

STEP News

Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action (STEP), Inc.

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**Your Pathway
to Success**

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STEP to Assist Flood Disaster Victims



Flood waters from Tropical Storm Lee, north of Montoursville.

As a community, we are acutely aware of the local property devastation that occurred from the September disaster. Although several months have passed, many homeowners still face immense challenges to reoccupy their homes. As a result, STEP is launching two programs to assist flood victims: **Homes In Need Flood Recovery** and **Housing Assistance Gap Funding**.

The Homes In Need Flood Recovery Program will assist flood victims with repairs to make their homes habitable. Flood victims who have been identified by the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center and Lycoming County, and who can return to their homes but need to complete necessary repairs prior to moving back, will be referred to the program.

STEP worked closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to submit an application for Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits to fund the Homes In Need Flood Recovery Program. Eligible contributors receive a 75% state tax credit that may be applied to their applicable corporate income tax over a five year period. STEP solicited corporate investment for the program, resulting in nine sponsors contributing \$283,000.

STEP, Inc.'s mission is to engage diverse individuals, families, and communities in the pursuit of social and economic success.

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Housing Options Pathway

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STEP to Assist Flood Disaster Victims

The Homes in Need Flood Recovery program will utilize two resources currently under the STEP umbrella. Crews from STEP's Housing & Building Initiatives and YouthBuild programs will work together to make essential repairs or renovations (heating, electrical, plumbing, shell measures, and address other basic mechanical issues) that will enable homeowners to return to their homes. Part of STEP's Housing Options Pathway, Housing & Building Initiatives personnel have extensive training, certifications, and work experience in residential construction. YouthBuild, part of STEP's Workforce Development Pathway, provides young adults with hands-on training, leading to a nationally recognized certificate in the construction trades.

The second program being launched by STEP, under the Housing Options Pathway, is the Housing Assistance Gap Funding Program. Eligible flood victims will be provided with the gap funding necessary to access temporary housing (hotels or apartments) in Lycoming County, while they are searching for permanent housing or working to rehabilitate their flood-damaged home.

Essentially, this program will pay the difference between the amount FEMA provides to flood victims for temporary housing and the actual rates in Lycoming County. The program will coincide with FEMA's time frame for temporary housing assistance, which is two months with an option of extension to a maximum of 18 months after displacement. This program, developed in conjunction with FEMA's Disaster Recovery Center, is funded by the Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation of Pennsylvania, with assistance from the Board of Commissioners for Lycoming County's ACT 137 Fund.



Photo of Trout Run just after Lycoming Creek crests on September 7, 2011.



Photo provided by Lycoming County Hazard Mitigation.

Tropical Storm Lee affected more than 1,200 homes in Lycoming County and completely destroyed 190.

If you are a displaced flood victim who lives in temporary housing or needs necessary repairs in order to return to your home, please contact STEP at 570-601-9509 to receive an application for the program.

For more information, please check STEP's website at www.stepcorp.org

A HUGE Thank You to our Contributors!

Infinity Oil Field Service, LLC

Blaise Alexander Family Dealerships

Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation of Pennsylvania

Jersey Shore State Bank

M&T Bank

Woodlands Bank

Board of Commissioners of Lycoming County

Frey's Commissary

Larson Design Group

W.R. Sims Insurance Agency, Inc.

Beiter's Home Center



Independent Living Pathway

Park Home gives \$225,000 to STEP Forward Endowment Fund



Representatives from Park Home Board of Directors, Bud Bell and Jeff Sims, with representatives from STEP: Terry Roller, President & CEO; and Carolyn Bullock, Board Secretary/Treasurer.

The Park Home, a nonprofit organization devoted to providing care to senior citizens, donated \$225,000 to the agency to benefit seniors. Jeff Sims, Park Home Board President stated, "STEP does so much for the community. By giving to STEP, they can do the most with it because of their broad range of senior programs."

Previously, The Park Home subsidized and administered the operation of The Meadows Assisted Living Facility, and plans to build an independent living facility in the area. By donating to STEP, the Park Home Board continues its mission of providing subsidies for seniors, according to Sims. "STEP was part of a larger philanthropic initiative that included contributions to St. Anthony's Center, the Williamsport Home and area hospice care providers," Sims said.

