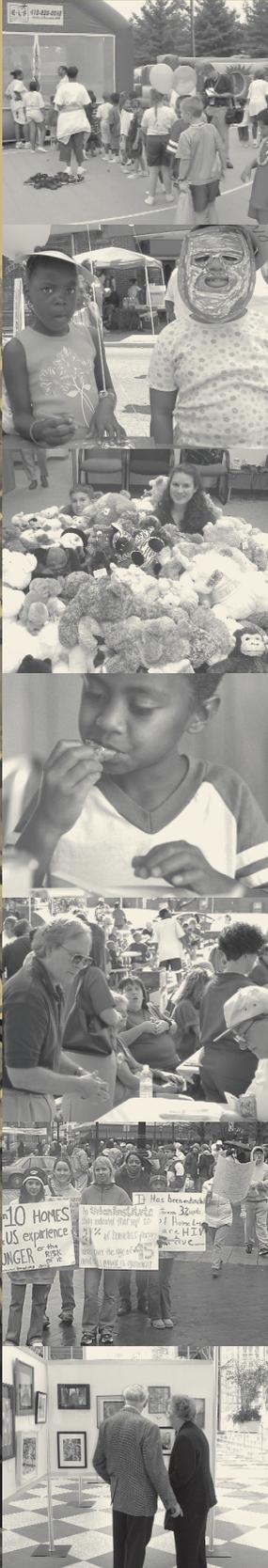




ALLEGHENY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES 2003 ANNUAL REPORT



In the past, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, like many organizations, has focused its annual report on accomplishments of the previous year and plans for the future. This year, instead, we highlight what *others* are doing as they join us in unparalleled public/private partnerships to improve the quality of life for the people of Allegheny County.

In the seven years since the Department's "redesign" in 1996, we have benefited enormously from the spirit of collaboration and the generosity of Allegheny County's business, educational, and philanthropic communities as well as its cultural institutions, grassroots organizations, and individuals. Hundreds of organizations and thousands of individuals have stepped forward to help us define and realize our mission in ways that were beyond the resources of our regular funding streams.

All of this is dramatic evidence of Allegheny County's unique capacity for coming together to solve community problems—the commonality of purpose that, in years past, resolved the daunting problems of smoke pollution, riverfront flooding and redevelopment, economic crises, and youth crime and violence and made us the envy of urban areas across the country. It is also testimony to the fundamental generosity of its people, including children who step forward to share toys, winter coats and prom dresses with those who are less fortunate.

We are proud to document these partnerships that allow us to refine and extend our capacity to serve people in important, enriching ways that cannot be covered through the government. The help is invaluable to us and to those we serve, and we are touched by our partners' responses that these partnerships have been mutually rewarding.

As you experience the spirit of Allegheny County reflected in the stories that follow, I encourage you to consider ways in which *you* can partner with us in the years ahead. Visit our Web site at www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs or call us at 1-800-862-6783 for more information.

Marc Cherna

Marc Cherna, Director

SHARING EXPERTISE AND WISDOM

When the new “mega” Department of Human Services was formed in 1996, the challenge was clear: consolidating the major providers of human services in ways that would empower both the consumers and the staff who serve them. A task of this magnitude would obviously require expertise and resources well beyond the capacity of our own staff and funding streams to ensure that the needs of the County’s most vulnerable populations were met with quality services that were coordinated, holistic, readily accessible, and culturally competent.

During the first three years of operation (1997-99), the Department of Human Services developed a blueprint for the redesign and set about the process of restructuring through a series of top-level partnerships with the business, educational, and philanthropic communities—communities that, in many cases, have continued to support the Department in the years since the reorganization.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS AND EDUCATION

The Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, through four volunteer committees, provided clear direction for addressing issues of organizational change and physical relocation as well as stabilizing integrated human resources and information systems. Members contributed generously in both time and expertise to help the developing Department identify and model its guiding principles by integrating common administrative functions across programmatic areas, enhancing communication and data collection capability, and proactively addressing changes in public policy that affect DHS consumers and services.

