



**Providence  
Center** 

A Ministry of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

**Fall 2017**

## ***A Home Full of Joy, A Love Full of Action***

When you step inside Providence Center's new home at 2557 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, you'll be greeted by cheerful blue walls, gleaming tile floors, and the warm, welcoming, and joyful atmosphere that has always been a part of our organization.

Here at Providence Center, we are excited to watch the families that we serve grow and learn in this beautiful space. And now, **thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, we have already paid off the mortgage for our building!**



*Above: Sister Peggy Doherty helps Kiara to assess her own progress as a returning student to Providence Center's English as a Second Language classes.*



*Above: Teen Leaders Melanie, Lee, Stephanie, and Alex try out a few new Brain Breaks and Boredom Busters led by our Youth Organizer, Katie, in the Community Room during Staff Training.*

*Right: Long-time Providence Center students Elizabeth and Joseph light up a new classroom with energy and laughter as they register for the Power program and remind Lead Teacher Nick to use his empathy skills and some of his favorite Chill Skills.*



**This means that all of the donations we receive going forward will fill Providence Center with life, joy, and opportunity, rather than going towards payments to the bank!** While our location has changed, our mission remains the same. Thanks to your amazing support, we can realize this mission more fully to serve the Fairhill community in an ever-expanding number of ways!♦

### **Our Mission**

Committed to North Philadelphia's Fairhill community since 1993, Providence Center offers education programming for children, youth, and adults. Our mission is to educate people to have the power and spirit to transform their lives and community.

### **Our Programs**

#### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

- "Power" After School
- Teen Leaders
- Summer Leadership Academy

#### **ADULT EDUCATION**

- English Language Classes
- Individual ESL Tutoring

#### **FAITH AND FAMILY**

- Prayer Group
- Women's Retreats

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**We are so grateful to all of our donors for joining with us to create this vibrant and life-giving space**—one that allows us to provide opportunities to even more Fairhill families and to ensure that the love and commitment of the Holy Child Sisters continue in this community for generations to come.

**We could not do it without you! Thank you!**

## *The Summer Leadership Academy*

**Providence Center Teen Leaders thank you for the summer of a lifetime and tell how your generosity has changed their lives and shaped their futures.**

Providence Center's Summer Leadership Academy supports high school students as they prepare for college, build their leadership skills, and embrace their roles as Teen Leaders who will work with younger children in the Power program during the school year. During the six-week program, the teens toured Temple University, learned community leadership skills with Youth United for Change and Artwell, and gave back in the community through volunteer work at St. Francis Inn. Here's what our teens had to say about the Summer Leadership Academy:

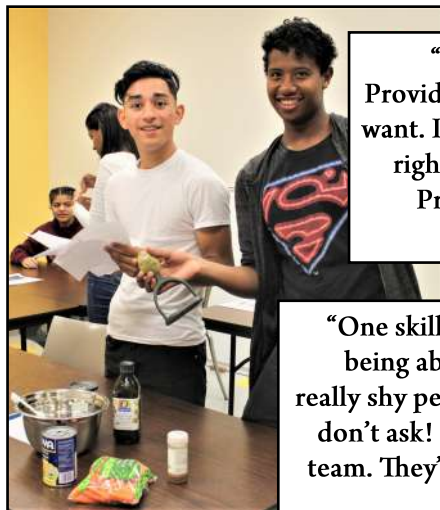
**"I enjoyed volunteering at St. Francis Inn and giving food to people in need. I like to help out because it makes me feel good, and it makes me feel grateful for the things I have in my life."**

**-Melanie**



**"I definitely see the change in myself. Providence is making me push harder for what I want. I know people who are going through a lot right now, but they're still pushing because Providence makes them want to push."**

**-Lee**



**"One skill I believe I have learned with Providence is being able to step out of my comfort zone. I am a really shy person, and I've learned that I can't get help if I don't ask! Now I know that I can open up more to my team. They'll help me and understand what I'm saying."**

**-Stephanie**

**"My colleagues and I went on a trip to Temple University, and it was absolutely amazing."**

**-Manny**



**Top:** The Teen Leaders prepare to serve food at the St. Francis Inn.

**Bottom right:** The teens tour Temple University.

**Bottom left:** Kevin and Manny whip up a tasty snack while learning about healthy living habits.

## *A Safe Haven in Fairhill*

As you have probably heard in the news, the opioid crisis has devastated the nation, affecting families from all walks of life. Philadelphia is no exception to this distressing trend with an estimated 70,000 heroin users in the city. Fairhill and Kensington have been particularly hard hit by the crisis. While a large drug camp has been closed along the Conrail tracks in Fairhill, the opioid crisis is still visible in Fairhill's parks and on our neighborhood streets. The children served by Providence Center face the community impacts of the opioid crisis every day, from the dangerous needles left in their parks to the ambulances rushing down their streets in response to overdoses.



