

2016-2017 *Annual Report*



**SUCCESS THROUGH
ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIP**



Agency Profile

The **mission** of STEP, Inc. is to engage diverse individuals, families, and communities in the pursuit of social and economic success. STEP is one of approximately 1,000 Community Action Agencies nationwide (with 43 in Pennsylvania), and, based on the size of its annual budget, is the 3rd largest of the agencies serving solely in Pennsylvania. STEP is an active member of the national Community Action Partnership and the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania (CAAP). STEP fulfills its mission and achieves the **six national community action goals** through programs under its **five Pathways to Success**.

Six National Community Action Goals

- 1: Low-income people become more self-sufficient
- 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved
- 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community
- 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved
- 5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results
- 6: Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems

STEP's Five Pathways to Success

- 1: Early Learning
- 2: Housing Options
- 3: Workforce Development
- 4: Community Collaboration
- 5: Independent Living



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Message

Moving in the Right Direction?

Self-sufficiency can look different for everyone, right? For the 19-year-old, looking for work and building hard and soft skills through STEP's Youth Enrichment for Success program can be one example. The 83-year-old customer, doing their best to stay in their home by utilizing Meals on Wheels or STEP Transportation, is another example.

Fostering self-sufficiency is STEP's mission. We consistently assess the needs to keep our current programming relevant. Our partnerships have never been stronger, and our work towards a creative approach to funding programs and initiatives is moving in the proper direction.

To make this all happen, over 300 full- and part-time staff, and 1,400+ volunteers, deliver a tremendous amount of dedicated and enthusiastic service. Dozens of STEP AmeriCorps Service Members positively affect the work being done at other non-profit agencies. These folks, including past staff and our faithful retirees before them, have done, and are doing, a fantastic job.

STEP is perhaps stronger and more focused than ever on making and keeping individuals and communities self-sufficient. However, it's never a once and done situation; there is always more work to do.

I hope that you will take a few minutes to read over the following pages. I am confident you will see it has been a fulfilling year. I salute everyone who worked so hard to help make a positive difference, including our customers themselves. Together you have accomplished much!

As the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for STEP, Inc., it is my pleasure to provide a message for the 2016-2017 Annual Report. This year has been an exciting one with the fiscal year starting during our 50th Anniversary celebration. In the end of 2016, STEP developed a general endowment fund to support future endeavors. I would like to thank everyone - the staff, our partners, and our contributors - who made the 50th year celebration so memorable. We should also recognize the other members of STEP's Board of Directors for their constant support, leadership, and engagement.

The Board of Directors has the tremendous task of moving the agency forward in a cost-effective manner, while ensuring progress and outcomes are reached by the individuals, families, and communities STEP serves. Whether it is through exploring options for new revenue streams, or assisting at agency events, we are an essential part of the team fulfilling STEP's mission. STEP is one of the largest employers in both Lycoming and Clinton counties, and staff must be recognized for all their dedication to the agency's mission and vision. It says a lot to be recognizing staff who have completed their 40 years of service. STEP's product is people and without dedicated staff, the outcomes detailed in this annual report would not be possible.

I look forward to continuing my leadership of the STEP Board of Directors and am excited for what the next year will bring!



Jim Plankenhorn
President & CEO
STEP, Inc.



Jeffrey Snyder
Chairperson
STEP, Inc. Board of Directors

Governance – 2016 - 2017



Board of Directors

STEP's Board of Directors is tripartite in structure, with members representing the public, private, and low-income sectors/populations of Lycoming and Clinton counties.



Jeffrey Snyder
Chairperson
Clinton County
Commissioner



Jeffrey Rauff
Vice Chairperson
Lycoming County
Retired



Carolyn Hawk
Secretary
Lycoming County
United Way



Aron Carter
Treasurer
Jersey Shore State Bank



Randall Allison
Williamsport
City Council



Susan Bigger
Williamsport Area
School District



Robert Cross
Lycoming County
Equinox Ltd.