A blue ribbon Oversight Committee, composed of leaders from the business, academic, and public sectors, and chaired by Dr. John Murray, served as a sounding board and has guided us throughout the planning and implementation processes. More recently, the broadly representative Partners Group was formed to conduct focus group interviews and explore ways of making human services resources and data accessible to the general public. In addition, advisory committees in all DHS offices provide volunteer consultation and guidance on areas where members have special expertise.

CMU welcomes opportunities for community service as an extension of our mission and as a positive learning experience for students. By helping DHS design its Management Information System, our students benefited from the hands-on work with human service professionals to develop a comprehensive, user-friendly information base that enhances both client service and accountability.

Mark Scott Kamlet, Ph.D.
Provost
Carnegie Mellon University and
H. John Heinz III Professor of Economics and Public Policy

My service on the DHS **Oversight Committee** was a reciprocal blessing. The opportunity to have input into the hands-on delivery of human services and to interact with this unique group of leaders from varied backgrounds has been personally rewarding for me.

Even more important, the experience has helped to ground me, as an academic, in the day-to-day problems in human services and to inform our teaching and research agendas. What we have learned from DHS and other agency executives, for example, has provided invaluable direction to the School of Social Work’s research initiatives in drug and alcohol treatment and child welfare training. In turn, the School’s research has provided valuable information to DHS on the effectiveness of its services to consumers.

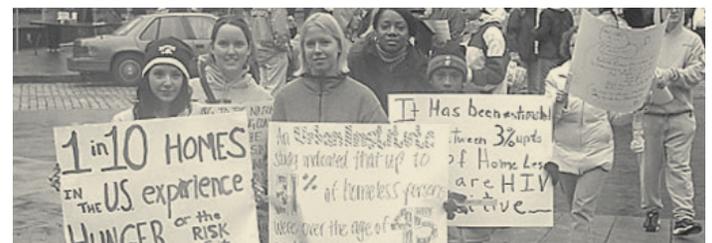
I am glad to have shared in the “redesign” of DHS—and grateful for what we all have learned from the partnership.

*David E. Epperson, Dean Emeritus
University of Pittsburgh
School of Social Work*

Students from the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University researched Management Information System (MIS) integration efforts for human services in Allegheny County, and students from the University of Pittsburgh Katz School of Business, with an instructor from the Duquesne University A. J. Palumbo School of Business Administration gathered national data for various aspects of the human resources restructuring.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PHILANTHROPY

Recognizing that many of the recommended changes could not be supported through the Department’s public funding streams, 15 local foundations joined together to establish the Human Services Integration Fund (HSIF). Over seven years, this collaboration of local foundations has invested more than \$5 million to address system-wide issues that could not be funded through individual grants or traditional categorical funding streams. Included in the HSIF efforts are the development of our Data Warehouse, a comprehensive information and data management system (MIS), fiscal and human resources systems, physical relocation of DHS operations, technical assistance for organizational change, the development of the HumanServices.net, and the funding of three important studies (of the CYF caseload, the behavioral health system, and Area Agency on Aging case management) that will guide our future delivery of services. Another area in which HSIF has helped is in providing a “jumpstart” for two unique initiatives—The Disability Connection and the Children’s Cabinet.



The Disability Connection, established with first year funding from HSIF, will build upon the work of the City of Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Task Force on Disabilities and The Disability Agenda to enhance awareness of the needs of people with disabilities through education and training of staff. It will also play a key role in forming coalitions, identifying additional funding for services, and operating a toll-free hotline (1-877-755-5222) for individuals and County employees with questions about disabilities.

Formed in 2000 with seed money from HSIF, the Children's Cabinet is a collaborative partnership of child-serving agencies and individuals from the fields of government, education, the courts, medicine, public health, behavioral health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse treatment. Convened by DHS, its 38 cabinet members and additional hundreds are serving on nine committees that are identifying

The **Human Services Integration Fund** has provided a wonderful return-on-investment, both for DHS and for the foundations that support it. Through the consortium approach, we have been able to help DHS tackle some of the biggest challenges in human services and address system-wide issues in a way that no individual grant could do.