Yes, it is true. The Park Home's major donation rendered STEP President & CEO, Terry Roller speechless—just for a brief moment!

STEP Modifies Transportation Services

Because of significant decreases in state-wide transportation funding, STEP will no longer be able to provide transportation service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. Accordingly, STEP will be implementing the following changes:

Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Days of Operation
Monday thru Friday

Times of Operation
6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

- Service to Geisinger Medical Center will be provided once per day between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- Service for Medical Assistance recipients (out of county service) will continue on an as-needed basis.
- STEP **WILL NOT** be providing transportation on STEP-observed holidays.

One of the benefits of this change is that more resources will be concentrated during the busiest part of the day. "This should actually improve customer service", Jim Plankenhorn, STEP Transportation Services Director, said. "We are proud to be able to continue to cover the 2,135 square mile, bi-county area and get people to high-priority medical appointments when those appointments typically occur. These services go a long way in helping our residents live independently for as long as possible."

STEP has collaborated with county governments, human service organizations, and medical partners to ensure a smooth transition. For more information, please contact STEP Transportation Services at 323-7575 or toll free 1-800-222-2468, and press option 4.



Your Pathway to Success

STEP'S ANNUAL MEETING — OCTOBER 20, 2011

“The STEP Annual Meeting is both an organizational and community opportunity to showcase how we achieve our mission through customer and community impacts. The meeting also offers the opportunity to recognize and thank our board members, advisory council members, employees, volunteers and contributors.”

Terry E. Roller, STEP President & CEO



William E. Nichols, STEP's "Founding Father," accepts the Outstanding Contributor Award.

STEP'S MISSION AWARDS



STEP's first Mission Award recipients:
Joe Campagna-Volunteer of the Year; Senator John Wozniak-Public Service;
William E. Nichols-Outstanding Contributor;
Debbie Hanley-Employee of the Year;
Representative Michael Hanna-Public Service.
Not pictured: Victoria Woodring-Customer Achievement.

DEBBIE HANLEY - Employee of the Year

Recognizing the employee who displays exceptional service to customers, fellow employees, the community, and STEP's mission.

JOSEPH CAMPAGNA - Volunteer of the Year

Recognizing an individual, organization, or group that impacts STEP's infrastructure, enhances service delivery to customers or directly impacts the customers.

JOHN WOZNIAK & MICHAEL HANNA - Public Service

Recognizing public officials, organizations or groups that have positively impacted the mission of STEP.

WILLIAM E. NICHOLS - Outstanding Contributor

Recognizing an individual, organization, or group that makes a significant donation to STEP (financial, in-kind, technical services, or products).

VICTORIA WOODRING - Customer Achievement

Recognizing an individual, organization, or group that achieves or exceeds their personal, educational, or professional goals.



Your Pathway to Success

STEP'S ANNUAL MEETING — OCTOBER 20, 2011



STEP Employee service award recipients in attendance at the meeting—Kimber Williams, John Konieczny, Debbie Hanley, Marcella Hosley, Barbara Parker, Tammy Frye, Rose Williams, Vickie Dodds, Sandra Graham, Gwendolyn Long, Phillip Good, Tammy Winder, Jesse Leidhecker, and Jeanette Englert.

EMPLOYEE YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

HOUSING OPTIONS PATHWAY

Jessie Leidhecker-25
Susan Gibson-5
Steven Smith-5

EARLY LEARNING PATHWAY

Bonnie Burget-35	Stephanie Pickering-15
Diane Shaffer-35	Melissa Corlew-10
Kim Vergills-35	Donna Flick-10
Sandra Graham-30	Gwendolyn Long-10
Vickie Dodds-20	Rita Whittington-10
Marcie Gentyzel-20	Jeanette Englert-5
Rose Williams-20	Kelly Hill-5
Pam Helminiak-Myers-15	Barbara Parker-5
Cheri Keeler-15	Tammy Winder-5

ADMINISTRATION

John Konieczny-20
Jean Myers-20
Harry Tompkins-20
Phillip Good-5

INDEPENDENT LIVING PATHWAY

Tammy Frye-30	Sheri Andy-5
Linda Unger-30	Howard Eisner-5
Cy Hall-25	Barbara Fiocco-5
Gayla Selfe-25	Debbie Hanley-5
Marcella Hosley-15	Kimber Williams-5
Traci Foster-10	



Senator John Wozniak presents STEP with a special congratulations, which he sponsored, from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Senate, to recognize STEP's 45 years of high quality service.