Regan Garey
Lock Haven
University



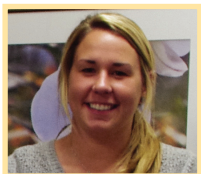
Maria Garlick
Clinton County
Housing Coalition



Linda Hess
STEP Aging Advisory
Council Representative



Jack McKernan
Lycoming County
Commissioner



Jacqueline Oliva
River Valley
Health & Dental Center



Lindsay Stamm
Lycoming County
Housing Authority



Gregory Wilson
City of
Lock Haven



Amber Wilt
Head Start Policy
Council Representative

Also serving in the 2016-2017 year: Leonora Hannagan, Heather Stroble



Aging Advisory Council



Officers

Raymond Humphrey
Chairperson

Linda Hess
Vice Chairperson

David Heiney
Secretary

Also serving in the
2016-2017 year:
Marge Scott

Members

Barbara Barger
Carolyn Bullock
Sharon Cashwell
Leslie Houser
Rochelle Keefer
Jack McKernan
Paulette Seitzer
Jeffrey Snyder
Joseph Sohmer
Lois Stryker
Nancy Watson



Head Start Policy Council



Officers

Heather Stroble
Chairperson

Leigh McCarty
Secretary

Aron Carter
Treasurer

Parents

Malena Dunn
Lapree Handy
Amanda Hassler
Leigh McCarty
Amber Wilt
Amber Kohler

Community Representatives

Aron Carter
Paulette Clementoni
Barbara Forshey
Dr. Shelly Litz
Melissa Magargle
Heather Stroble
Debra Zinck

Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position

Total Assets.....	\$9,022,474.
Total Liabilities.....	\$3,131,366.
Net Assets.....	<u>\$5,891,108.</u>

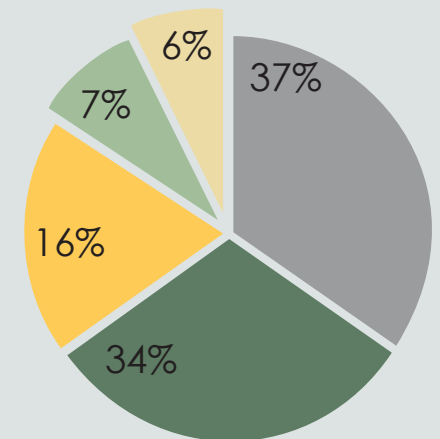
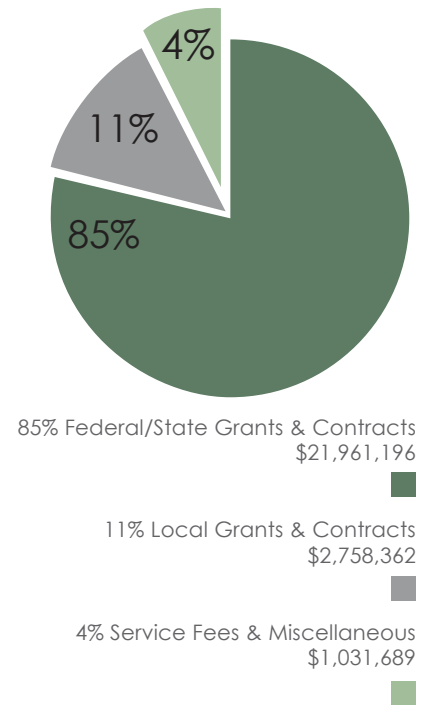
Statement of Activity

Total Grant Revenue & Other Support.....	\$25,751,247.
Total Program Expenses.....	\$25,381,949.
Excess (Deficit) Revenue Over Expenses.....	<u>\$369,298.</u>

Program Expenditures

■ Early Learning 34%	\$8,617,803.
Head Start \$4,257,448	
Parent-Child Home Program \$127,746	
Head Start Supplemental Program \$955,484	
Pre-K Counts \$1,085,029	
Early Head Start \$1,989,596	
Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Visitation \$162,500	
■ Housing Options 7%	\$1,690,277.
Weatherization & Housing Services \$1,384,627	
Outreach Services \$305,650	
■ Workforce Development 16%	\$4,010,916.
Work Ready \$196,775	
Employment Transportation Assistance Program \$98,832	
Child Care Information Services \$3,715,309	
■ Community Collaboration 6%	\$1,545,804.
AmeriCorps \$667,301	
Neighborhood Assistance \$34,226	
Supportive Housing Program \$190,325	
Service Navigation \$254,372	
Administration & Planning \$336,589	
Other \$62,991	
■ Independent Living 37%	\$9,517,149.
Office of Aging \$4,935,859	
Shared-Ride Transportation Services \$2,025,038	
Medical Assistance Transportation \$2,556,252	

Total Program Expenditures.....\$25,381,949.



