



**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 Executive Director



As I reflect on our many accomplishments over the last several months, I can't help but feel overwhelmed with a wide range of emotions. I am proud of Providence Center's ability to pivot so quickly in the midst of a nationwide pandemic. I am grateful for the generosity and support of donors like you that make that possible. By the same token, I can't help but feel the weight of the many uncertainties that we face today, as an agency and as a city. Now more than ever, I can't help but worry for the families and children that we service who are disproportionately being affected by COVID-19.

This pandemic has brought to the surface the many inequities that communities like Fairhill endure, highlighting issues such as food insecurities, the technology divide, disparities in healthcare and the fact that many of the city's essential workers are under-paid and largely comprised of minority workers. These inequities are not new, and make no mistake, they affect the residents of Fairhill every single day.

The tragic murder of George Floyd has also brought the worst injustice of all, racism, to center stage. To mourn the death of George Floyd and the many others who have lost their lives simply because of the color of their skin isn't enough. We have to work harder than ever for Fairhill. Our mission is to serve the needs of the Fairhill community, and they need us now more than ever. We must stand strong behind the message that "Black Lives Matter".

We teach our students to be conscious members of their community and to speak up for what they believe in. We must lead by example. Now is not the time to be neutral. Now is the time to do what Providence Center has always done, "meet the needs of its community" with "a love full of action" (Cornelia Connelly, founder of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus).

I ask that you stand with us and consider making a donation. Help us to come back stronger than ever so that we can continue to be a beacon of hope for our families. Your support, no matter the amount, means so much during these wearisome times; times during which major cuts are being made to funding across the city, including the dismantling of the Mayor's Office of Adult Education which will also have disproportionate implications on our community. We don't know what other monetary cuts are to come, but our staff stands ready with me to make a difference, spreading a message of inclusivity, opportunity, hope and love that is only possible with your support.

Thank you for helping to make Providence Center a pillar in its community.

Siria Rivera M.Ed  
Executive Director

## Winter/Spring 2020

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### Our Board of Directors

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## New Members of the Providence Team

Providence Center is excited to introduce our new Director of Adult Education, Gretchen Spencer, and our new Director of Youth Development, Shannon McGill!

Gretchen is passionate about working with adult learners and teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). She has experience researching adult education, language acquisition, and immigrant rights. Gretchen earned her M.S.Ed from Temple University, and she continues to work with Temple through Providence Center's partnership with the Temple L.I.F.E. program, offering ESOL classes to parents in the School District of Philadelphia. Welcome, Gretchen!



Shannon is responsible for ensuring a safe and nurturing environment that cultivates high quality youth programs in accordance with DHS standards. She has dedicated nearly two decades to supporting marginalized communities through local government, education, and the nonprofit sector. Born and raised in Long Beach, California, Shannon received her master's in Human Services to guide her passion for empowering individuals through capacity building, identifying opportunities, mentorship, and advocacy.

## Thank you to all contributors to our non-event!



**With your help we surpassed our goal!**

Thank you to all who joined us for our Annual Benefit Non-Event! Thanks to the generosity of our donors and event sponsors, we were able to raise **\$67,000** to support our programming and continue serving the Fairhill community.



## Program Highlights



Through a partnership with Philly Counts and On the Table Philly, our YA! (Youth Advocates) teens have been working to increase census participation in the Fairhill community. They are the youngest group in Philadelphia to attend training to become Census Champions! YA! teens are worked in our neighborhood to explain the importance of the census and assisting community members in filling out the survey. Throughout quarantine, they also participated in phone banking efforts in order to continue this important work. Providence Center has also hosted census job fairs to encourage Fairhill residents to work for the census and take advantage of this opportunity to ensure a more complete count this year. Our Philly Counts census awareness work will continue throughout the summer months.

We are thankful to announce that we didn't have to suspend our ESOL programming due to COVID-19. Our ESOL teachers and many of our students transitioned to virtual classes to complete the semester. Our summer semester of classes will be 100% virtual.



## Congratulations to our graduating seniors!

**Providence Center is proud to congratulate our Teen Leaders and YA! teens who graduated from high school in recent weeks:**

- **Soad Awwad**—will attend Yale University.
- **Brianna Hall**—plans to take a gap year to explore her interests before applying to college.
- **Bianca Hernandez**—was accepted to the U.S. Marines.
- **Jan Carlos Ortiz-Lopez**—will study business at the Community College of Philadelphia.
- **Carlos Lugardo**—plans to work and improve his math skills before applying to college.
- **Stephanie Torres**—will study Nursing at the Community College of Philadelphia.



**Congratulations!**  
**Class of**  
**2020**



## You can make a difference! We need your email!

If we don't have an updated email for you, please email [info@providencephilly.org](mailto:info@providencephilly.org). This will enable us to keep in touch with you during these socially distant times.

**Donate online at [ProvidencePhilly.org/Donate](https://ProvidencePhilly.org/Donate)**



### Did you know?

You can support Providence Center through your employer's annual United Way campaign.

Just direct your gift to Providence Center by using  
**our United Way number: 12030**

It's easy, it's quick, and it will make a tremendous positive impact in the lives of our students.

**Thank you for your support!**



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**If you missed our non-event, no worries! Please visit [ProvidencePhilly.org/Events](https://ProvidencePhilly.org/Events) to watch videos from our Executive Director, Board Chair, teachers, and students.**



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