



Newsletter

CAAP

Community Action
Association
of Pennsylvania

**SELF-SUFFICIENCY
PROGRESS AWARDS**

Recipients



*Angel
Williamson - Irwin*



*Julian
Thompson*

Autumn
2021

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STEP INC. *Star Awards*

In 2020, 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 card of their choosing.

August, September, and October STEP Star award winners are:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Ashley Fischer
Head Start
Family Advocate | Amanda Long
Service Navigation
Family Navigator | Mike Snyder
Information Technology
Computer Specialist | Angela Weikle
Head Start
Classroom Aide |
| Kayla Keller
Service Navigation
Family Navigator | Joe Laver
Early Learning Resource Center
Eligibility/Training & Compliance Specialist | Harry Tompkins
Information Technology
Network Support Specialist | Maria Casale-Faubion
Head Start
Teacher |
| Ashley Innerarity
Service Navigation
Intern | Mary Bournonville
Head Start
Family Advocate | Kara King
Service Navigation
Family Navigator | Dakota Griffis
Service Navigation
Family Navigator |
| Ashton Ferrara
Service Navigation
Family Navigator | Dana Cain
Administration
Multimedia Specialist | Rusty McCarty
Maintenance
Groundskeeper | Michelle Harstead
Head Start
Teacher Assistant |
| | Traci Daniels
Administration
Information Assistant | Brenda McDermit
Office of Aging
Center Coordinator | |



The winner of August's gift card drawing was Ashton Ferrara!

The winner of September's gift card drawing was Harry Tompkins!

The winner of October's gift card drawing was Angela Weikle!



Dental Hygiene Kits

In an effort to uphold health and safety best practices surrounding the COVID pandemic, STEP Head Start is not currently brushing teeth when children are in their care. However, there is an imperative need to still support dental hygiene!

STEP Head Start Health Specialist, Buffy Neese, ordered and sorted individual take home dental kits for all pre-enrolled and enrolled children in the Head Start program. With the assistance of education and support staff, approximately 430 dental kits were distributed across both Early Head Start and Preschool Head Start programs. Each kit included an age appropriate toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss in a clear plastic zipped tote bag for easy storage and safe keeping.

In addition, on October 13 and 14, STEP Head Start hosted the River Valley Mobile Dental Unit at the STEP Round Hills Campus in Williamsport. In total, 50 children were seen, and 12 children are scheduled for restorative dental care to address a total of 29 cavities.

STEP Head Start is dedicated to partnering with local resources and families to encourage the practice of good dental hygiene at a young age!



Positive Behavior Interventions and Support

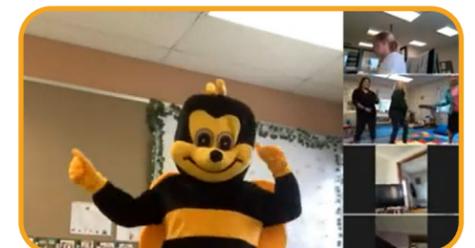
Fall Harvest Kickoff Event

STEP Head Start hosted its first ever virtual Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) Fall Harvest Kickoff Event from October 11 through 14!

The event is the yearly kickoff for the PBIS program, which teaches children about emotions and coping skills in order to proactively encourage good behavior. Many of the interactive activities, including deep breathing exercises and pumpkin feeling faces, help children to practice PBIS strategies. Caregivers are encouraged to carry PBIS into their homes through rewards and various tools.

Prior to the week-long event, each child received a bag of materials to successfully participate in hands-on activities during the virtual event. Items included a pumpkin from Tebb's Farm, playdough, stickers, an age appropriate book, and beehives for practicing PBIS skills.

Head Start families and staff had the opportunity to log into Zoom each evening from 4:00 PM until 5:00 PM to celebrate children and families, teach them more about PBIS, provide community resources and presenters, and facilitate interactive parent-child activities.