Traci Lowe
Chief Financial Officer
STEP, Inc.

Message from the Chief Financial Officer

Fiscal year 2016-2017 has been another financially solid year due largely in part to fiscal responsibility. It is our belief that, in addition to being fiscally responsible by creating, managing, and maintaining an annual balanced budget, you also need to plan for the future. I'm happy to report that during fiscal year 2016-2017, we were able to create our second endowment fund, the STEP General Endowment, to expand STEP's services and programs well into the future.

Traci C. Lowe

Our Volunteers

STEP appreciates all of its volunteers. As a Community Action Agency, STEP relies on volunteers to meet its goals. Many of STEP's volunteers are concentrated in its Office of Aging and Early Learning programs, as well as being found in STEP's governing bodies. All service provided by members of the STEP Board of Directors, Head Start Policy Council, and Aging Advisory Council is on a volunteer basis, complementing the thousands of volunteers and AmeriCorps members who serve with the agency.

The total monetary value of STEP's volunteers and AmeriCorps service members is **\$2,186,532**. This calculation is based on research completed by Independent Sector showing that, in 2016, the value of Pennsylvania's estimated volunteer time was \$23.89 per hour.

A total of **2,086** volunteers provided **91,525** hours to STEP programs throughout the year.

Low-income individuals donated **25,296** volunteer hours to STEP.

STEP Board of Directors members donated **230** hours of service.

25 representatives for low-income people participated in formal community organizations, governments, boards, or councils through STEP's efforts, giving them the opportunity to provide input to decision making and policy setting.

692 Head Start and Early Head Start volunteers provided training, program planning and governance, evaluation, and assistance with classroom activities.

106 volunteer hours were contributed by Head Start Policy Council members and community representatives who played an essential role in program governance and evaluation.

528 STEP Office of Aging volunteers contributed approximately **41,119** hours delivering Meals on Wheels, assisting with senior center activities, leading exercise activities, providing insurance counseling, and visiting homebound seniors.

18 Ombudsmen volunteers made **228** visits to **33** facilities to assist residents with resolving complaints.

Volunteers through the AARP Tax-Aide program filed **1,230** federal returns, **1,126** state tax returns, and **373** local Earned Income Tax returns, while providing information to **113** individuals.

Everyday Hero Ray Humphrey

The Woodlands Bank annual community service award is titled "Everyday Hero" to acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of the tireless individuals in our towns who provide non-profit organizations, such as STEP, with countless hours of service.

Nominated by STEP, Ray Humphrey was honored with the 2017 Woodlands Bank Everyday Hero Award. Ray assembles and delivers meals to homebound seniors with STEP Office of Aging's Meals on Wheels program, and serves as Chairperson of STEP's Aging Advisory Council. Ray showcases our efforts throughout the community and plays an active role in growing the Independent Living Endowment Fund.



Our Employees

During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, STEP employed approximately 300 staff members. STEP staff assisted over 17,000 customers, guiding individuals, families, and communities on their pathways to success.

Quarterly Employee Award Winners



Stephanie McMinn
Accountant II
Fiscal Department



Kim Andy
Lead Customer
Service Specialist
Service Navigation



Connie Baker
Housing Administration
Coordinator
Housing Options



Mellanie Boone
Transportation
Operator
STEP Transportation

Employee of the Year

Mellanie Boone



Employee Milestones 30, 35, & 40 Years of Service



Fred Shrimp
40 Years
Office of Aging



Kathy Moltz
35 Years
Head Start



Jean Sullivan
30 Years
Office of Aging



Daniel Merk
30 Years
Transportation

Agency Development Highlights

7,919 hours of employee training were completed.