Representative Michael Hanna accepts one of the Public Service Awards.



Debbie Hanley accepts the Employee of the Year award from Jim Plankenhorn, Director of Transportation Services.



Governance and Councils

Clinton County Community Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony—September 22, 2011



Left to right: Terry Roller-President & CEO; Board Members: Joel Long, Carolyn Bullock, Katie McCaslin, Elizabeth Manlove, Leonora Hannagan, Russell Kimura, Robert Cross, and David Stone.

Each color of the chain represents a preschool class based at this community center, with the name of a child on every link.

- ◆ STEP congratulates Carolyn W. Bullock, the Board's Secretary/Treasurer, who was elected recently as Chairperson of Area Agency on Aging's Advisory Council. She has been an active member on the Advisory Council for 23 years, and served as the Treasurer for the City of Williamsport before retiring.
- ◆ STEP thanks Eileen Harley for her years of service to the Board of Directors. Eileen had been an elected representative to STEP's Board from CAPP (Community Alliance for Progressive Positive Action), a progressive, nonprofit youth intervention and development program located in Williamsport.
- ◆ STEP welcomes Loni Gamble, Executive Director of CAPP, to the Board of Directors. Loni founded CAPP nearly 10 years ago, starting with a community advisory committee and a summer basketball league. Today, CAPP provides academic enrichment using evidence-based curriculums, and performing arts opportunities for many area youth. Loni was unanimously elected by CAPP's Board as their representative to STEP's Board of Directors.

COUNCILS ELECT OFFICERS

Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council

Chairperson: Carolyn W. Bullock
Vice Chair: Donald Miller
Secretary : Janice Fye

The Area Agency of Aging Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from Lycoming and Clinton Counties. Meetings are held bi-monthly to provide insight, feedback and recommendations to STEP regarding services provided to individuals, age 60 and over.

Head Start Policy Council

Chairperson: Katie McCaslin
Vice Chair: Lori Weigel
Secretary: Grace Morey
Treasurer: Supaporn Shetler
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer: Melissa Anderson

The Policy Council, comprised of current Head Start parents and representatives of the local community, shares the responsibility for Head Start program governance with STEP's Board of Directors. Policy Council responsibilities include the development, review, and approval of all major program policies and procedures, grant applications, program planning, hiring decisions, annual self-assessment, and enrollment selection priorities.



Housing Options Pathway

“Thank you, STEP. I am proud of my home.” - Sharon Sharr

“My husband had always taken care of the house, and he had learned about a special housing renovation program, run by STEP, for Montgomery residents. We applied, but were just over the income guidelines. After his sudden death in 2010, it was very difficult for me. I was now faced with dealing with things (the house) I never dealt with before. Then, I received a letter from STEP urging me to reapply, and I discovered that I was now eligible.”



Steve Smith, Housing and Building Initiatives employee, and Sharon Sharr, homeowner and STEP customer.

“They [Housing & Building Initiatives Program personnel] did so much: replaced soffit, fascia, spouting, gutters; new front porch with handrails; rewiring; new banister for inside stairs; new Bilco basement door; and so much more.”

“I knew things needed to be done, but I never realized there was so much about my home that was not in compliance with codes. All the work that was done made me feel so much better. It gave me peace of mind, and it was the first positive thing I had experienced since the passing of my husband.”

“Those guys were super and did excellent work. I could never have afforded to have the work done, nor did I know how to do it myself. They made the house a heck of a lot better; it really raised the market value; and it looks nicer. As a ‘gateway’ home into Montgomery, I am proud of my home. Thank you, STEP.”