Foundation support allowed DHS to secure the expertise it needed in several areas, including the development of the MIS system and examining "best practices" across the board—initiatives that could not have been funded through normal categorical funding streams. And what we learned from better data, joint thinking, and partnership with public sector leadership has made us, as grantmakers, more strategic and focused in our own giving.

*Margaret M. Petruska
Program Director
Children, Youth, & Families
The Heinz Endowments*

barriers to children/adolescents and families receiving care within Allegheny County and addressing the ways in which these barriers can be eliminated. The Cabinet's goal is to develop a countywide accessible, individualized, high quality System of Care for children and adolescents with social, emotional, and behavioral health needs.

This prudent investment of private dollars in key service areas has provided a flexible, non-bureaucratic, and responsive funding source for DHS. The products of this investment in improved systems and programmatic innovation have resulted in a national reputation for excellence in all DHS service areas, and the active involvement of community grantmakers has sparked private initiatives that support public needs.

Focusing on the strengths rather than the deficits of individuals and families and intervening early with prevention initiatives that avoid or forestall more serious problems are priorities for DHS. Unfortunately, prevention is rarely a priority in public funding. That's why our partnerships with local foundations, communities, and institutions to provide opportunities for family empowerment and cultural enrichment are so important.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PREVENTION AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

Foundations, working with DHS and neighborhoods (including public housing communities), have provided leadership and funding for such important prevention initiatives as Family Support Centers and the Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace Fund for Children's Programs. The latter, a partnership with The Pittsburgh Foundation and the housing authorities of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, provides a safe, stimulating community-driven and community-designed after-school and summer program for 1,000 children in 19 public housing or Section 8 communities. By employing residents of the communities, it also provides job opportunities and child care for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and provides a snack and hot meal daily to the participating children. DHS underwrites



most of the basic operating costs as a strategy for preventing child neglect and abuse, and the housing authorities provide space for the programs. Food service at the program sites is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the City and County Summer Food Programs. The Pittsburgh Foundation funds and oversees program management and coordination, provides technical

The **Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace Fund for Children's Programs** has been an amazing partnership built on the shared vision of DHS, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and the communities themselves. The sustainable source of funding from DHS has allowed us to stretch limited private dollars to realize the goal of engaging parents in developing, running, and governing programs to keep their children safe.

The community has benefited enormously from the merging of common interests and resources to serve the needs of vulnerable families and children.

*Gerri Kay
Vice President for
Program and Policy
The Pittsburgh Foundation*



For more than three decades, AHRCO has been committed to developing and managing quality, affordable housing for low and moderate income families and seniors. Our partnership with DHS at **Mon View Heights** has added a new dimension to that mission by making case-work and child care services available to our residents.

We are pleased to provide the space for these services, and we have found that their presence makes our facilities more attractive to prospective residents and provides a stabilizing influence on the community as a whole. We are hoping to expand this partnership to other sites and, indeed, to encourage other developers to follow our lead.

*Milton A. Washington
President
Allegheny Housing Rehabilitation Corporation (AHRCO)*

nities, and maintains institutional relationships that generate an additional \$1 million annually from other foundations and public sources.