114 hours of board member training were completed.

126 employees have CPR training.

13 employees completed OSHA training, and **13** employees are EPA Lead-Based Paint certified.

14 employees are certified to perform protective service investigations.

1 staff member is a nationally certified Results-Oriented Management Accountability (ROMA) trainer, with **2** trainers in training.

9 employees are trained in Tai Chi, **3** in Zumba Gold, and **8** in Healthy Steps in Motion.

Message from the Chief Operations Officer

As the Chief Operations Officer, my role is to support program directors, managers, and staff as they work directly with our customers and partners producing outcomes and results. What we do each day directly impacts the lives of individuals, families, and children and develops communities into better places to live, work, and play. I am proud to be a part of the STEP team.

Rachelle A. Abbott



Rachelle Abbott
Chief Operations Officer
STEP, Inc.

Early Learning

STEP's Early Learning Pathway includes Head Start, Pre-K Counts, Early Head Start, and the Parent-Child Home Program. These high-quality early learning experiences are provided by skilled professionals, in partnership with parents and communities. The Early Learning Pathway leads to success in school and life.

1,800 infants and children obtained age-appropriate immunizations and medical and dental care.

1,845 infants and children gained health and physical development improvements as a result of adequate nutrition.

1,469 children participated in preschool activities to develop school readiness skills.

721 children participated in preschool activities that prepare them developmentally for entering kindergarten or first grade.

900 parents and other adults have learned and now exhibit improved parenting skills.

59,230 lunches were served.

57,204 snacks were served.

513 families were connected to services.

201 children with disabilities or who required special services were enrolled.

418 children are up-to-date on age-appropriate preventative/primary care.

473 children were provided with continuous accessible dental care.

546 children received dental exams.

149 children were in need of dental treatments; **98** received treatment.

527 family partnerships were established with caregivers.

Vision & Dental Screenings Make A Difference

All children enrolled in STEP Head Start have their vision screened annually by our Family Advocates and Home Visitors using our vision spot screeners. Our vision screeners have been very successful at identifying children's vision concerns.

STEP Head Start has screened 701 preschool and Early Head Start children's vision this year. 93 children were referred to an eye professional for follow-up, 51 children have been prescribed glasses, 1 child is receiving patch therapy, and 7 children are being monitored by eye specialists and have follow-up appointments.

As a result of STEP Head Start's Mobile Dentist program, 116 children were seen by a dentist for examination, cleaning, and x-rays. 32 children required restorative care from a pediatric dentist.



STEP Round Hills Campus

STEP's purchase and renovation of the Round Hills Elementary school building - now the STEP Round Hills Campus - represents the preservation of neighborhood quality-of-life resources, and the preservation of community facilities. It also shows STEP's dedication to long term fiscal responsibility and asset management, as classrooms and personnel are able to be moved to the Round Hills Campus from rented facilities. The 36,000 square foot facility will initially house 13 STEP Early Learning classrooms, Head Start administrative personnel, and Penn State's Family Literacy Project, with the potential for more partnership opportunities and program expansion in the future!



Early Learning: Looking Forward with Terry Roller

The Early Learning Pathway will continue to build upon a recently established and very successful internal collaborative partnership with Service Navigation. Family Advocates working directly with the parents of the children enrolled in early learning programs act as the liaison to link the family to intensive case management available through the Service Navigation department. Service Navigation can support the family with a simple yet sophisticated assessment tool that screens and provides access to a vast array of services and partners throughout the community. Advancing before- and after-school programming partnerships is also viewed as a major future program objective.

Terry Roller
STEP, Inc. Chief Strategic Officer



Housing Options

STEP's Housing Options Pathway includes Weatherization, Housing and Building Initiatives, and the Utilities Assistance Program (UAP). Individuals and families secure and maintain safe, affordable, and energy-efficient housing. The Housing Options Pathway leads to a safe and affordable home.

Of the **194** participants seeking to maintain safe and affordable housing, **107** were able to through STEP's Housing Options Pathway.

192 of the **335** households seeking assistance for utilities were provided services through STEP's Utilities Assistance Program. An additional **333** customers obtained a utility security deposit waiver.

