driver |
| Ashley Fischer
Head Start Family Advocate | Lee Bower
Transportation Driver |
| Rachel Eckley
Head Start Classroom Aide | Mark Brewer
Transportation Driver |
| Kim Vergillis
Head Start Teacher Assistant | Phillip Buhner
Transportation Driver |
| Sunshine Kustaborder
Head Start Family Advocate | Dana Burkholder
Transportation Driver |
| Mindy Davis
Office of Aging
Protective Services Caseworker II | Nicole Claire
Transportation Driver |
| Jane Thompson
Office of Aging
Health, Fitness, & Nutrition
Center Manager | Bob Clark
Transportation Driver |
| Erin Tavani
Service Navigation
Family Navigator | Geoffrey Dugan
Transportation Driver |
| Julie Shaible
Early Head Start Infant/Toddler
Services Manager | Nancy Edwards
Transportation Driver |
| Kevin Baker
Transportation Driver | Gabrielle Evans
Transportation Driver |
| Mellanie Boone
Transportation Driver | Tyler Evans
Transportation Driver |
| | Terra Flannigan
Transportation Driver |
| | Jason Fox
Transportation Driver |



- | | |
|---|--|
| David Grieb
Transportation Driver | Mike Sander
Transportation Driver |
| Jack Heitsenrether
Transportation Driver | Cindy Sipe
Transportation Driver |
| Art Hengler
Transportation Driver | Pete Spagnuolo
Transportation Driver |
| Mike Herritt
Transportation Driver | James Taylor
Transportation Driver |
| Anne Hindman
Transportation Driver | John Wardlow
Transportation Driver |
| Mary Kurtz
Transportation Driver | Paul White
Transportation Driver |
| April Marshall
Transportation Driver | Buffy Neese
Head Start Health Specialist |
| Loretta Mullen
Transportation Driver | Amy Bower
Head Start Teacher |
| David Neece
Transportation Driver | Gretchen Mantle
Early Learning Resource Center
Contract Specialist |
| John Otto
Transportation Driver | Jennifer Wilson
Head Start Teacher |
| Charles Peet
Transportation Driver | Mary Bournonville
Head Start Family Advocate |
| Alison Rhoads
Transportation Driver | |



The winner of October's gift card drawing was Gretchen Mantle!

STEP Head Start

BACK TO SCHOOL

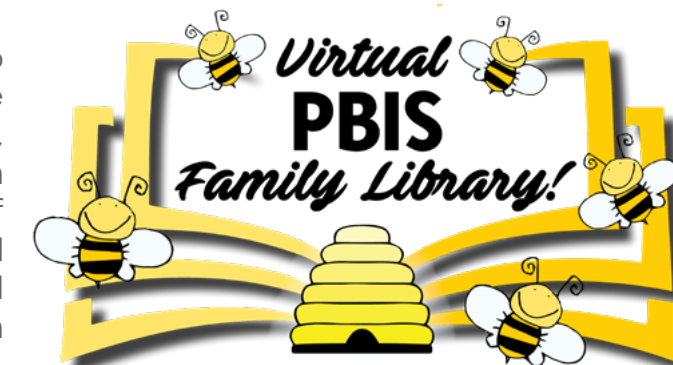
Distance Learning!



STEP Head Start began the school year a little differently this fall - Head Start staff and students connected online via Zoom and Class Dojo for distance learning. Teachers have been working hard to provide innovative learning experiences including STEP Head Start Literacy Bags, outdoor story time sessions, kid-friendly kitchen activities, and themed Zoom meetings featuring *Go Away Big Green Monster* by Ed Emberly and *Llama Llama Red Pajama* by Anna Dewdney.



Students and families are also encouraged to utilize STEP's website to access interactive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) materials, including an at-home Beehive accessed through www.stepcorp.org/pbis and a virtual library full of books linked to read-aloud versions of the physical copies that are available throughout STEP Head Start locations. The Virtual PBIS Family Library can be found at <https://www.stepcorp.org/pbis/virtual-pbis-family-library.html>.