***"At Providence Center, we're trying to create a safe haven for the kids. We are creating it for the kids and also for ourselves."***

***-Lee, Teen Leader***

Students at Providence Center avoid addiction and participate in programs that help support them to build a future full of hope and promise. In spite of this community crisis, Providence Center remains a safe haven where our children and teens receive support to overcome challenges and grow as joyful, creative, and caring individuals. They learn to manage stress, practice non-violent conflict resolution techniques, and share their hopes and dreams in a warm, welcoming environment. Even in the face of community adversity, our children learn about the positivity and boundless potential in themselves and in each other. ♦



## Meet Sophia, A Passionate Teen Leader

Sophia is a senior at El Centro de Estudiantes, and this is her second year as a Teen Leader. Before Sophia became a Teen Leader with Providence Center, she preferred to keep to herself at school and in her community. "Being a teenager in this urban setting, I started realizing that I didn't want to be around people... I just wanted to get out, to graduate and get out," Sophia explains. Then, Providence Center made a presentation to Sophia's school, and everything changed.

*"When Providence came, they spoke on how they are here to change that cycle of poverty, drug addiction, and violence, to start with the youth and open up their minds to things... That really stood out to me because rather than running away, I'm sticking myself right in the middle, and I'm helping."*

Since Sophia joined the Teen Leader program at Providence Center last summer, she has become a strong and outgoing role model for the Power program and a leader in the garden. Reflecting on the past year, Sophia described the mentorship she provided to a student who needed support with settling conflicts and working well with her peers. "The student started getting along with a couple of other girls that were in the group that she did not like at all in the beginning of the year. I loved that because I saw the growth in her. I saw how her

mindset changed and how she matured through that."

*"I really did impact their lives... It taught me that I have a lot to give to the world."*



*Sophia and Mayo create masterpieces through Providence Center's community partnership with Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.*

also learned skills that will come in handy as she pursues her college education and investigates careers ranging from forensic anthropology to community organizing. Sophia explains, "I've learned to manage my life better. Those were skills that they don't teach you in school. Now, I have a calendar at home, I have a white board, I have a cork board... Providence Center really just taught me to organize my life better as a person."

Starting her second year in the program, Sophia reflects on what Providence Center means to her. "You have to find the good people and connect with them, and that's really why I joined. Providence Center has given me the opportunity to do that, with adults around me, teens around me, and children around me. I love it. I love feeling like I belong somewhere. I love this place. For real. They've taught me a lot." ♦



*Sophia writes about what she has to offer younger students at a leadership retreat.*

## You Can Make a Difference!

Please join us to make Providence Center's building a safe and joyful home for children, teens, and adults. Because of your support, children learn to believe in their futures, teens become role models and go to college, and adults gain the skills and confidence to build better lives for themselves and the children who depend on them. **Thank you!**

- \* **Donate online** with your credit card: [providencephilly.org/donate](http://providencephilly.org/donate)
  - \* Sign up online to become a **monthly donor**
  - \* Ask your employer to **match your gift**
  - \* **Consider a bequest** to Providence Center
  - \* **Invite us** to come and speak, or **visit us**.
- We'd love to meet you! ♦**



*Teen Leaders Yamil and Alex play a game at the Spring Fair in Fairhill Park with students Nathan and Bryan.*

## Volunteer with Us!

**Volunteer on your own or bring your family, co-workers, or parish!**  
*There are many ways you can make a difference!*

- \* **We need reading buddies** for the kids! Come and read books with one of our inspiring students in the Power program after school.
- \* **We need tutors** after school to help children with their homework.
- \* Let us know **if you have a trade or skill you'd like to contribute**, such as computer maintenance, carpentry, plumbing, etc.



You can also volunteer to **help us collect school supplies or raise funds** for our programs.  
Contact us for ideas!

To volunteer, contact:  
[info@providencephilly.org](mailto:info@providencephilly.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@providencephilly.org](mailto:dchiles@providencephilly.org)



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