



A Ministry of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

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.

A Letter from Our Director

Where do you go to look for inspiration?

Sometimes it's in the obvious places, like at a high school graduation. Inside you can read about two Teen Leaders who are graduating, moving on to pursue their dreams in college. Imagine what their success means to the children they have been mentoring?

Sometimes, you find inspiration at an unexpected time. How about 8 AM, on a Saturday, outside a North Philadelphia elementary school? That's where you would have found our Young Advocates, teens who chose to wake up early on the weekend to paint and clean the school. Read about the more than 30 dedicated youth who come to Providence Center to discuss issues on Friday nights and serve their community on Saturdays. Imagine what their commitment and enthusiasm means to neighbors who want a better quality of life?

All of us at Providence Center hope that you find inspiration in our students, because we find inspiration in you! Inside, the Dalesandros share a bit of their story and why they support Providence Center. We know that each of you has a story, too. It was wonderful to meet so many of you at our open houses, and if you couldn't make it, I hope you will come and take a tour. Let's inspire each other!

—David Chiles, Executive Director



Spring 2018

Our Programs

- CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
- Power After-School Program
 - Teen Leaders
 - Young Advocates (YÁ)
 - Summer Leadership Academy

- ADULT EDUCATION**
- English Language Classes
 - Conversation Groups

- FAITH AND FAMILY**
- Prayer Group
 - Women's Retreats

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North Philly Teens say, “¡Yá!—Enough!” and Make a Change

How do you think teens in Fairhill choose to spend their Friday nights? Some cruise around with friends. Others stay home, hoping to avoid trouble. But the 30 young people in Providence Center's new Young Advocates program, YÁ, gather each Friday to discuss issues ranging from food insecurity to gun violence to the role of art in activism.

They're not all talk though. After gathering on Friday night to learn and share ideas over pizza, the YÁ team often spends



their Saturdays addressing those same community issues. Under the leadership of our community organizer, Charito Morales, these teens are pitching in and getting their hands dirty to make positive changes and to build the community of their dreams, one project at a time. ♦



Above: The YÁ team spends a Saturday preparing beds for our community garden.

Left: Teens Mino, Genesis, and Erick plant flowers to beautify the Cramp Elementary schoolyard.

Opening Our Doors to Friends and Supporters

You helped us to purchase a new building. You encouraged us as we prepared our space for 50 children, over 30 teens, and 300 adult students to learn and grow. You supported us as we stocked our new home with books, games, laptops and art supplies to educate and empower our community.

Then, you came to visit and celebrate with us during our open house events last month! Whether you attended our open house in person or celebrated with us from afar, we were so glad to open our doors to you, our friends and supporters! ♦

***Above:** Teen Leaders and Power Program students welcome Open House guests—community leaders, Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, and old and new friends.*



***Left:** Yannaliz demonstrates how she uses Chill Skills. Our students learn to use Chill Skills and other strategies to cope with challenges and build resiliency.*

***Right:** Kendirene explains the Power Program. Each afternoon in the program, 50 students receive a nutritious snack, complete homework, learn social and emotional skills, and participate in activities to broaden their horizons.*



Meet the Dalesandros



Supporters Margaret and Palmer Dalesandro have been involved with Providence Center for a few years. But their service to the North Philadelphia community began decades earlier!

Margaret traces her involvement in the area back to her high school days at Sharon. “As part of our spiritual outreach, I used to go to a settlement house to see if the children needed anything. And then at Rosemont, we had a program where we tutored at St. Edward’s. The involvement in Providence Center is a continuation of my Holy Child involvement in Fairhill.”

Palmer recalls, “My grandmother lived not too far from Providence Center. It was a vibrant ethnic community then. Now, it’s a place that is desperately in need of assistance. It’s been ignored for too long, and that has affected me to become involved.”

Building upon their longstanding ties to the area, the Dalesandros support Providence Center’s families through donations and gifts of their time and expertise. In addition to their sponsorship of the Rose B. Dalesandro Volunteer Room, Margaret and Palmer have served on our Development Advisory Board and are now spearheading a committee to plan Providence Center’s Spring 2019 25th Anniversary celebration.

