

A publication for the friends and families of Cray Youth and Family Services, Inc.

Office: 44 South Beaver St.

New Castle, PA 16101

(724) 654-5507

www.CrayYouth.org

www.ConfluenceCoffee.org

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**Jurassic Bowl: Coming to Colonial Lanes May 7, 2022
Cray's 1-to-1 Mentoring Program is proud to present our
28th Annual Bowl-a-Thon –Jurassic Bowling!**

Cray has been providing formal mentoring programs since 1996. Since then, over 700 children in Lawrence County have been matched with a carefully screened volunteer mentor through our programs. The relationships that have developed over all these years have changed so many lives for the better. The children we serve, their families, and the mentors all benefit from the friendships that are formed. We don't charge fees for our services, and our mentoring programs are financially supported through grants, donations, and special events like Bowl-a-Thon. Each year, Bowl-a-Thon has raised between 15 and 25% of our annual revenue for mentoring programs at Cray. There are several ways to support Bowl-a-Thon. Businesses, organizations, churches, clubs, and/or individuals can sponsor the event. In-kind items can be donated by local restaurants or businesses for the popular auction that is held the day of Bowl-a-Thon or refreshments for the bowlers. The most fun way to participate is to create a bowling team with 4-6 people and come bowl with us! To participate, each team member commits to raising a minimum goal of \$50.00 to benefit our program. Junior bowlers, ages 6-14, can participate with an adult for a \$20.00 donation. Each team member will receive a free game of bowling, lunch, entertainment, and this year's Bowl-a-Thon t-shirt! Every year, this event reminds us why we are so fortunate to be serving children and families in Lawrence County. We hope you can join us! Team registration and sponsorship materials are available at crayyouth.org

FROM THE DIRECTOR..

I want to apologize that we did not get a Fall newsletter out to all you folks, but time just got away from us. Winter was brutal in many ways this year with almost all of us personally touched by the devastating effects of this continuing pandemic!

Certainly the bright spot for Cray was the incredible outpouring of gifts given in the form of presents and monetary donations to well over 200 children and families involved in Cray programming. This generosity from our community supporters has allowed us to help our present clients while growing our “Family Needs Fund” for future needs of our families. Remember “Once a Cray Kid Always a Cray Kid!” An example of a former Cray student being helped by this fund was Cray purchasing beds for a Mom and her 5 children who had just lost their Father/Husband to a tragic accident. There are more examples every month of helping Cray kids and families with emergency situations.

Cray has been fortunate to not have to shut any of services down during this difficult stretch, remaining face to face with all Cray programming. Cray was able to recently lift our mask mandate for the first time since August 2021 as Cray has followed the CDC guidelines for our policy. It is great to see people’s smiles again at the agency! Hopefully, we are getting on the other side of this difficult pandemic.

Please check out the other parts of this newsletter, paying close attention to our upcoming Bowl-a-thon event which will once again be in person Saturday May 7th.

Also on that date is the return of our Comedy show at the Confluence. Get your tickets soon as they are going fast.

Lastly, continue to stay safe and hope for an early spring!

Blessings, Don Kemerer, Director

PROJECT SEARCH



Project SEARCH is in its 5th year at UPMC Jameson Hospital. It is a transition to work program for individuals with a disability, ages 18 to 21. The goal of the program is for interns to gain competitive employment within the community. The 2021 graduating class obtained 100% employment. Applications were accepted for the 2022-2023 school year until March 13, 2022. Please reach out to Amy Donston, Skills Trainer, for more information for next year. You may also schedule a tour. She can be reached at:

724-656-4637 or amyd@upmc.edu.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Once a Cray Kid, Always a Cray Kid!

Last night, a young lady who spent some time with us in the Krause Shelter contacted me. She knew it was a long shot but she was desperate and didn't know where else to turn.

"Anna" was in a car accident a month ago and her car has been in the shop. She had a \$2500 deductible and had the money to pay it at that time. Over the course of the month, Anna had to pay for a rental car. Anna, a single mother of 3, is in her final months of RN school at Jameson. If she missed another day, she would be out and not graduate in May. Anna is 26 years of age. She no longer qualifies for services through our Independent Living Program. She received a call that her car was finally ready, but she no longer had the funds to cover the cost of the deductible due to the rental car. Anna had contacted me for a referral to an agency that may be able to assist her. What she didn't know was that she had already contacted the right place!



Cray had an anonymous donor that wanted their donation to go towards education. Specifically, to help someone to remove a barrier for their completion to a course of training who might not otherwise qualify for assistance. This seemed like the perfect match. Our director agreed! When I called Anna to tell her that we had a check for her, she tearfully thanked God for the miracle. She was so hopeless the night before. Anna sent me a message stating that "Cray has helped me in so many ways. I am so grateful for everyone there".

