



**Providence  
Center**

A Ministry of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

**Fall 2014**

## ***Celebrating 20 Years of A Love Full of Action!***

On October 2nd, Providence Center honored its founding Sisters and their faithful commitment to the people of Fairhill. Twenty years of adults learning English to build a better life for their families. Twenty years of women praying together and supporting each other. Twenty years of teens becoming leaders, mentors, and college students. Twenty years of children having a safe and joyful place to grow as students and as people. Twenty years because the Sisters stayed when St. Edward closed. Twenty years because of your support and your faith in those we serve. Twenty years, all of us, together! ♦



*Sr. Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ Provincial Leader, represented Sr. Elizabeth Barber in the ceremony. Here she is with Joseph from our youth program, with Christyn Moran (left) and Ofelia Garcia (Right).*



*The founding Sisters, from left to right: Peggy Doherty, SHCJ, Sheila Falls, SSJ, Nancy Logan, SHCJ, Tese Currie, SHCJ (representing Muriel Ratigan, SHCJ), Eileen Moughan, SHCJ, Nancy Hagenbach, SHCJ, Mary Jane Hicks, SHCJ (representing Mary Agnes Toomey, SHCJ). Also pictured, on the far right, Roseanne McDougall, SHCJ, Board Chair, and David Chiles, Executive Director.*



*Jana with Aisha, one of the students she mentors.*

## ***Jana's Story***

Jana is a Teen Leader, one of eight high school students in North Philadelphia hired to work in "Power", Providence Center's after school program. In a community challenged by Philadelphia's highest murder and poverty rates, Jana serves as a tutor and mentor for the children. For a long time, Jana hoped to leave the neighborhood. "I always wanted to leave the city and help children in other communities," she says. But now, she sees the impact she can make in her own neighborhood. "Being a Teen Leader gives me the opportunity to be a support for all the children . . . it gives me the opportunity to be an example for them and to make a difference."

Jana, along with her Teen Leader peers, also attends

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### **Our Mission**

Providence Center engages children, youth and adults in educational opportunities within the Fairhill/West Kensington community of North Philadelphia.

The Center values respect for the dignity of each person and creates a safe, hospitable place for learning.

### **Our Programs**

#### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

- "Power" After School
- Teen and Grad Leaders
- Summer Camp

#### **ADULT EDUCATION**

- English Language Classes
- Individual ESL Tutoring

#### **FAITH AND FAMILY**

- Prayer Group
- Women's Retreats

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workshops and receives one-on-one coaching to help her grow as a person and professional. "Before Providence Center," Jana says, "I was always worried, never really

*"I have faith that things are going to turn out the way they should."*

sure of what I wanted to do. And now I'm more calm, and I have more faith that things are going to turn out the way they should."



Jana, with Aristedes on the left, basking in applause when she announced her college acceptance at the anniversary.

Things are turning out very well for Jana. A high school senior, she recently received her first college acceptance, complete with a full scholarship offer. Jana will be going to college, an amazing personal accomplishment, but she won't be alone. Jana's example will help many children to grow, to dream, and to follow her down the path she is blazing. ♦

## The Hagenbach Classroom



Sr. Nancy Hagenbach, Providence Center's founding Director.

As part of our anniversary celebration, we were honored to announce the dedication of the "Hagenbach Classroom" in Providence Center, named for our founding Director, Sister Nancy Hagenbach, SHCJ. Her plaque reads, "Providence Center is proud to recognize Sr. Nancy Hagenbach, SHCJ, by dedicating, on our 20th Anniversary, the Hagenbach Classroom in honor of her service to the Fairhill community and her embodiment of 'A Love Full of Action'."

What better way to honor the faith and legacy of Sr. Nancy than to insure that students for years will be learning and bettering their lives in a classroom that bears her name? ♦



Leticia Gonzalez, St. Edward alumnae, member of Providence Center's prayer group, and featured 20th Anniversary speaker, receiving her corsage from Tina Barber, Providence Center board member. Do you have a reflection about your time at St. Edward? We would love to hear from you!