21 families removed handicap-accessibility barriers, code deficiencies, and/or safety issues, at an average of **\$15,087** per home.

148 households were weatherized for social benefits (employment, home quality, economic stimulation, reduced uncollected debt, improved health and safety) of **\$501,072** and **\$660,896** in energy-related savings.

339 energy efficiency kits with a value of **\$33,900** were distributed to help customers reduce their energy consumption.

Approximately **\$1,420,350** leveraged by PPL & UGI for utilities assistance.



Housing Options Endowment Fund

Throughout the year, STEP worked toward establishing the Housing Options Endowment. This permanent endowment will generate income each year that is able to support any of STEP's Housing Options Pathway programs, which assist individuals and families in securing and maintaining safe, affordable, and energy-efficient housing.

To assist in building the endowment, STEP held a variety of activities to raise funds, including: monthly 50/50 raffles, a shoe drive, silent auction, live auction, and a donation board. To date, the fundraising efforts have raised over \$10,000 - all of which will be used to establish the Housing Options Endowment Fund.



Supportive Housing Program Success Story

Seth and Rachel Fredericks were referred to STEP's Supportive Housing Program (SHP) in December of 2016 by Lycoming County Re-Entry through their Drug Court Probation Officer, Christina Lepley. At that time, both Seth and Rachel were in recovery and in Drug Court.



In October of 2016, Rachel was laid off from her job and a few days later they lost the place they were renting due to a flood that affected many in Lycoming County. Fortunately, they were able to move in with Rachel's parents. Although things were going well, they wanted to find a place of their own. Seth had a job through a local manufacturer and was hired on temporarily. Due to his hard work and commitment to his job, the manufacturer hired him on permanently and gave him a raise as well. Rachel worked in her family's tax office, which brought them temporary income until she found another job. Through the stressors, both Rachel and Seth have been able to maintain their sobriety and continued to be successful in their recovery. Seth believes that the program provided him with necessary skills to grow. "I had no structure in my life, I really wanted to change but didn't know how," said Seth. The couple was surprised by the additional resources they were provided with. "When we were approved for the program we thought we would just find an apartment, but this program has done so much for us. It helped us learn to pay our rent and our bills again. We actually live a semi-normal life, which I never thought was possible. This program is amazing," added Rachel.

Once accepted into the Supportive Housing Program, specific funds through Lycoming County provided the security deposit and several months of rent on their new place. This allowed the Fredericks to get back on their feet and recouped items they had lost in the flood. Seth states, "Without this program, we would've never gotten the apartment we have now with our history."

The Fredericks continued to meet with a STEP Family Navigator on a weekly and bi-weekly basis and followed the expectations of Drug Court as well as probation. Seth and Rachel both graduated from Drug Court in 2017, and were recently awarded with the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania's (CAAP) Self-Sufficiency Award during the CAAP Annual Conference. The couple continues to do well financially and is hopeful for their future. Rachel states, "This program was a huge step in changing our lives."

Housing Options: Looking Forward with Terry Roller

The expansion of partnerships, strategies, and resources continue to strengthen county-wide affordable housing services for customers. Launching in 2017, STEP Housing Acquisition and Rehabilitation Program (SHARP) will utilize unrestricted funding to renovate single family dwellings into affordable housing, made available to interested customers regardless of income. SHARP will support and maintain the county tax base as well as stabilize neighborhoods. The incorporation of budget management into Housing Options programs, along with social capital skills training interwoven with casework management, will help customers move towards self-sufficiency for housing, healthcare, transportation, food, retirement, and other fundamental family necessities.

Workforce Development

STEP's Workforce Development Pathway includes the Work Ready Program, the Employment Transportation Assistance Program (ETAP, formerly Welfare to Work), and Child Care Information Services (CCIS) of Lycoming County. Through these programs, individuals overcome barriers to obtain or maintain employment and achieve self-sufficiency. The Workforce Development Pathway leads to employment and self-support for individuals, and economic success for the community.

194 unemployed individuals enrolled in Workforce Development Pathway programs.