The DHS Office of Community Services (OCS) proactively seeks out underserved neighborhoods and assists them in meeting their most pressing needs. Partnership with the racially and economically diverse Green Meadows apartment complex in Baldwin Borough, for example, has reduced tensions by bringing varied services to the community, including summer day camp, on-site Head Start, the Community-Family Club for parents and children, and annual family “nights out.” Other housing developers, like Allegheny Housing Rehabilitation Corporation (AHRCO) and the National Development Corporation, are partnering with DHS to offer supportive services within their communities to families with young children.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMER EDUCATION

When the cost of flu vaccine threatened to price it out of reach for low-income seniors who were homebound or unable to go to a doctor’s office for the shot, Highmark partnered with the DHS Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to cover the cost of 3,500 immunizations at community centers and another 1,600 for homebound seniors. In addition, Highmark underwrites the printing costs for the DHS handbook that helps parents in the CYF system understand their rights and responsibilities. Developed locally, A

Our association with the Department of Human Services is an extension of the Highmark mission, which is to “Help People Live Longer Healthier Lives.” In essence, this type of private/public partnership is vital in maximizing the region’s resources.

*Aaron A. Walton
Senior Vice President
Corporate Affairs
Highmark*

Parent’s Handbook has reached more than 60,000 families in the last seven years and is recognized nationally as a model publication. Through the Highmark Gift Fund, a \$15,000 grant to DHS, gift certificates or small gifts are made available to recognize individual consumers’ achievements or to reward volunteer service to DHS.



PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEGAL SERVICES

Through the Adoption Legal Services Project, a partnership with the StateWide Adoption Network (SWAN), Juvenile Court, and the law firm Reed Smith, which provides *pro bono* services to the adoptive families, the DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF) has dramatically

The popularity of the Adoption Legal Services Project at our firm speaks to the selling power of simple work with big rewards. ALSP staff attorneys provide expert assistance to our attorneys and handle the time-consuming and technical aspects of each case. As a result, the adoption program can be marketed to our attorneys as work they can do, no matter what their practice area.

As for the rewards, many of our attorneys consider our work with the Adoption Legal Services Project to be the most valuable work we do. We play a part in helping hundreds of children emerge from lives of crushing abuse and neglect, and we celebrate with these children on the day the court finds their foster parents’ love to be a commitment for life.

*Ann P. Cahouet, Esquire
Director of Pro Bono and Community Service
Reed Smith LLP*

expedited adoptions of children from families where parental rights have been terminated. The five-year backlog in adoptions has been eliminated, and the annual rate of adoption has increased 133 percent since the 1996 restructuring of DHS. For accomplishments like these—the result of public/private partnerships—DHS has been heralded by national news media (like CNN and ABC *Primetime*), national professional associations, and legal journals as a model for child welfare agencies across the nation.



ACTA's partnership with the Allegheny West CareerLink is a natural one, given our joint mission and our shared commitment to helping employers and job seekers find each other and a way to work, through innovative transportation solutions. Sharing space and staff with CareerLink in an area rich in potential job creation has given us greater visibility and contact with the public while supporting our economic development goals.

*Lynn Manion
Executive Director
Airport Corridor Transportation
Association (ACTA)*



PARTNERSHIPS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OCS has also partnered with other public agencies and private businesses with interests in the airport corridor to establish the Airport Corridor Connection, a one-stop shop for job seekers, employers, and commuters. The Allegheny West CareerLink, itself a partnership of DHS with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Employer and Career Services and Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh, offers career counseling, prescreens applicants, and provides space for interviews. CareerLink also partners with the Airport Corridor Transportation Association (ACTA), a Transportation Management Association of businesses in the Airport Corridor, to advance the common goal of helping area employers enhance employment opportunities through improved transportation options, including such initiatives as vanpools, carpools, and greater access to public transportation.

The DHS Office of Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD) has worked with businesses in Allegheny County to provide employment opportunities for people with mental retardation. Following the philosophy of self-determination, the Support Coordinator will link individuals with mental retardation, who are interested in finding work, with contracted service providers, who will help them find employment based on factors that are important to them, including location, transportation options, and type of work. The *Tribune-Review*, the Sheraton Station Square, and Dingbat's Restaurant are just some of the businesses that have welcomed people with mental retardation into their "business families."