Palmer explains why he supports Providence Center’s mission. “My family—we were immigrants. My mother was born in Italy. Here, she became a National Merit Scholar. The differentiation was education. I think that’s the thing that Providence Center does—help the children to get a better education.”

Margaret sees connections between her own family’s immigration story in the 1920s and the story of youth in Fairhill today. “One of the most impressive things is just how incredibly intelligent, articulate, and self-directed the students are. Providence Center is giving them the confidence to know that they belong. In this neighborhood, the need for security and safety and a sense of self-value is so critical. And I would really like to see Providence Center spread that message to even more of the residents.” ♦

Hats Off to Our Graduates!

A young person's high school graduation is a momentous occasion for any family. In North Philadelphia, it's an even more joyous cause for celebration. Fairhill's teenagers face the challenges of persistent violence and deep poverty. They attend schools with student-to-counselor ratios of 600 to 1 and have limited opportunities to participate in college access programs. Graduation rates in our local high schools hover around 50%.

Providence Center's Teen Leaders defy those statistics. With their own innate potential and the support of Providence Center staff, 94% of high school students who have spent a year as a Teen Leader since 2013 have enrolled in college and completed at least two years.

This year, we congratulate two of our Teen Leaders on their high school graduations and wish them well in their next steps! Dante is graduating from Edison High School and heading off to Penn State Schuylkill after two years as a Teen Leader. During his time at Providence Center, Dante often shared his ability to empathize with younger students. We know that this same gift will help Dante to soak in all the knowledge he can and forge new friendships during college!

Sophia graduated from El Centro de Estudiantes in December and has recently completed her first semester at the Community College of Philadelphia. While she finished the semester with an A average, balancing multiple jobs with the first semester of college life did present some challenges.



Bottom: Dante and Jordan giggle through a communication exercise during the teen retreat in Stone Harbor, one of a range of college and career activities that Teen Leaders complete during the program.



Sophia explains, "Every week, by the time I got to Friday, I was like, 'Alright, I did all the homework for this week. Let me start some for next week.' And then I never did!" But now that the semester is over, Sophia reflects, "I think I was just not remembering that I need time for myself too. For next semester, I'm definitely going to work on that."

Through the Teen Leaders program, students like Dante and Sophia learn to manage their time. They learn to set goals, to reflect on challenges, and to adjust to reach those goals. They learn to be leaders in school and in the workplace but also to find balance and to live healthy lives. And they learn that **with a supportive community of peers and mentors, there is no limit to what they can achieve!** ♦

Top: Sophia shows off her high school diploma with Maura, Director of Youth Programs, by her side.

Become a Power Booster!

When you become a monthly Power Booster, you can make a difference in the life of a child. We serve Philadelphia's economically poorest community, so we can't ask families to pay full tuition for the children in our after-school Power Program.

That's where you come in!

Along with fellow Power Boosters, your gift will sponsor a child in our program each month:

- **At \$10 each**, 20 Boosters give students like Yannaliz the opportunity to learn how to manage stress and peacefully resolve problems.
- **At \$20 each**, 10 Boosters offer students like Elian (*right*) enriching science and art activities.
- **At \$50 each**, 4 Boosters provide students like Kendirene with teen role models from her community.

Making a recurring gift is easy!

Use your credit card through our website (ProvidencePhilly.org/donate/), or set up recurring payment through your bank. Call or email Julie McIntyre for more information: (215) 739-7465, jmcintyre@ProvidencePhilly.org.



Volunteer with Us!

Volunteer on your own or bring your family, co-workers, parish, or civic group!



There are many ways you can make a difference!



- * Read or tutor with our inspiring Power Program after school.
- * Help with local park clean-ups and other special events!
- * Contribute a trade or skill, such as computer maintenance or carpentry.
- * Join us to collect school supplies or raise funds for our programs. Contact us for ideas!

To volunteer, contact: info@providencephilly.org



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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



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