## St. Edward's Corner

Leticia Gonzalez, a graduate of St. Edward's and member of Providence Center's prayer group, shared a reflection at our anniversary. She spoke of Sr. Mary Agnes Toomey, who passed away before Providence Center was founded, but whose commitment to helping families inspired our mission.

"When my parents returned to Puerto Rico," Leticia said, "they gave me their home. The paperwork involved was very overwhelming, and a conversation with Sr. Agnes calmed my fears. If you knew Sr. Agnes, this next part of the story will not be surprising. She told me how she could help me get grants to get new windows, doors, and roofing. Which were badly needed!

"My windows, doors, and roofing are part of many silent testimonies to Sister in our neighborhood. Sister died in 1993, in February, and St. Edward closed right after that. That was a tremendous loss to me, and I felt so disconnected from the church.

"Later, I found out that the Holy Child Sisters were on 4<sup>th</sup> Street. They called their house the Providence Center. Providence Center filled a void in my life. .. From St. Edward's to Providence Center, a short walk. A happy part of my life's journey." ♦



## Scenes from the Anniversary



“It’s not a regular program, it’s very unique. This one is loving, it’s special, the trips we do are amazing.” *Aristedes, Power Youth Program, with his mother above and friend Joseph below.*



*Above: Melanie and Rosita Lopez. Below: Youth staff, Teen Leaders, and children.*



“I have the opportunity to be a support for all the children. . . . to be an example for them and just to make a difference and change in some way how they see their life.” *Jana, Teen Leader*



*SHCJs Eileen Moughan, Mary Ann Buckley, and Mary Jane Hicks share a laugh.*



“Providence Center has brought so much joy to our family and children, and they really enjoy their time there at the program, and the happiness on their faces is priceless.” *Candida, mother of Aristedes*



*Pat Tirrell, SHCJ, Marybeth Phillips, and Peggy Doherty, SHCJ.*

## A Tale of Two Halloweens



On October 21st, Rosemont College invited our children to campus for trick-or-treating, hay rides, and more Halloween fun. This trip is always a highlight of our program year; the kids have a blast, and we love having them on the college campus.

Later in the month, on Halloween, we planned a Fall Fair and were expecting over 200 children in Fairhill Square. Unfortunately, gun shots rang out as we decorated the park. The school was put on lockdown, the fifth lockdown in seven weeks. For the children’s safety, the Fair had to be cancelled.

Support from partners like Rosemont makes it possible for our children to have fun and safe celebrations. And

when violence gets in the way of fun, like on Halloween, your support insured that we were there for the children, painting faces and handing out candy in the school when the lockdown was lifted, comforting the children who were scared, and reminding them that it is still ok to be a kid. ♦



*Left: Michael with his pumpkin at Rosemont College. Above: Abandoned decorations in Fairhill Square.*

## **WAYS YOU CAN HELP**

*"Generosity, generosity, generosity must be the beginning and ending of our life." -Cornelia Connelly*

*We serve needy families, and so our programs are either free or charge only a nominal fee. **Please help us sustain this mission with a gift!** °*

- \* Become a monthly donor
- \* Ask your employer to match your gift
- \* Consider a bequest to Providence Center
- \* Donate online with credit card/PayPal:  
[www.providencecentershcj.org](http://www.providencecentershcj.org)

*Volunteer on your own or bring your family, co-workers, or parish! **There are many ways you can become involved in our work!***

- \* Tutor adults learning English
- \* Spend time with our kids and teens
- \* Help in the office
- \* Volunteer your trade or skill

*° Gifts to Providence Center are tax-deductible*

**For information, contact David Chiles at [dchiles@providencecentershcj.org](mailto:dchiles@providencecentershcj.org).**

### **Help Us Spread the Word!**

Invite us to speak at your parish or community group! If you would like to arrange a presentation, contact David Chiles: [dchiles@providencecentershcj.org](mailto:dchiles@providencecentershcj.org)



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