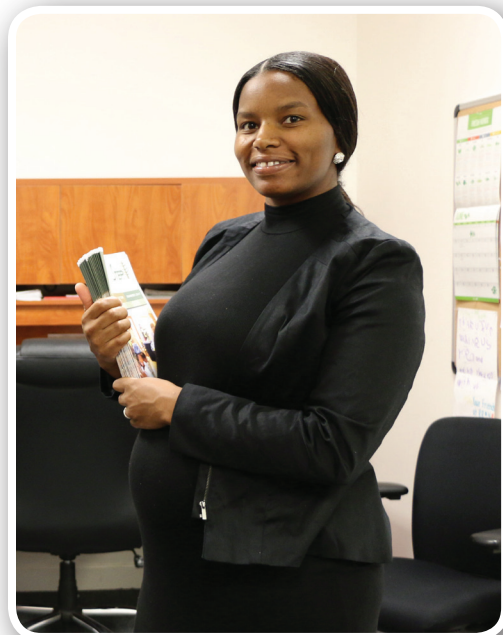
746 of **768** parents (either employed, attending school, or both) were able to enroll their children in before- or after-school programs through CCIS.

1,398 of **1,425** participants obtained care for a child or other dependent through CCIS.

901 individuals obtained access to reliable transportation or a driver's license.

73 customers obtained employment-ready literacy skills.

Ashley Pierce, pictured at right, gains on-the-job experience through the Workforce Development Pathway's Work Ready Program.



Work Ready Success Story

*Ms. Smith enrolled in the Work Ready program on April 18, 2016. She is a single mom who was homeless and living in a local shelter. She had been mandated by the courts to complete intensive outpatient drug and alcohol treatment. Ms. Smith relapsed and was jailed for 90 days. Upon her release, she was required to complete an additional 112 hours of community service. With the cooperation of a local church, she was able to do that and maintain her court-appointed counseling sessions. Through cooperation between STEP's Work Ready program and adult probation, Ms. Smith completed her community service hours and was permitted to start on her required Work Ready programs. Ms. Smith began her Work Ready hours at a local business on September 26, 2016. The manager at the business was so impressed by Ms. Smith's work ethic that she offered her permanent employment on October 13, 2016, and provided accommodations regarding Ms. Smith's continued drug and alcohol treatment. On October 14, 2016, Ms. Smith began her job while continuing to maintain her sobriety. This customer has been enrolled in STEP's Work Ready program in the past but had not accepted responsibility for making the necessary changes to move herself forward. Each time Ms. Smith enrolled in Work Ready, a foundation for lasting change began coming together. Ms. Smith turned the corner and is achieving her goals.

*Name has been changed for confidentiality.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Success Story

Don Vought is a 59-year-old disabled and honorably discharged veteran who has been in STEP's Supportive Housing Program since January 12, 2017 and has made tremendous progress. One of his goals was to secure part-time employment which would enable him to be more self-sufficient; however, with his physical limitations due to his disability, that proved to be a difficult goal.



The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) was contacted on his behalf. In addition, one of our Family Navigators worked very closely with a local non-profit agency in hopes of creating a part-time job that would accommodate his physical limitations while also fulfilling the needs of the agency. After many weeks, this vision became a reality and Don began his employment through SCSEP with the Salvation Army in March 2017. He is now working 12 hours per week and his part-time employment goal has been attained.

There has also been collaboration between STEP and the Veterans Multi-Service Center (VMSC) on behalf of Don. The VMSC agreed to write off the past-due balance of Don's prescription medications, and to pay for his current prescription medications until his financial situation improves. This has enabled Don to consistently maintain his prescription medications and overall health. Don can now afford the co-pay for his prescriptions since he has secured employment.

Workforce Development: Looking Forward with Terry Roller

The removal of barriers through leveraging and partnerships is a continuous and fluid process for workforce education, training, and family-sustaining employment opportunities. These barriers include, but are not limited to, transportation, medical and dental services, and child care. The development and implementation of new initiatives to support both youth and adults, providing for the successful transition into compatible career paths, remains a high priority.