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All services will be:

- ✦ **High quality** — reflecting best practices in case management, counseling, and treatment.
- ✦ **Readily accessible** — in natural, least-restrictive settings, often community-based.
- ✦ **Strengths-based** — focusing on the capabilities of individuals and families, not their deficits.
- ✦ **Culturally competent** — demonstrating respect for individuals, their goals, and preferences.
- ✦ **Individually tailored and empowering** — by building confidence and shared decision-making as routes to independence rather than dependency.
- ✦ **Holistic** — serving the comprehensive needs of families as well as individuals through tangible aid and a full continuum of services —

INFORMATION EXCHANGE ✦ PREVENTION

✦ EARLY INTERVENTION ✦ CASE MANAGEMENT & CRISIS INTERVENTION ✦ AFTER CARE

VISION

To create an accessible, culturally competent, integrated, and comprehensive human services system that ensures individually tailored, seamless, and holistic services to Allegheny County residents, in particular, the County's vulnerable populations.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

300,000 persons served annually

Total Staff: 1,100

Service Providers: 480

Total Budget: \$655.1 million

Total includes the Allegheny HealthChoices Program

Funding Sources: 80

Each with separate laws, regulations and reporting requirements



Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for providing and administering human services to County residents through its five program offices:

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)

Office of Children, Youth & Families (CYF)

Office of Community Services (OCS)

Office of Mental Retardation /Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD)

Dan Onorato

Allegheny County Chief Executive

James M. Flynn, Jr.

Allegheny County Manager

Marc Cherna

Director, Department of Human Services

Often the “little things”—holiday gifts for children, a dress for the prom, tickets to a popular concert or the chance to explore a museum exhibit—take on a disproportionate importance in families already wrestling with poverty, stress, and conflict. Because few programmatic budgets acknowledge that such items are powerful rewards and incentives for adults as well as for children, DHS has traditionally turned to the community—cultural institutions, businesses, and individuals—to fill the void, and the response from these private sector partners has been overwhelming. In all, these partnerships, coordinated by the DHS Office of Community Relations (OCR), increase annually. Last year, they represented nearly \$700,000 in essential tangible aid and enrichment opportunities for DHS consumers.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

The two largest community partnerships with DHS are the Holiday Project and the Allegheny County Music Festival. Conceived by Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Max Baer while he was presiding judge of Allegheny County Juvenile Court, the Music Festival is a popular public event for families that also raises funds to fulfill special (and unfunded) wishes of children served by all DHS programs, including the desire for musical instruments and lessons, art supplies and lessons, and sports equipment. It benefits from the contributions of individuals who attend the festival as well as from corporate supporters and artists who lend their talents to make it a success. Dozens of volunteers, including those from Juvenile Court administration and Court judges, contribute their time and effort to the project.

The Holiday Project mobilizes local businesses and their employees as well as schools, churches, and individuals to purchase holiday gifts for more than 6,000 children involved with the DHS Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF).

At Duquesne Light, we know our success as a company is directly connected to the well being of the neighborhoods and families we serve.

The DHS **Holiday Project** provided a very simple, but powerful opportunity for employees at every level to reach out to a segment of the community that is sometimes overlooked. Volunteerism and community outreach are important elements of our corporate culture, and we take great pride in knowing that the energy of our collective efforts made a difference.

Our partnership with the DHS Holiday Project provided a very special way for our employees to share in the experience of making the holiday season a bit brighter for those in need.

*Pamela L. Coates
Manager, Community Relations
Duquesne Light*

While nearly 100 organizations, churches, and individuals partner with DHS on the annual Holiday Project, six large corporations conduct company-wide drives for gifts. They include Lazarus-Macy, Duquesne Light Company, PNC Bank, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), National Real Estate Information Services, and Oxford Development Corporation. Citizens Bank contributed hundreds of basketballs and footballs for children served by the Holiday Project. Sorting and delivering the thousands of gifts is handled by staff members from OCR and the DHS Office of Administration’s Facilities Section, County facilities staff, Juvenile Court staff, and caseworkers and aides from CYF regional offices, many of whom work on their own time to be sure the packages are delivered on time.

