

PROVIDENCE CONNECTIONS

SUMMER/FALL 2018



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Established as a nonprofit organization in 1994, Providence Connections strengthens families and enriches lives through comprehensive education and developmental opportunities for parents and children.

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CONTACT US

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Pittsburgh, PA 15212
(412)766-3860
www.providenceconnections.org

Dear Friends of Providence Connections:

Speaking as a parent of two young boys, I can say firsthand that raising children and creating a thriving family is hard work.

That's why I am so honored to be a part of the Providence Connections family, who for over 24 years, has been strengthening families and enriching lives right here in the North Side. Every day at Providence Connections, our talented team of Family Development Specialists, dedicated and caring child care professionals and administrative staff work tirelessly to ensure that parents and caregivers, who are vital to the success of their children, have a safe haven and someone to call upon when they need help.

Please know that as family you are always welcome in our center and I invite each of you to visit us and to see how special our daily work is for yourself. I know that you will feel the love and sense of family as soon you step foot in our beautiful building.

Blessings,

Samantha

Samantha Ellwood
Executive Director



WHO'S NEW AT PC?

MEET OUR FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM!

Providence Connections is proud to announce a brand new team of talented Family Development Specialists. Read below to find out how blessed we are that they have joined our team!

Pictured, from right to left: Justin Brown, Lauren Burkes, Monique McCain and Peter Jenkins



JUSTIN BROWN

Justin graduated from the University of Pittsburgh and has designed and developed educational programming over the last 10 years. After moving to San Francisco, he led the creation and implementation of integrated labs with an emphasis on work-based learning for high school students in San Francisco Unified School District. Upon returning to Pittsburgh, he was director of a youth mentoring program with over 200 mentors in 5 Pittsburgh Public Schools before joining Providence Connections.

As a northside resident, Justin believes that Providence is an essential component to a thriving Northside community and will take an active role to support parents and families in a more meaningful and impactful way.

LAUREN GARLAND BURKES

Lauren is a Pittsburgh native with over 12 years of experience working with families. Lauren is currently pursuing her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Northcentral University. Lauren has a passion for working with families who need help navigating and coping with changing circumstances in life across diverse backgrounds. Lauren comes to us from UPMC as a Patient Access Representative and has worked at Sojourner House. She is an active Board Member with Education 4 Us, a non-profit that promotes education equality for African American youth in New Jersey. She is excited to join Providence and help to foster growth and positive family functioning in families living in Pittsburgh's northern region.

MONIQUE MCCAIN

Monique brings to Providence more than 15 years of experience working with families and children. She consistently exhibits a passion for excellence, striving to constantly improve and develop more efficient systems that produce an improved level of service to promote healthy families to achieve a life balance and bright futures.

Monique is very excited to serve and support families that want to better their family lives. She will be the family cheerleader directing families in a positive path. Her goal is to help families build bright new futures.

PETER JENKINS

Peter comes to PC with over fifteen years of expertise working in education and youth engagement whose educational background in the fields of theology, health education, and sociology have helped become a supportive and collaborative adviser with a faith based and team-oriented approach to addressing issues, planning, goal setting and using professional and community connections to improve the lives of people.

He is looking forward to engaging with fathers to build even stronger families and helping Providence Connections continue to move from being a hidden jewel to a more well-known and treasured Northside institution.

Everyone at Providence Connections is over-the-moon excited for the new Maker Space. But perhaps no one is as excited as our new Manager of Educational Quality and Innovation, Ms. Kelly Cropper-Hall!

We had the opportunity to sit down with Ms. Kelly and ask her some of our most pressing Maker Space questions:



CREATIVE SPACES

What do you hope the families of PC will get out of the new Maker Space?

I hope that the children and families of Providence Connections take advantage of the opportunity to embrace the wonderful space that we have here. That this truly a space for children and families to be very creative and to explore the materials that they normally would not be allowed to touch.