WE GREATLY APPRECIATE OUR INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS

JULY 1, 2010 - JUNE 30, 2011

Janet Alling	Traci and Marc Lowe
Sally Berfield	Elizabeth Manlove
Larry and Robin Chilson	Evelyn A. Moore
Patricia Cohick	Susan and Stephen Nelson
Patricia Essip	William E. Nichols
Barbara and George Griffith	Jim and Cheryl Plankenhorn
Bradley D. Hall	Terry and Julie Roller
Kevin Hodrick	Cathy and Robert Stopper
Pat Jenkins	Edith Williamson
Daryl and Scott Kern	Shirley Yoder
John and Diane Konieczny	

Please contact STEP at 570-326-0587 for information about how you can contribute to the STEP Forward Endowment Fund.



Community Collaboration Pathway

WE GREATLY APPRECIATE ALL OUR CORPORATE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS
JULY 1, 2010 - JUNE 30, 2011



Jersey Shore State Bank



Knight-Confer Funeral Home

THE RIGHT
DEGREE HEATING
and AIR
CONDITIONING



COMPREHENSIVE
FINANCIAL SERVICES



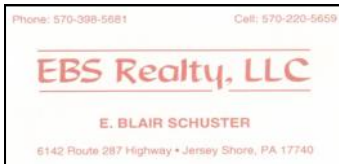
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Community Collaboration Pathway

STEP Employees “Pay It Forward”

RESPONSE TO LOCAL FLOODING

STEP and its employees “stepped it up” in their response to the flooding that began September 7 from Tropical Storm Lee. STEP Transportation provided flood evacuation transportation to 10 Lycoming County Housing Authority residents around 4:00 a.m. on September 8, including at least one in a wheelchair. Additionally, 16 people, who were displaced from Montoursville, four of whom are disabled, were returned home. This transportation cannot be charged to PennDOT as it was same-day service, and was performed as a public service to the communities.

On September 8, STEP Office of Aging donated the food that had been ordered for the Clinton County Community Center ribbon cutting event, postponed due to the regional flooding, to the Salvation Army in Williamsport to feed families housed in flood evacuation shelters.

As phone calls came in, Linkage Lycoming staff referred flood victims to the local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the Red Cross. Referrals were also made to the shelter locations and the FEMA office in Montoursville. Linkage Lycoming and Homeownership Counseling continue to collaborate with the Lycoming County United Way to identify local rental vacancies that could be used as transitional or longer-term residences for the flood victims.

A number of staff assisted several fellow employees who were flood victims, either by collecting supplies and food items, delivering these items and/or equipment to them to aid in their recovery, or directly assisting in some of the cleanup efforts.



Supplies collected for flood-affected co-workers.

NONPROFITS BENEFIT FROM EMPLOYEE DONATIONS

Two recipients of STEP’s 2011 Employee Service Awards donated the value of the award they would have received to nonprofits of their choice.

Traci Foster, Informational Assistant with STEP Office of Aging and recipient of a 10-Year Award, made her donation to the United Brachial Plexus Network, Inc. (UBPN). UBPN is devoted to providing information, support and leadership for families and those concerned with brachial plexus injuries worldwide. Brachial Plexus Injuries (BPI) refer to injuries to the complex set of nerves that control the muscles of the fingers, hand, arm, and shoulder. Traci is on UBPN’s Board of Directors.

John Konieczny, Human Resources Director for STEP and recipient of a 20-Year Award, made his donation to Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc. (STM). Since 1998, STM has been ministering to those who are broken, whether that brokenness is financial, physical, emotional, spiritual or relational. They are located at 501 High Street in Williamsport.

PAY IT FORWARD FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



Buffy Neese and Donna Flick, STEP Lycoming-Clinton Head Start co-workers, assembled a gift basket to raise funds for breast cancer awareness. The fundraiser winner, co-worker Rachelle (Ricotta) Abbott commented, “I was so excited to win the basket and my winning gave me the idea to develop a similar basket for my Relay For Life team, The Cancer Crushing Pants, to raffle off at our events - to pay it forward!”

