Dear Friends,

Happy Holidays, to our faithful community of supporters! We did it! Thanks to all of you, we have completed another successful year. In 2017 your donations including time, energy and talent helped Sherise realize her dream of starting at Carlow University, to major in Nursing. While she was in school, her infant son, Tony, enjoyed his days in a safe, loving and educational setting. Both are thriving and actively engaged in reaching their potential.

There are many accounts of success throughout our history. Recently at our Halo Dinner, honoree and good friend Megan Grefenstette talked about her experience while collecting items for our Silent Auction at a local store. It so happened that her inquiry was excitedly embraced by the manager. He shared that he had been one of the first babies at our Brookline site when it opened in 1984. More than 30 years later he is not only a success but appreciative for having such a great start in life.

While I was thinking of the many great stories and basking in the glory of our work at Angels’ Place, I was feeling very proud. I was brought back down to earth, however, upon receiving a birthday card from a dear friend.

The message on the card read:
“A very special person was born, who was destined to change the world,” opening the card it said, “relax, it’s not you.”

Bringing a smile to my face it also served as a reminder to focus on the true meaning of the holidays and the birth that changed the world. The holidays are the perfect time for reflection and to give thanks for the blessings received throughout the year.

Your donations provided the opportunity for many families to receive quality early childhood education and family support. Our parents and children become community leaders, entrepreneurs, educators and so much more. For the last thirty years, research has shown that investing in families has positive ripple effects throughout a community.

We are grateful for the support of our friends who continue to help us grow, exceed goals and transform lives. During this special time of year, as you think about how you might celebrate others, we hope you’ll consider a gift to Angels’ Place.

May you have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of love during the Christmas season and always. Have a Happy New Year!

Gratefully,

Beth E. Banas
Executive Director
WINTER 2017

WINTER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Autumn is a time of celebration and tradition at Angels’ Place. As the days become shorter, both centers have been looking forward to the holiday season with love and gratitude for all the caring individuals who help Angels’ Place to continue providing highly accredited care and early childhood education to the families in our program.

During the fall months, the children, families and staff participated in Pinwheels for Peace, a global initiative where participants make a commitment to peace towards others. Everyone made pinwheels that were displayed outside our centers to demonstrate our commitment to peace. The children at both centers celebrated Halloween by dressing up, carving pumpkins and trick-or-treating. The Grandparent’s Luncheons were a huge success and it was an honor to celebrate the family members who are instrumental in the lives of the children and parents we serve. One of our favorite traditions at Angels’ Place is our annual Thanksgiving dinner where we have the opportunity to give thanks for all of life’s blessings.

The children have continued to enjoy outdoor play into the fall season. The natural occurring changes in our environment offer wonderful opportunities for learning and fun. The Pre-K children recently enjoyed traveling downtown to Heinz Hall for the Tiny Tots Symphony and our children on the North Side appreciated a visit from the Pittsburgh Fire Department! Members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra came to visit our sites to teach the children about the clarinet. Ms. Krystle Fitzpatrick has been visiting our sites weekly to teach the children about yoga, mindfulness, and meditation. Our children especially love the poses and breaths named after animals! A huge thank you to Let’s Move Pittsburgh for the generous grant that made this opportunity possible for Angels’ Place.

Angels’ Place successfully completed the PANO Standards for Excellence Accreditation Renewal Program. The air conditioning project at Swissvale center has been completed, just in time for the unusually hot days in September, thanks to a grant provided by the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development. At the September Organizational In-Service at North Side center, staff participated in full day of professional development. Bonnie Weiss conducted a training on Mindfulness and Krystle Fitzpatrick led the team in an afternoon yoga session.

Parent meetings have resumed for the fall led by our Family Support Director, Maria, who also runs our Play Connection groups with parents and children. Thank you to guest speaker, Raymond Moore, from Fair Housing Partnership for coming to present at both our centers during a parent meeting. We would also like to extend a big welcome to Daniera the Nutritional Coordinator at the North Side. We are grateful and excited to have her as a part of our team!
RAISING A READER

Over 100 brand new books are being shared with Angels’ Place children and families every week through a new book sharing program. Each child, from the infants to the Pre-K students, are toting their red book bags home each Tuesday so they and their parents can have a fun book-cuddling experience each night! Every book bag contains four age appropriate, library quality children’s books.