What do you think the kids/student here at PC will be most excited about?

Most are going to be excited to come to a place that they can have their creativity run their project, not teacher directed. I will be there to link the lessons together and answer questions, but they will really be the deciding factor on where their project is going to go. What is really neat, is that I am starting with the youngest students and will see them develop creatively over the years.

Do you have any favorite lessons planned?

One of my favorite projects is plastic fusion: you take recyclable plastic, like bags and cut shapes out, place the shapes on poster bag (it can be layered), and place it on poster board, put parchment paper on top and iron it to fuse it together. This will really allow the kids' creativity to just run wild! Everything is a learning experience! One of my main goals is to create a store – where the kids are able to make, price and sell their creations: teaching the kids the entire concept and process of a business.

What are you most excited to share with people who visit the Maker Space?

Everything! From imagining to constructing to reconstructing! The whole process is going to be new and exciting for everyone, including me!!

CREATIVE COOKING

CATCHING UP WITH CHEF EMILY



Right next to the new Maker Space is a room where one of Providence Connections' most famous faces is regularly whipping up favorites like chickpea tikka masala, curry chicken wraps and beef kafta with fresh Tzatziki! Now, our very own Kitchen Connoisseur, Chef Emily, is taking a quick break from her creative cooking to answer some tough (and not so tough) questions!

Question: How do I get my child to eat more vegetables?

Keep putting vegetables on their plate, but reduce the pressure to eat them. We all are a little bit rebellious, and the more someone wants you to do something, the more likely you are to reject that. So put vegetables on your child's plate every day, but let them choose whether to eat the vegetables or not, without comment or pressure. This is a long game, but you will see results. For faster results, let your child participate in choosing and preparing the vegetables. It's hard to say no to something you picked out, washed or peeled.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS FALL

August 17: BBQ on Brighton

Join us for free food and fun!

September 20: Family Unity Night

Maker Space themed Family Unity Night

September 24: Golf FORE Families

*Support PC by joining us on the Green!

October 16: Halloween Costumes

Distribution from 4-7pm

October 18: Family Unity Night

Bring the Zoo to Us! Family Unity Night

October 20: Pumpkin Fest

Pumpkin Fest at Providence Connections

November 15: Thanksgiving Dinner

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

The 5th Annual Golf FORE Families Wildwood Golf Club September 24, 2018



Contact the Development Office at
412-766-3860 ext. 321
for more information

Volunteering at Providence Connections

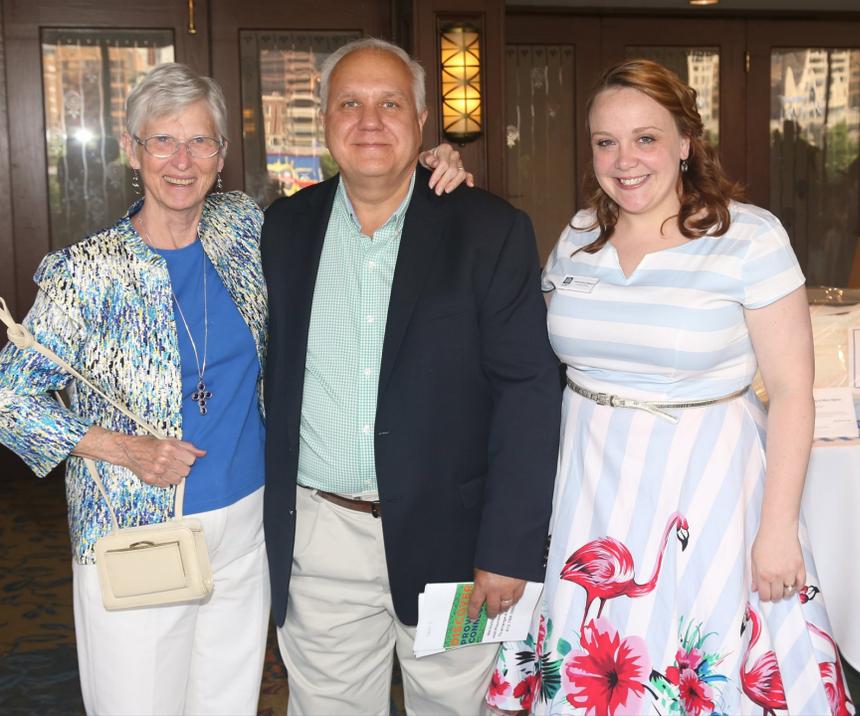
Providence Connections offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities – for both organizations AND individuals. Here are just a few ways to get involved:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Gardening and outside cleanup | Help with Family Unity Night |
| Play time facilitation | Supply Drives |
| Library re-organization | Gift Card Drives |
| Classroom reading | Join our Advisory Council |
| Classroom clean-up | Join us for an Open House |
| Painting and patching | |