Terry Roller
STEP, Inc. Chief Strategic Officer



Community Collaboration

STEP's Community Collaboration Pathway consists of Service Navigation and STEP AmeriCorps. Through cooperation and partnerships, resources are maximized, and organizations and communities are enriched. The Community Collaboration Pathway leads to increased resources for individual and community success.

24 nonprofit partners in Lycoming and Clinton counties benefitted from the service of **40** STEP AmeriCorps members.

STEP AmeriCorps members provided **36,175** hours of service to the community.

39 service terms were completed with an education award. **1** service term was completed without an education award.

1,894 intake & assessments were completed to determine what services were needed.

STEP served **1,382** CSBG-eligible customers—individuals at or below 120% of the federal poverty income guideline.

291 goals were achieved through Family Navigation, along with **294** self-sufficiency matrix improvements.

Expanding Opportunities Through Community-Wide Partnerships

Nonprofit: **129**

Faith-based: **31**

Local Government: **24**

State Government: **25**

Federal Government: **21**

For-Profit Businesses & Corporations: **130**

Consortiums/Collaborations: **27**

Housing Consortiums/
Collaborations: **6**

School Districts: **15**

Institutions of Secondary Education: **8**

Financial Institutions: **8**

Health Service Institutions: **49**

Statewide Associations or Collaborations: **8**

Total: 481 organizations, with **775** programmatic partnerships

Youth Enrichment for Success Success Story

A Family Navigator has been working with Macenzie since November 2016. Macenzie completed her senior year of high school in June 2015 with no clear direction of what she wanted to do after graduation. It was apparent that she had some issues with anxiety as well as limited community knowledge. The Family Navigator began working with Macenzie to



develop employment skills including resume building and interviewing techniques. With a little guidance, Macenzie quickly developed the necessary skills for employment readiness.

Macenzie expressed an interest in working with animals and possibly working towards a degree in the veterinary field. The Family Navigator worked with Macenzie to complete an application for the Lycoming Animal Protection Society (LAPS), contacted the volunteer coordinator, and set up a date for Macenzie to begin her career exploration.

The Family Navigator received reports from Macenzie's volunteer coordinator that she did a great job and that she was very helpful. Macenzie continued to develop essential employment skills at LAPS and recently interviewed and accepted a paid work position at the local YWCA Boutique.

STEP AmeriCorps 2016-2017 Host Sites

AIDS Resource Center	Infant Development Program, Inc.	The Salvation Army Pennsdale/Muncy
American Red Cross	Lock Haven University	STEP Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program
Anne Halenbake Ross Library	Lycoming County SPCA	STEP Office of Aging
Central PA Food Bank	North Penn Legal Services	STEP Transportation
City of Williamsport Recreation Department	River Valley Health & Dental Center	Susquehanna Greenway Partnership
Clinton County Housing Authority	River Valley Regional YMCA	Williamsport Area School District
Firetree Place	The Salvation Army Lock Haven Social Services & Thrift Store	Williamsport Growers' Market Association
Heart of Williamsport	The Salvation Army Williamsport Social Services & Thrift Store	
Habitat for Humanity		

STEP AmeriCorps Success Story



STEP AmeriCorps member Eve Steransky served at the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. In November 2016, the Greenway Partnership submitted a Supplemental Planning Grant application to PennDOT for a bike and pedestrian plan within the eight-county (Juniata, Mifflin, Snyder, Union, Clinton, Montour, Columbia, and Northumberland counties) SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership was awarded \$60,000 for the grant, and presented the plan to the MPO for approval. The MPO approved the plan, and it was requested that Lycoming County, which is outside the SEDA-COG MPO, be included in the comprehensive bike and pedestrian plan. This was a great opportunity for Eve to expand the Greenway's mission. "It's exciting! This grant will generate the largest bike/pedestrian plan the Greenway Partnership has ever done, and I'm the one producing it! I would not have been able to gain this kind of experience without STEP AmeriCorps," said Eve.