This program is brought to Angels’ Place by Raising a Reader, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving kindergarten readiness for children by increasing the number of families that frequently and routinely share picture books with their infants and preschool children.

Angels’ Place was picked to be one of the pilot programs to implement Raising a Reader as a result of its excellent reputation of quality care for young children in the community. When the local Raising a Reader Coordinator, Mary Denison, PhD, toured Angels’ Place and met with Executive Director, Beth Banas, both Ms. Banas and Dr. Denison were highly enthusiastic about each other’s programs. Angels’ Place was a perfect fit with sharing families, dedicated staff and a supportive administration to implement the Raising a Reader program.

Research indicates that a love of reading is linked to life success. Children who are talked to and read to by their families when they are young do better in school, read better, graduate more often and are more likely to be employed as adults. Angels’ Place is making that connection for all of its children with the addition of Raising a Reader. Special thanks to Mary Denison for bringing Raising A Reader to Angels’ Place along with becoming a weekly volunteer at our Swissvale center! We are grateful for your partnership. “The single most significant factor influencing a child’s early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school.” –National Commission on Reading, 1985.

ENDLESSLY THANKFUL

We are grateful to new and longtime friends of Angels’ Place for volunteering their time, talents and resources. Volunteers help to ensure that our families have a brighter future!

PNC Grow UP Great Volunteers

Grow Up Great volunteers helped to set up for our Grandparent’s Luncheon and Thanksgiving Dinner. They also went to the North Side to build new wooden platforms and decks, as well as doing outdoor maintenance.

Weekly volunteers; Special thanks to Eileen Gelet, Russ Fry, Joan McElhinny, Bonnie Banas, Kim Lamonde, Mary Denison, Rick and Lynda MacMurchy, Kathy Slaby, Mary Ann Lyle, Debbie Retenauer and Megan Grefenstette.

- Ben Lavella, Keith Rhodes and Rick MacMurchy who disassembled, moved, transported and then reassembled office equipment at our center.
- Kretschmann Organic Farm for weekly vegetables.
- Christ Light of the World Parish for a large donation of household supplies.
- Three Rivers Quilters Guild for homemade quilts.
- Hayley Baranowski donated Halloween Costumes.
- Woodland Hills High School students for conducting an awesome food drive.
- Many volunteers and committee members who helped to make the Halo Dinner a success.
- Shannon Wasilewski and 22 The Point for featuring Angels’ Place Swissvale on a show called, Issues on the Point.
- Christ Child Society Program provided winter coats for our children again this year.
- North Side is especially grateful to the volunteers from Carlow College for organizing and cleaning the third floor.
- Jeremiah’s Place for hosting an informative dinner for our families on the role of active parenting.
- All of the groups who reached out to create a special holiday for parents and children. Our families will be receiving Christmas gifts from the following: St. Barbara’s, St. Maurice, St. John Fisher Ladies of Charity, Evan’s Family and Friends, John and Jeanne Belcher, Rotork, North American Martyrs, St. Thomas More, St. John Capistran, St. Germaine Parish, and PNC.
- We continue to be grateful for our door donations of clothes, toys and wish list items. These donations put supplies into our programs so we can continue offering free services to children and families.

THANK YOU, DONNA WINTER!

Donna taught at our Brookline site and retired this past June. During her time as a teacher here, she filled every child with joy, silliness, and laughter. She loved to hold babies and play with toddlers as well as plan creative activities for the preschoolers. Donna was always ready for holidays! She celebrated everything, including Chinese New Year, St. Patrick’s Day, and elections, where the children went into voting booths to vote for their favorite stuffed animal - a pig or a duck. Her silly songs could be heard throughout the building and are still sung by those from Brookline.

She always was available to help anyone in need. Donna is a beloved member of the Angels’ Place family and she will be missed dearly.

THANK YOU, DONNA WINTER!
HALO AWARD DINNER 2017

Thank you to everyone who came to our annual Halo Award Dinner, it was an amazing success! The generous contributions make it possible to serve our families with the highest standards of child care, early childhood education, and family support.

We would like to especially thank the Grefenstette family, the recipient of our 2017 Halo Award. As a family, Ed, Megan, Jake, Ben, and Ellie Grefenstette often invite and encourage their friends and extended family members to support the organization. Their dedication is remarkable in their commitment of time, resources, and talents. They brighten the centers with their energy, working diligently to make special events like the Halo Award Dinner extra special. On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and clients, we thank the Grefenstette family!