Clinton County Community Center Ribbon Cutting

"Good things come to those who wait; and, I think after taking the tour, everybody will agree this is a good thing." With those words, Terry Roller, STEP President & CEO, began the grand opening ceremonies on September 22nd at the new Clinton County Community Center (CCCC), in the former Kmart building in the Clinton Plaza. "This is an example of community collaboration, and it was all made possible through the grassroots energy from our seniors," Roller said.

The facility contains a state-of-the-art activity center, a modern exercise area for seniors and preschoolers, an indoor walking facility, new and expanded crafts and activities for seniors, better STEP transportation response time, an outdoor recreation area, and it's fully handicapped accessible.

Economic Benefits

- \$5.5 million construction project **supported over 90 jobs** in rehabilitating the facility.
- Consolidated services will **bring hundreds of citizens weekly** to the site, which contains several retail outlets.
- Long-vacant, deteriorating former retail outlet was rehabilitated into a **state-of-the-art Community Center**.



Left to right: June Fetter; Clinton County Commissioner Adam Coleman; Faith Jones; Lock Haven Mayor Rick Vilello; STEP President & CEO Terry Roller; Ashlynn Allen; Clinton County Commissioner Joel Long; Bobbi Neff- holding her granddaughter, Aaliyah James; Katie McCaslin- holding her son, Liam McCaslin; State Senator John Wozniak; PA Department of Aging Representative John Detman; State Representative Michael Hanna; PA Department of Environmental Protection Daniel Vilello; Clinton County Commissioner Tom Bossert; and Allen Saar.

Children and seniors participating in the ribbon cutting ceremony represent all seniors and children receiving services at the Community Center. Each color of the chain represents a preschool class based at the Center with the name of a child on every link.



Your Pathway to Success



Benefits to the Community

- Historical artifacts incorporated into the building design, demonstrating STEP's interest in the **preservation of and education about the county's past.**
- Availability of retail services helpful to STEP's customers in the same shopping plaza. Extension of sidewalk in front of the Community Center, allowing **easy flow of mutual customers.**
- **Vibrant hub** of community services and activities replacing a deteriorating, vacant building.



Over 200 community members attended the ribbon cutting ceremony and open house on September 22, 2011.

ANNUAL MITTEN TREE PROJECT



STEP Lycoming-Clinton Head Start Program is collecting mittens for children, birth through age 5. The Annual Mitten Tree Project is inspired by the children's book, The Mitten Tree by Candace Christiansen.

In the book, a woman missed her own grown children one winter day. She noticed a little boy at the school bus stop who did not play in the snow with the other children because he had no mittens. That night she knitted the boy a pair of mittens and hung them on an evergreen tree for him to find in the morning. Seeing the boy's face as he threw a perfect snowball high into the winter sky with his new mittens, the woman knitted mittens for all the children, and hung them on the tree for them to find. Returning home from watching the children board the school bus wearing their new mittens, her heart filled with joy, the woman discovered a basket filled with new yarn on her doorstep. To this day, the woman knits mittens for all the children in her town and every time her yarn basket is empty, a new full one appears.

In this spirit, STEP Lycoming-Clinton Head Start seeks donations of new mittens, hats and scarves (handmade or not) for children in its Head Start, Early Head Start, PA Pre-K Counts and Parent-Child Home Programs. Patterns for hand-knit or crocheted mittens are available upon request. **Donated mittens, hats and scarves may be taken to the Head Start office, 2138 Boyd Street, Williamsport, or the Clinton County Community Center, 124 East Walnut St., Lock Haven. The program collects year-round for those who prefer to plan ahead. If you have questions or would like a copy of the patterns, please call Donna Flick at 570-601-9623 or Anne Doerr at 570-601-9600.**

Terry E. Roller, President & CEO

Traci Lowe, CFO

STEP, Inc. Board of Directors

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Leonora Hannagan - Vice Chairperson

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Please contact STEP at 570-326-0587 for information about how you can contribute to the STEP Forward Endowment Fund.