In 2003, Duquesne Light’s employee volunteer group, the Connectors, expanded their gift drive to enable all interested employees to participate. In addition to the individual gifts, the Connectors contributed \$2,000 from the Connectors President’s Award, given annually for significantly influencing employee participation in volunteer and community service projects.

AT&T’s Customer Service Center employees brightened the holidays for children at 17 local homeless shelters by decorating Christmas trees and lading them with more than \$4,000 in small gifts. The DHS Office of Community Relations coordinated this effort and the delivery of the trees.

Many Allegheny County restaurants, theaters, hotels, and other recreational businesses generously donate gift certificates, tickets, etc., every year for door prizes at DHS functions, such as the annual Self-Determination Awards dinner for Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD) consumers and their families. Eat ‘n Park Restaurants provide gift certificates to enable pre-adoptive parents to have family meals with the children they plan to adopt, and several purveyors, including Bruegger’s Bagels and Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, supply refreshments for special events such as the Stone Soup Hunger and Homelessness March and Rally (which DHS co-sponsors with hunger and homelessness shelters), the OCR Job Shadow Day, and the opening of Head Start at Green Meadows.





No less important than these major collaborative efforts are the myriad small ones involving individuals, church groups, schools, and youth organizations from across the County whose efforts include children who collect stuffed toys or clothing for those who are less fortunate, Scouts who round up blankets and scarves for the homeless, women’s sewing groups that make and donate lovable teddy bears and quilts for children served by DHS, and stores that donate books, toys, and food for those in need. When young Laura and Justin Taylor, of Wexford, looked for a service project to observe their Mitzvah, for example, they remembered their own little foster brother who had arrived with a stuffed gorilla, George, and treasured his faithful friend throughout his stay with the family. To bring comfort to other youngsters from troubled homes, the Taylors asked their friends and family members to celebrate their Mitzvah with the gift of a stuffed toy. In all, they collected 250 and contributed them to abused and neglected children served by CYF.

My children could not have chosen a more appropriate project for their Mitzvah than collecting stuffed animals for children served by CYF. It was a wonderful learning experience for them, and their reward was in knowing what joy they were bringing to 250 other children.

*Debby Taylor
Mother of Laura and Justin Taylor
Wexford*

The opportunity for teenagers to attend the high school prom may not be a top priority when families are wrestling with poverty, impending homelessness, or violence, but it can be critically important to the self-esteem and happiness of the young women themselves. For many, however, this traditional “rite of passage” is an impossible dream because of the cost of an appropriate gown and accessories. To make the dream possible, some 20 businesses, schools and colleges, and social service agencies and scores of individuals collaborated with the OCR on Project Prom. During the first year, 450 new and gently used evening dresses and more than 300 shoes, bags, and other accessories were collected to share with high school juniors and seniors referred by caseworkers and counselors in DHS programs. The Parental Stress Center provided space for the “prom shop,” and volunteers—including some students of Oakland Catholic High School, helped the “shoppers” choose their outfits. This successful effort will

I think **Project Prom** is great. Proms are so much fun. I think everyone should have an opportunity to go to at least one and have a dress that they like and feel good about themselves and have a nice time.

*Gayle Bishop
Project Prom Student Coordinator
Oakland Catholic High School*

become an annual event that now includes soliciting for gift certificates from tuxedo rental shops to help young men with their prom expenses.

Recognizing a need and responding to it guided the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in two long-standing partnerships with DHS and the Allegheny County court system. To provide a safe, supportive environment for children of court-involved families, NCJW has equipped playrooms in family, juvenile, and criminal courts and provides staff and volunteers to supervise them. When NCJW leaders learned from CYF caseworkers that children who were removed from their homes to foster care often had to transport their belongings in hastily filled trash bags, they created the “Pic-a-Bag” project. In the first year alone, they supplied 1,000 bright blue duffle bags equipped with overnight toiletries, a tee shirt, and a stuffed toy. The project continues, largely with donated or heavily subsidized materials, as way of helping young children in difficult situations feel respected and cared for.