Special thank you: Bishop David Zubik for the invocation and for dedicating the past decade to the diocese of Pittsburgh; Brittny McGraw, anchor and reporter for WPXI, for being such a wonderful and energetic Mistress of Ceremonies; Danielle Bailie, Angels’ Place alumna and inspiring mother, for her speech on the impact of Angels’ Place on her family; Megan’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Gaberino for serving as the Honorary Chair Couple. Finally the Special Events Committee and Angels’ Place Staff did a wonderful job “rocking the event.”
(Loyal Halo Dinner Patrons.) (Great dinner conversation.)

(Angels’ Place Staff.) (Happy guests.)

(Lucky Silent Auction Winner, Eileen.) (Good friend, Brian, volunteers for 50/50 raffle.)

(Honorary Chair Couple Marge and John Gaberino.) (Silent Auction.)

(Danielle made us proud with her speech.)

(John spinning the Carnival Wheel!) (Mr. Grefenstette and friends.) (Mary and Beth are stars!)
HALO AWARD DINNER DONORS

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SPECIAL THANKS TO
Bishop David Zubik, Invocation
Ms. Brittny McGraw, Emcee
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Ms. Stephanie Parker, Invitation Design and Slide Show
Ms. Jen Leck, Slide Show
Dr. & Mrs. Richard & Kathy Yost
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Mrs. Diane Mazza
Ms. Ellie Greffenstette
Ms. Emma McMahon
Mrs. Kathy Yost
Ms. Kristine Opferman
Ms. Lily Hudak
Ms. Lisa Trozzi
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Ms. Sarah Bedortha
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Ms. Danielle Bailie, Parent Speaker
Mrs. Kathy Yost
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Ms. Lisa Trozzi
Ms. Maggie Freedy
Ms. Marissa Furfuro
Mrs. Megan Greffenstette
Ms. Peggy Watson
Ms. Sarah Bashaw
Ms. Sarah Bedortha
Ms. Paula Eicker - Themed Cookies
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South Side Anglican Church
*Mt. Lebanon* United Methodist Church, United Methodist Women
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Support Angels’ Place through United Way’s Contributor Choice program. Designate your contribution to Angels’ Place by using code #1200 North Side or #3977 Swissvale.

Many other businesses encourage giving through America’s Charities (EIN #: 25-1450489).

Federal employees can give through the Combined Federal Campaign, for which the Angels’ Place code is #44139. The code for the State Employees’ Combined Appeal is #5000-0017.
**WISH LISTS**

**North Side**
- Fruit Snacks
- Cereal
- Sprinkle Parmesan Cheese
- Salad Dressing (not light or reduced fat)
- Graham Crackers
- Animal Crackers (no icing)
- Goldfish
- Ritz Crackers
- Raisins
- Sugar/Flour
- All Purpose Cleaners
- Spic/Span or Floor Cleaner
- Toilet Cleaner
- Hamster Food for Rufus Our Hamster
- 39 gal Garbage Bags
- Paper Towels
- Tall Kitchen Garbage Bags
- Pump Hand Soap
- Paper Napkins

**Swissvale**
- Fruit snacks
- Cereal
- Sprinkle Parmesan Cheese
- Salad Dressing (not light or reduced fat)
- Graham Crackers
- Animal Crackers (no icing)
- All Purpose Cleaners
- Toilet Cleaner
- 39 gal Garbage Bags
- Tall Kitchen Garbage Bags
- Paper Napkins
- Smoke Detectors
- White and Colored Copy Paper (Letter)
- Duct Tape
- Mailing Labels (30/page)
- Small Paper Dessert Plates
- BPA Sippy Cups with Lids
- Large Bibs
- Timothy Hay for Small Animals
- Hamster Food
- Putty/Sticky Tac
- Calcium Chloride
- Mops
- Small Paper Dessert Plates
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- BPA Sippy Cups with Lids
- Large Bibs
- Paper Towels
- Pump Hand Soap
- Dixie Cups
- Scotch Tape
- Regular Light Bulbs
- Candelabra Light Bulbs/Regular Light Bulbs

(Happy Halloween!)