For the safety of our students and staff, all volunteers are required to obtain PA Acts 33 & 34 Clearances as well as FBI Fingerprinting

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator for more information: nbcastro@providenceconnections.org





THOSE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

THE 2018 BACKYARD BBQ

The 2018 Backyard BBQ took place on Thursday, June 7, 2018 at the Sheraton at Station Square. Guests enjoyed music by local musician Bobby V, family-style BBQ-inspired dinner and decor by local florist, greenSinner. This year's event featured a new, online, digital bidding system, the Family Leadership Award and a spectacular program of speakers!

On behalf of Providence Connections, THANK YOU for your kindness and generosity in support of this year's Backyard BBQ. Because of YOU, we were able to raise more than \$67,000 to support our mission of strengthening families and enriching lives. We would have not been able to accomplish this without your support and we are truly grateful to be able to count on you as friends.



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THE FAMILY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Each year at the Annual Backyard Barbeque, one Providence Connections family is selected to receive the **Family Leadership Award**.

The Family Leadership Award is a way to honor our families who have not only received services and support from Providence Connections but have overcome challenges, hardships or struggles and are now giving back to the community.

This year we were proud to award Holly Price with the 2018 Family Leadership Award! Congratulations, Holly!

PROVIDENCE FAMILY FOCUS

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

2018 Family Leadership Awardee

Holly Price is a native Pittsburgh resident originally from the South Hills who later moved to the Northside at age eighteen. Initially managing pet stores, Holly then pursued her hair styling career and continues that part time today.

Back in 1998, Holly was diagnosed with significant heart issues, around the same time her son Tristian was born. During this trying time, her mom took care of them both. In 2002, while commuting to work, Holly noticed Providence Family Support Center and enrolled Tristian in the child care. Only two short years later, in the summer of 2004, Holly's mother passed away and she lost the security and foundation of her family. Luckily, for Holly, Tristian was able to continue to be enrolled in daycare and he eventually transitioned into the summer day camp program at age 5.

After being involved with Providence Connections for more than 8 years, Holly joined the Parent Advisory Council and frequently was a parent volunteer at holiday gatherings. In addition to volunteering, she and her son could also be found at one of the many parent enrichment classes offered by Providence



Connections. In 2010, Holly's health, once again, took a turn for the worse and she looked to Providence Connections for support while she had heart surgery and was recuperating. This time her son Tristian, who was just eleven years old, took charge of her recovery, much like her mother had years earlier. For Holly, she counted on Providence Connections to help her manage the times when her family was in crisis and for that she is grateful for the support and care she and her son received.

Most recently, Holly has been an active member of the Parent Advisory Council until she stepped down from official duties in 2017. She continues to visit Providence Connections on a regular basis and often volunteers to fill in when and where she is needed. Holly also gives back to the Northside community, at large, by volunteering with the Northside Community Alliance Foodbank, Homeless Cat Management Team, and Trinity Lutheran Church clothing bank.