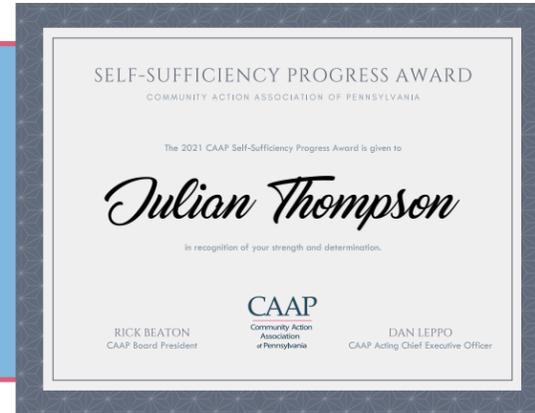


CAAP

Community Action Association of Pennsylvania

SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRESS AWARDS

Recipients



The Community Action Association of Pennsylvania (CAAP) Self-Sufficiency Awards and Annual Conference recognize the significant accomplishments of Self-Sufficiency Award winners while showcasing how Community Action Agencies support a person's journey toward financial stability. This year STEP, Inc. nominated two individuals, Angel Williamson-Irvin and Julian Thompson, who were recognized during the CAAP's virtual ceremony on November 4, 2021.

STEP Family Navigator Stacy Steppe (pictured left) nominated Angel Williamson-Irvin (pictured right) for the 2021 CAAP Progress Award for her work in the Youth Enrichment for Success (YES) Program. Angel has made tremendous progress and her future is bright!



Angel entered the Youth Enrichment for Success program on April 27, 2021 for the second time. She had temporarily relocated to Lycoming County in August 2020 but returned permanently a few months later. When she reached out to Stacy Steppe in April, a referral was made for high school equivalency classes with Penn State Career Pathways. Due to her work schedule, Angel completed the majority of her studies via online learning platforms. She also completed practice tests with Career Pathways staff.

Stacy worked with Angel to develop a goal plan. Angel has since obtained employment, maintained employment, and improved her overall health. She successfully passed all subjects of the HiSET on August 24, 2021 and earned her high school equivalency.

Angel continues to work on job readiness skills, budgeting and exploring educational options. She has expressed an interest in completing a Pennsylvania civil service exam to obtain a state job, as well as learning more about attending the police academy.

STEP Family Navigator Megan Barckhoff (pictured below, left) nominated Julian Thompson (pictured below, right) for the 2021 CAAP Self-Sufficiency Progress Award for her success in the Work Ready Program. Julian has moved her family to self-sufficiency in a relatively short time due to hard work and initiative!

Julian entered the Work Ready Program at the very start of the pandemic in March 2020. She was a single mother fleeing domestic violence. Julian and her two children were living outside of the United States, in St. Thomas, with a partner who was destructive. Julian decided she and her children needed to move back in with her mother in Lycoming County.

When Julian entered the program, she was uncertain of almost everything and was overwhelmed with stabilizing things for her family. At the same time, she was facing a global pandemic that shut down school, daycares, and much of the stability that she was seeking.

As things started to reopen, Julian worked diligently on establishing a safe and secure life for her family. She was able to place both of her children in daycare in the summer of 2020. This offered her the freedom to address her needs while providing support and growth for her children. Julian also started to attend community service at Goodwill and enjoyed the camaraderie that she found there.

In September of 2020, Julian obtained employment with Goodwill working 20 hours a week. Due to her employment status she was eligible for a Special Allowance for supportive services from the County Assistance Office that assisted with a car purchase. Julian reported feeling more happy and secure than she had in years. During the past year, Julian has put in a lot of work to ensure that her children have the stability and supports they need. Julian has also worked to ensure that she has the supports she needs to cope with the past.