STEP AmeriCorps: Service during Pandemic

STEP AmeriCorps members are uniting to help others during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. September 11th is Patriot Day, and for AmeriCorps members, it is a national Day of Service and Remembrance. On this day Americans across the country are called to do good deeds in their local communities in tribute to the individuals lost and injured in the attacks, first responders, and the many who have risen in service to defend freedom.

Sophia, who serves with Lycoming College's Division of Student Life, chose to donate blood for her good deed, knowing her donation will fulfill an essential need in healthcare.

Jess serves with Habitat for Humanity and donated clothes to the American Rescue Workers for her good deed!

Christine serves with the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership Trails program. She went to three boat launches along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and removed trash from each of the sites.

Dwayne serves with the Williamsport Area School District at Curtin Intermediate school. He donated clothing to the Salvation Army for his 9/11 Day good deed.

For her good deed, *Ariana*, who serves at the Ross Library in Lock Haven, chose to send her mom and dad Starbucks all the way to Hawaii through Uber Eats. Ariana's parents are in the military and chose to enlist after the attacks on 9/11. She thought this good deed would be a fun way to thank them for their service! Ariana is also a member of the Army National Guard. Thank you all for your service to our country!

Member Development Coordinator *Lori* donated blood with the American Red Cross for her good deed.

Ty, who serves with Loyalsock Township School District, gave a student he works with an extra mask when the student needed one - a small act of kindness!

April, who recently began serving with STEP Service Navigation, took her elderly neighbor (who is homebound) a goodie box with snacks and some word searches, as well as a prepared meal of ham, beans, and potatoes. Her neighbor was so happy and touched by her thoughtfulness!

Brittany, STEP AmeriCorps Program Director, delivered goodie bags to the most recent AmeriCorps alumni who gave the program three to four years of service each, to thank them for their dedication to AmeriCorps and their communities.

For her good deed, *Louise*, who serves with North Penn Legal Services, made a donation to PushBlack. With her help, the organization will raise up Black voices and advance criminal justice reform!

Regina, who serves with the West End Christian Community Center, thanked a current First Responder by writing a Thank You note and presenting her with flowers. Regina said that the recipient "felt grateful and overwhelmed by the acknowledgment," and it made her feel proud to be able to do this good deed!

STEP AmeriCorps members have been safely serving their communities, and you can too!

Be sure to follow CDC guidelines for how to slow the spread of the disease, and consider these simple ways every American can help their neighbors, friends, and families.



10 ways to safely help your community during COVID-19

1. Donate to nonprofits

2. Donate or volunteer safely with food banks and pantries

3. Deliver meals and groceries to vulnerable seniors

4. Help a local school

5. Donate blood

6. Become a medical volunteer

7. Donate medical supplies or equipment

8. Stay in touch

9. Serve in your community

10. Volunteer at home



STEP Office of Aging

Emergency First Aid, CPR and AED Training

Older adults face a particularly high risk of certain injuries and illnesses, such as falls and heart attacks. Center Coordinators for STEP Office of Aging's Centers for Healthy Aging are required to stay up to date with basic first aid, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), and AED (automated external defibrillator) training to prepare for possible emergencies.

Centers for Healthy Aging staff and volunteers recently renewed their bi-annual Emergency First Aid, CPR, and AED certification under the training of Charles Wentzell. Charles is a Department of Health Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Instructor, American Heart Association (AHA) Instructor, and EMS Chief in addition to his position as STEP Transportation's Fleet Coordinator and Lead Operator.

Changes brought on by the emergence of COVID-19 for those who may need or choose to give care in an emergency were addressed in the training. For 2020-2021, early CPR with an emphasis on chest compressions is recommended. While CPR with breaths has been shown to be beneficial when compared to compression-only CPR, during the COVID-19 outbreak, it is currently recommended that no rescue breaths be performed, due to the risk of disease transmission.

