

INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS

AUBERLE

INNOVATION: 412 Youth Zone to help kids age out of foster care system

When the Allegheny County Department of Human Services released a request for proposal to create a one-stop center to assist young adults who had aged out of the foster care system, John Lydon, CEO at Auberle, came up with a unique approach that was accepted and became the 412 Youth Zone.

The 412 Youth Zone is a one-stop, drop-in center helping youth aging out of the foster care system and homeless youth gain stability, heal from childhood trauma and become a part of a community.

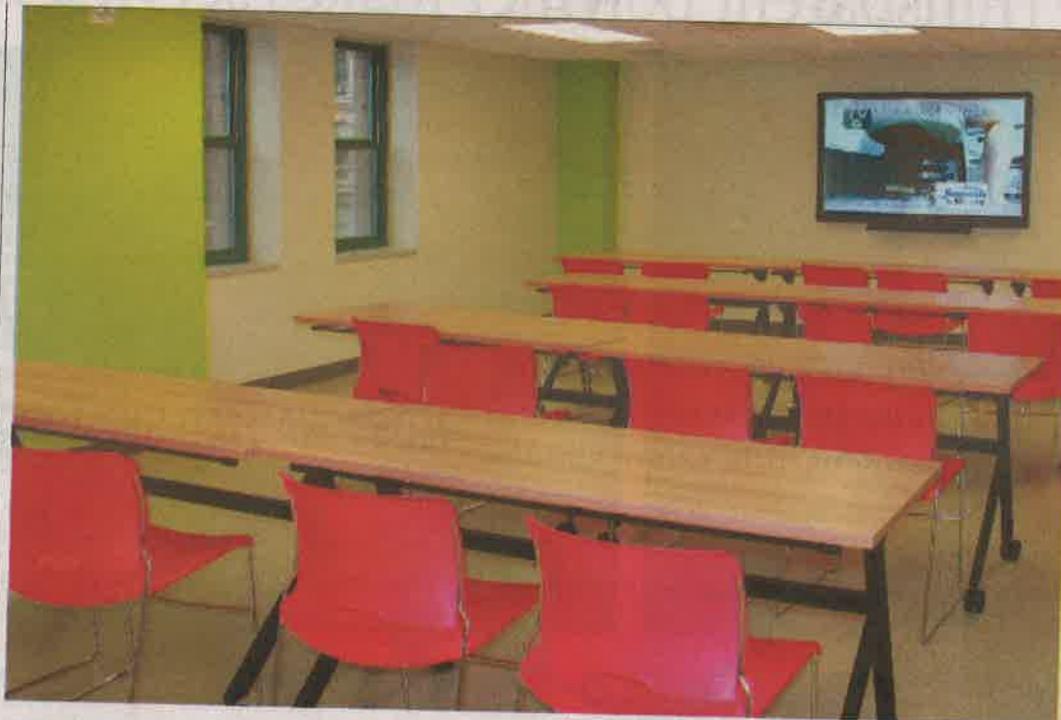
Each year, more than 20,000 teenagers are moved out of the nation's foster care system. When they turn 18, they're no longer eligible for the benefits the foster care program provides.

Services at the 412 Youth Zone include everything from art classes to cooking classes, GED preparation and housing counseling sessions.

"We chose to create this huge partnership of agencies as opposed to just pitching itself for ourselves," Lydon said, adding that partners include Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, which runs a medical clinic at the center; Action Housing Inc., which owned the building and donated the space; Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Pittsburgh Police, University of Pittsburgh, PPG, Massaro Corp., Huntington Bank, Allegheny County Library Association, and the YWCA. In all, 74 partners signed on to support the project.

Most of the partner support has come in the form of in-kind donations, according to Lydon.

"PPG hired a color consultant to come in and talk to us about painting different rooms



AUBERLE

PPG provided a color consultant to select colors for each room of the 412 Youth Zone that reflected how it would be used. It then donated the paint for the center.

different colors," he said. "Therapy rooms are soothing. Common rooms are energizing. PPG then donated the paint for the facility."

In the past year alone, the program has served more than 1,000 people between the ages of 16 and 23 by providing services

including food assistance, medical, behavioral health counseling, educational tutoring, life skills training, workforce training, prevention education, housing counseling, legal aid, child care and parental support.

- Richard Cerilli

AUBERLE

1101 Hartman St.,
McKeesport, PA 15132

► **PHONE:** 412-673-5800

► **WEBSITE:** auberle.org

► **TOP OFFICER:** John Lydon, CEO, johnly@auberle.org

► **WHAT THE COMPANY DOES:** Serves thousands of children and families each year, helps troubled children and their families heal themselves

► **EMPLOYEES:** 209