Community Collaboration: Looking Forward with Terry Roller

Partnerships both public and private will focus on cost-effectively developing volunteer opportunities throughout the community, along with the expansion of the geographical footprint for those opportunities in surrounding counties. Increasing job shadowing opportunities for youth will continue to be a major thrust. Streamlining and accelerating the TABE (Testing Adult Basic Education) process through internal staff skill development and/or partnerships will be paramount to assisting customers with acquiring their GED or technical trainings.

Terry Roller
 STEP, Inc. Chief Strategic Officer

Independent Living

STEP's Independent Living Pathway consists of Office of Aging services and STEP Transportation. Through these programs, senior citizens and persons with disabilities maintain their independence with self-reliance, and continue to participate in community activities. The Independent Living Pathway leads to dignity and choices throughout life.

4,582 senior citizens and **2,032** individuals with disabilities were able to continue living independently.

121,019 meals were provided to **770** people through STEP Office of Aging's Meals on Wheels program, while **28,073** congregate meals were served.

1,233 customers in tax preparation programs qualified for federal or state tax credits in the amount of **\$841,943**.

155 seniors were able to remain in their homes instead of a nursing facility through the Aging Waiver program.

110,302 one-way trips were provided through STEP Transportation, bringing approximately **\$290,914** in savings for **1,251** riders receiving reduced fares.

360 reports of need were filed and **149** investigations were conducted by Protective Service workers.

STEP Office of Aging STEP'N Out Program

Funded by a grant from the PA Department of Aging, "STEP'N Out!" is a way for individuals age 60+ to experience local and regional history, entertainment, and landmarks. While a few of the experiences may have an admission fee, the transportation for the program is free of charge. A trip departs from each of STEP's eight Centers for Healthy Aging every month, in addition a monthly multi-center charter trip. For more information call the STEP Office of Aging at 570.323.3096.



STEP Transportation Customer Quotes

"I have dealt with the public all my life and your drivers are top of the line. They are unbelievably pleasant and I cannot say enough good things about them."

June Lawrence
STEP Transportation Customer

"I would like to thank STEP Transportation for all of your service to us 'older folks.' There was a situation where there was a mix-up with a trip and the dispatcher did his best and set me up with a ride. The van was here pretty quickly and I was on my way. The van was also at the doctor's office right when I got out! Whew! What a relief! So, again I'd like to thank you for all of my rides as I use the van more and more as my physical condition gets worse. It's always a pleasure."

Gretchen Kennedy
STEP Transportation Customer

Pathways to Healthy Aging Bikes, Trikes, Surreys, & LifeTrail

Continuing to help its members to utilize the neighboring Riverwalk trail and other cycling opportunities, STEP Office of Aging's RiverWalk Center introduced a fleet of bicycles, tricycles, and multi-rider Surreys available for sign out at the center.

In addition to the cycling equipment, STEP has partnered with the Borough of South Williamsport to install seven LifeTrail Wellness Stations within the adjacent South Williamsport Park Complex. The LifeTrail Advanced Wellness System promotes the essential elements of good health for older adults, from good posture and balance, to greater flexibility, strength, and endurance.

The suggested series of exercises at each station provides many benefits, from emulating natural movement patterns for greater ease with real-life tasks to the use of body weight to build strength, and a progressive, variable approach to workouts that will keep them fun and challenging even as fitness levels improve. Large images and text make the instructions easy to read and understand. Safety bars help beginners get accustomed to the equipment, but can be relied upon less as comfort level grows. Three of the stations are wheelchair/ADA accessible.

The stations are available for public use, but for more information, call STEP's RiverWalk Center at 570.601.9592.



Independent Living: Looking Forward with Terry Roller

Enhancing access to services via online access and phone interactive voice software is in the making. Technology improvements will provide transportation customers user-friendly methods for employment, after-school programs, and health care services. Mature customers are seeing a branding and marketing transformation with facilities and services through the "Healthy Aging" philosophy. Facilities are being renovated to provide state-of-the-art features for exercising, food preparation and dining, and social interactive programming. Developing innovative partnerships and accessing public and private funding will allow for a responsive assessment, providing for nursing-home-level care to customers within their own homes.

Terry Roller
STEP, Inc. Chief Strategic Officer

A handwritten signature of Terry Roller in black ink.

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For more information about donating, contact STEP at:

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