At **NCJW**, we take to heart the Jewish responsibility of *tikkun olam* (to repair the world). Our mission is to make our community a better place, particularly for its most vulnerable residents—women, families, and children. The partnership with DHS and the Courts to provide duffle bags to CYF children and supervised playrooms for children of court-involved families has given us a wonderful opportunity to serve in areas where we see immediate results from our volunteer efforts and from the contributions of the businesses, foundations, and individuals that support those efforts.

In terms of personal reward and satisfaction, NCJW and its members get far more than we give in these partnerships, and for that we are most grateful.

*Lynette Lederman
President
National Council of Jewish Women*

PARTNERSHIPS FOR CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Participating in cultural activities—visiting the Carnegie Science Center or the Children’s Museum or attending musical and dramatic performances—is seldom included in program budgets despite the positive value in personal growth and success in school. Here, again, DHS private sector partners play a major role.





The partnership of the **Children's Museum** with Community Connections for Families was a great opportunity to showcase children and what they do well, in the context of the family. With the additional space afforded by our expansion, we plan to engage in more such partnerships in play and discovery with "children-first" organizations throughout the community.

*Lois Winslow
Education Director
Children's Museum of Pittsburgh*

Tickets for Kids offers opportunities to several thousand DHS-involved children each year, including many of those in the Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace (BJWL) Fund for Children's Programs. A new partnership with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh provides yet another means to enrich the lives of the children and families they serve. Representatives from the Children's Museum and Community Connections for Families (CCF), one of the System of Care initiatives overseen by the DHS Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), developed a plan for activities

Our consumers look forward each year to the Flowering of Insight art exhibit. Displaying their art, attending the awards celebration, and having an opportunity to sell their artwork always serves to instill pride and enhance self esteem.

*Jennifer Albert
Coordinator, Deaf Treatment Services
Allegheny East MH/MR Center, Inc.*

It was great to see our kids meeting other kids with similar needs. I can't wait for the next visit!

*Parent of a child in
Community Connections for Families*

that were not only children-first, strength-based, family-oriented, and self-enhancing, but were also educational and entertaining. In May, a kick-off event brought together 150 participants—CCF children identified with serious emotional disturbances and their family members—for a private visit to the museum's "Open Your Mind—Explore Your Mental Health" exposition. The event featured art activities, an hour-long comedy performance, food, and time for play and discovery. Surrounded by supportive family and staff, the children were afforded a unique opportunity to participate fully in the museum's offerings. Because of their underlying emotional and/or behavioral concerns, this full participation would not have been possible when the museum was open to the general public.

Showcasing the talents of DHS special needs consumers, the annual *Flowering of Insight* art exhibit draws on the collaboration of OCR staff and service contractors, area artists, and the generosity of PPG's management services company, Grubb and Ellis, which provides exhibit space in the PPG Wintergarden for 14 days. (At the customary rate, this amounts to a contribution of \$35,000.) In 2003, more than 230 works of art were exhibited, and 71 were sold, netting nearly \$3,000 for the artists whose works were purchased.

These public-private partnerships represent a sampling of the many contributions from the business, education, cultural, and philanthropic communities and from grassroots groups and individuals to the efforts of the Department of Human Services and its almost 300,000 consumers, who constitute nearly one-fourth of all Allegheny County residents. They add immeasurably to the efficacy and impact of the direct services we provide with public dollars, and they help us leverage additional funds by demonstrating that Western Pennsylvanians care deeply about each other and are willing to work together to improve the quality of life for all of us.

We are grateful to community leaders who have shared their time and talent with us, to the institutions and corporations that have supported innovative programs, and to the individuals who have stepped forward to help. Especially heartening is the number of young people—children and teenagers—whose generosity tells us that Allegheny County's hallmark spirit of collaboration and compassion is firmly rooted and will continue into future generations.

Produced by the Office of Community Relations

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