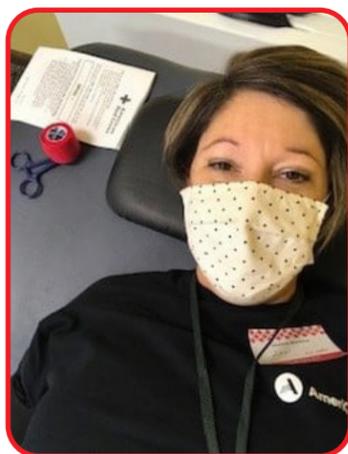
9/11 DAY OF SERVICE

SEPTEMBER 11TH NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE

September 11th was designated a National Day of Service by Congress in 2009 and is led by AmeriCorps, the federal agency for volunteerism and national service. AmeriCorps partners with 911Day.org, the nonprofit that, along with 9/11 families, began the 9/11 Day observance more than a decade ago, and engages hundreds of nonprofit groups, faith-based organizations, schools, and businesses nationwide.

AmeriCorps members throughout all 50 states mobilized their communities to participate in projects that included delivering meals, refurbishing schools and community centers, collecting food and clothing, and building homes. Members also recruited mentors, provided services for veterans and military families, and helped citizens improve their financial literacy skills. Despite the pandemic, communities found ways to serve safely on 9/11.

Locally, STEP AmeriCorps honored the victims and heroes of that day through hosting a Blood Drive for the American Red Cross for their 9/11 National Day of Service project. Our community has a critical need for blood. Every 2 seconds someone in America needs blood. Did you know that it only takes one hour of your time to give blood and your donation can save three lives? You're helping friends, families and neighbors, right here in our community!



PREPARING TOGETHER

None of us expect disaster. Who could have anticipated that we would have a world-wide pandemic that would shut the country down and limit resources? The same goes for natural disasters, emergency situations, and unexpected circumstances—they are normally not anticipated and catch us completely off guard. That's why it is so important to be prepared. Having a personalized safety plan can minimize unnecessary suffering as well as bring peace to your mind.

STEP AmeriCorps is helping older adults prepare for the unexpected by offering a free emergency preparedness program! Participants of STEP's Centers for Healthy Aging and Meals on Wheels program can receive a personalized preparedness tool filled with everything from a list of medications needed in an emergency, emergency contacts, contact information for doctors and local emergency personnel, and much more!

Individuals receive an on-the-phone training where a STEP AmeriCorps member guides them through the workbook, creating their personalized plan. Once complete, the plan is mailed directly to the participant's home, where they can keep it on hand for reference in an emergency situation.

If you would like to get prepared by receiving a free personalized safety plan, please call 570-601-9672 or email preparingtogether@stepcorp.org.



Brought to you by STEP AmeriCorps in partnership with STEP Office of Aging.

CLEAN and Tune



Mark Your Calendar!

Did you know heating systems should be serviced once a year?

In order to help customers avoid costly repairs and interruptions to their heating service, STEP is administering the Clean & Tune program in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The program will provide general service with the goal of preventing crisis calls.

-  **Keep your heating system running smoothly**
-  **Improve your heating system's operable life span**
-  **Improve heating efficiency**

Apply through your local County Assistance Office!

Clinton County | 570.748.2971

Lycoming County | 570.327.3300



For more information on STEP's weatherization, homeowner-occupied rehabilitation, and utilities assistance, customers can visit the Housing Options Pathway at www.stepcorp.org or call STEP at 570.326.0587.



STEP Head Start Mitten Tree Project Now through December 15

STEP Head Start will be collecting infant and child size mittens, gloves, hats, coats, and scarves for Head Start children this year from October 15 through December 15.

Over the years, this project has been able to keep more than 1,000 infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children's hands and hearts warm with your generous donations.

If interested in donation, you can send or drop off mittens to:

STEP Head Start | 2138 Boyd St., Williamsport

STEP Main Office | 2138 Lincoln St., Williamsport

Clinton County Community Center | 124 E. Walnut St., Lock Haven

Santa's Seniors

Santa's Seniors Now through December 15

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, snack size packs of crackers, pretzels, chips, and/or cookies, cup of soup, ramen noodles, and breakfast/granola bars.

Donations can be dropped off Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:00pm at the following locations:

Backyard Broadcasting | 1685 Four Mile Drive, Williamsport

STEP, Inc. | 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport

Clinton County Community Center | 124 E. Walnut St., Lock Haven





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