The training included CPR for infants, children, adults, and bariatric individuals (those with a body mass index of 30 or more); how to operate an AED; administering the Heimlich maneuver; and emergency first aid including correct usage of the Epi-pen and dressing traumatic wounds.



Energy Awareness Month and WEATHERIZATION DAY

The U.S. Department of Energy declared the month of October as Energy Awareness Month and Weatherization Day was celebrated on October 30th. Weatherization Day is an opportunity for a local, state, and national focus on the Weatherization Assistance Program and the work that is performed by all the members of the program. Since 1976, when the program was started, STEP's Weatherization program has weatherized over 13,000 homes in Clinton and Lycoming counties.



Households who are eligible pay on average 16% of their income on utilities, which is more than 4 times what non-eligible households pay (3.5%). Families that weatherize their homes can use the money that once went to utilities for other, more essential things like food and medicine.

With the weather starting to change, more people are switching on their heat, but if your home isn't weatherized you could be spending more money than you have. See the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines listed to the right and check if your household monthly income qualifies you for weatherization services in Lycoming or Clinton County.

2020-2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines			
Household Size	100% FPL Annual Gross	150% FPL Annual Gross	200% FPL Annual Gross
1	\$12,760	\$18,140	\$25,520
2	\$17,240	\$25,860	\$34,480
3	\$21,720	\$32,580	\$43,440
4	\$26,200	\$39,300	\$52,400
5	\$30,680	\$46,020	\$61,360
6	\$35,160	\$52,740	\$70,320
7	\$39,640	\$59,460	\$79,280
8	\$44,120	\$66,180	\$88,240

For eligible applicants, STEP's Weatherization Energy Auditor will visit your home to check the heating and water systems to ensure that they are operating safely and efficiently. If minor heating or water system repairs or a clean and tune are needed, STEP Weatherization can usually provide the service. In the case of a heating system replacement, there are a limited amount of funds available to assist homeowners on a first-come first-serve basis. Weatherization does provide rental properties with heating system repairs when possible, but does not assist landlords with heating system replacements. The dwelling will also be visually inspected and sophisticated equipment will be used to determine air leakage into the home.



Mark Your Calendar!



Santa's Seniors Donations accepted through December 14

Help us fill bags for seniors! Due to COVID-19 and the need for individually packaged goods, we are focusing on donations of these items: Individual snack packs of pudding, gelatin, and/or fruit cups, cereals such as oatmeal and/or dry/cold cereal cups, macaroni & cheese, rice dishes, snack size packs of crackers, pretzels, chips, and/or cookies, cup of soup, ramen noodles, breakfast/granola bars, chocolates, and candy.

Backyard Broadcasting | 1685 Four Mile Drive, Williamsport
STEP Main Office | 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport
Clinton County Community Center | 124 E. Walnut Street, Lock Haven



STEP Head Start Mitten Tree Donations accepted through December 18

2020 marks the 16th year of STEP Head Start's Mitten Tree. Each year this project has been able to keep more than 600 children's hands and hearts warm with your generous donations.

STEP Head Start | 2138 Boyd Street, Williamsport
STEP Main Office | 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport
Clinton County Community Center | 124 E. Walnut Street, Lock Haven



STEP AmeriCorps Peace Walk & Dream Week

Monday, January 18 | Peace Walk

Community members are invited to join STEP AmeriCorps during the MLK Day Peace Walk. Donations for local nonprofit organizations and ministries will be collected during the Peace Walk. Individuals may also drop off their donation to the organization directly at another time of their choosing throughout the week.



January 19 & January 20 | Blood Drive | Penn College

Community members and students will need to sign up for an appointment if they wish to donate blood. Information on how to sign up will be posted on social media at a later date.



Thursday, January 21 | Virtual Speaker Event | Penn College

This event will take place on livestream and will be promoted on Lycoming College and Penn College campuses, social media, and throughout the community.



Additional details regarding time and location will be shared on our Facebook page closer to Dream Week!
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