Thank you to the generous community we live in. Without your donations, some of these wonderful stories would not be able to be told. We would not be able to honor our motto of "Once a Cray Kid, Always a Cray Kid". I'm very much looking forward to going to a graduation in May!

LEARN MORE ABOUT CRAY YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES:

Main office: 44 South Beaver St. New Castle, PA 16101

724-654-5507

Website: crayyouth.org

"WE MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR KIDS"

CRAY EDUCATION CENTER

46/22

Forty-six that is the percent of successful transitions students from Cray Challenges have earned to this point in the school year. Big Deal, right? It is! In years past the Pennsylvania Department of Education suggested alternative schools reach 20 % of transition. AEDY requires a minimum stay of 45 days before a student can return to their home school. The state also set a maximum number of 180 days a student can stay in AEDY without a transition attempt. This was a change PDE made four years ago to shorten the length of stays in AEDY.

Students return to their home school after they meet the behavioral goals that have been created within the first five days of placement. These are largely established through the results of a behavioral assessment that also must be completed within the first five days.

Data is everything, numbers, averages they all decide if we are doing our job. Everything seems to be counted, and recounted, almost like our last election, lol. For years Challenges and Cray Education Center have excelled as 1 unit.

I would like to focus on 22 people in this building, these people that give their all to make a better life for our students. People that change lives. I would like to thank these people personally! WOW is an understatement!

Jen Black

Jacob Harvey

Christina Sansone

Molli Cambell

Jen Hoffman

Isabella Starkey

Kesha Coleman

Shawn Householder

Emily Swaya

Dwayne Evans

Ron Howard

Jill Trott

Eric Francis

Erik Montozzi

Susan Valenti

Andy Fry

Lauren Rizzo

Judy Waddington

Matt Germanski

Anthony Sainato

Shannon Windhorst



CROSSROADS

Since the fall, the Crossroads students have gone back to school for the 2021-2022 school year. Along with returning to school, several other fun activities and holidays have occurred. One of these activities included several caseworkers from Lawrence County Children and Youth Services coming to the Crossroads program for a back-to-school carnival that included lunch, kickball, snow cones and popcorn. The Carnival was a lot of fun for the kids, caseworkers and Crossroads staff. During the fall and into winter celebrated both Thanksgiving and Christmas, which included dinners which were prepared by Barb Hambrick and enjoyed by the Crossroads students. The Christmas dinner also included gifts for our students that were donated by Seubert & Associates, Inc. Our Crossroads students were very appreciative and excited for all the gifts they received as well as the prepared dinner, and the time off to enjoy their families for the holiday. Finally some staff news to share during the month of December, Crossroads staff John Haun celebrated one year of being a Cray employee

OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO OUR CHRISTMAS DONORS

GAP PORTERSVILLE MCDONALDS
DON SERVICES, ANITA MCKEEVER
NESHANNOCK STAFF AND STUDENTS
BRENDA DEVINCENTIS BULLANO FAMILY
MIA GRECO ROZ HARE MARISSA FERRARI
CASCADE ST. POST OFFICE
TRELOR & HEISEL LIONS CLUB
ERIE INSURANCE
SEUBERT AND ASSOCIATES
KATIE RATVASKY JOE PASSERELLO
WESTMINSTER COLLEGE OFFICE OF FAITH
AND MINISTRY
LIFE CHANGING MINISTRIES SISTERS IN
CHRIST





Planning a party? **The Confluence** is a great place for gatherings large & small. Manager, **Mandy Haid** offers custom catering designed to satisfy your personal tastes. Private parties can be scheduled for any day of the week (even outside of our regular business hours). Enjoy a private room for up to 85 people or book the entire café and enjoy the comfort of our main dining area. Call now to reserve your



Comedy Club returns on SATURDAY, MAY 7th. Get your tickets soon before they sell out!



The Confluence is located in downtown New Castle, PA .



214 E Washington Street

Free parking across the street

THE CONFLUENCE: NEW CASTLE'S FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT SPOT

MUSIC
LIVE
THURSDAYS
6—8:30 PM



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44 South Beaver Street
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BE A SUPERMAN TODAY AND HELP MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR KIDS

As Cray transforms for the future to meet the growing challenges that face kids and families in Lawrence County, we need your help! Please consider a donation to Cray.



YES, please accept my contribution of \$ _____

Please designate my contribution to assist:

_____ 1-to-1 Mentoring _____ Where Most Needed

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to Cray Youth & Family Services

*All donations, monetary & in-kind, are tax-deductible.

_____ Please check here if you do NOT want your donation publicly acknowledged.

Donations can be made online through
JustGive.org by visiting our website:
www.CrayYouth.org/donate
(credit card fees and processing charges are
deducted from gift online)

What's in your will is a testimony of what is important to you. When thinking about giving, an ultimate gift is one that will last. Please consult your attorney or tax advisor when considering your estate planning.