

Good Kids

WE HAVE LAUNCHED A
BRAND NEW WEBSITE

www.auberle.org

The First Connection Needed for Youth to Succeed Starts with the 412 Youth Zone Coach

During the transition to adulthood, teenagers often experience enormous amounts of pressure that are just too heavy to carry on their shoulders alone. Whether it is fitting in, growing up or planning for the future, young people ride a roller coaster of emotions that make it hard for them to cope with everyday life. To help lift the weight off their shoulders, Auberle, with the vision of Allegheny County Department of Human Services, has opened the 412 Youth Zone, a safe and welcoming one-stop center designed for 1,500 eligible youth ages 16–24.

Auberle employs a team of supervisors and a group of 412 Youth Zone Coaches who make connections with each youth and help all of them become healthy, independent adults and contributing members of their communities.

The 412 Youth Zone offers services including life skills, medical and behavioral health, education, housing counseling and workforce development.

Daylon M. is one of several young adults who make frequent visits to the program, where he interacts with not only his youth coach, Kortney Coltogirone, but has also rekindled an old friendship with a coach he views as a great male role model.

Initially, Daylon enjoyed playing cards and chess at the 412 Youth Zone, but was hesitant to take the next step and enroll in the program. He had been dealing with a troubled past and tended to experience a lot of skepticism before deciding to even try anything out of his comfort zone, such as going to the 412 Youth Zone and enrolling himself in the program.



When he was young, Daylon was placed into Foster Care and has since moved around from group homes to his uncle's house. But he never got the sense that any place felt like home, and lacked self-confidence as a result.

"I knew it was time to get my life back on track," Daylon said. "When a couple of my friends told me about the 412 Youth Zone, I was a little hesitant to come at first because I do not normally like to try new things and am more of a shy person. But then once I saw a familiar face, I relaxed and knew this place could help me."

The familiar face Daylon is referring to is one of the youth coaches at the 412 Youth Zone, Lamont Watts. When Lamont was hired at

Auberle, he previously worked in another independent living program and met Daylon at various group outings around the city. Since then, their relationship has grown to the point where Daylon views Lamont as the perfect male role model.

"Every time I see Daylon I am proud of him," Watts said. "It is an amazing feeling to meet all of the youth that come to the 412 Youth Zone and interact with them. Even though some of the youth are not directly assigned to me, I like people to know that I am a very committed coach and that they can reach out to me at any time. I like to view myself as a role model to these kids, and I want them to know that I can be that person they can open up to when they are feeling many different emotions at one time."

The job of the 412 Youth Zone Coaches is crucial. They are the first connection at the program that these teens make with an older adult. For youth, the coaches are not simply there to point them in the direction they need to go, they are there to take the journey with them into being a self-sufficient adult.

Since his first visit to the 412 Youth Zone, Daylon has participated in a variety of the workshops, including Opportunity Passport, which helps transition-age youth learn about managing their finances and keeping a budget for weekly spending. He is also involved with Auberle's Employment Institute's Driver's Training Program with the goal of getting his driver's license.



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Celebrating Our Accomplishments!

Just a quick look at some of our recent success with the children and families we serve:

- 91% of residents in Movin' On achieved the goal of obtaining permanent housing at discharge.
- 4 youth working hard in our receptionist area earned their National Customer Service Representative certification.
- Stephanie O. is the first GED graduate at the 412 Youth Zone. She is a member of the 412 Youth Zone and a participant in our Career Pathways Program designed to help youth earn their GED, a national certification, and employment.
- 100% of Homebuilders® families who completed the service showed progress on goal attainment ratings for at least one goal at service closure.
- Congratulations to our 2016 seniors who graduated from McKeesport High School earlier this spring: John C., Sebastian N., Lonnie G., Julian R.
- The Allegheny County Department of Human Services selected Auberle in a major competition from entities inside and outside the state to operate the 412 Youth Zone in Downtown Pittsburgh, a safe and welcoming one-stop center for youth ages 16–24 that are transitioning out of the Foster Care system. The 412 Youth Zone's goal is to help youth become independent, self-sufficient adults.
- Our Foster Care program had a record number of adoptions last year. We are also one of a small number of agencies to provide Foster Care services to teens in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region.
- Auberle's Employment Institute was named the Pennsylvania Community Based Program of the Year by the Juvenile Court Judges Commission and is the go-to workforce development program in the region.
- We committed to and underwent a three-year, intensive process that involved every program and every person so that we could become certified as a trauma-informed services delivery agency in The Sanctuary Model®.
- The U.S. Department of Labor awarded Auberle a three-year federal grant to increase the reach and impact of our Employment Institute by teaching youth skills necessary to build low-income housing in the region.



CEO Corner

Throughout my time as the Chief Executive Officer at Auberle, I have never witnessed as much positive growth and transformation as I have here in the past year.

From the implementation of Homebuilders®, a nationally recognized program to help families in crisis, to the dedication of the 412 Youth Zone, to the recent celebration of our youth and families at the 30th Annual All Star Banquet, we have significantly grown our services. We have tried to give you some perspective on that in this issue of Good Kids.

Despite challenges faced through the recent state budget crisis, we vowed to keep our doors open to at-risk youth and families by exhausting our reserves and borrowing nearly \$4 million to keep all programs operating. In fact, during this time, we expanded our services and implemented many new programs.

One example of a new program is the 412 Youth Zone. When we read Allegheny County Department of Human Services' (DHS') vision to establish a one-stop center for youth aging out of Foster Care, we knew we had to organize the community to give youth, ages 16–24, the opportunities to succeed and access services that will help them become self-sufficient adults.

We approached our partners and created a stunning array of needed services. After a highly competitive process, DHS selected Auberle as the lead agency to run this ground-breaking project. Since the dedication in March, we have engaged 38+ community partners, including four universities, to help us deliver and expand services to 1,500 eligible youth. Our young people provided key input at every step, from the design and services offered to creating the logo, selecting the furniture, painting the walls and laying down carpeting. The importance of this program was demonstrated at the dedication with Bishop

David A. Zubik, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and over 200 attendees when a young lady explained the importance of her youth coach in her life guiding her to employment and education and pointing her to a brighter future for her and her two toddlers.

In addition to the 412 Youth Zone, we earned additional opportunities to launch two new initiatives: Homebuilders® and Teen Foster Care.

Allegheny County selected Auberle and one other agency to administer all in-home crisis services using Homebuilders®, a nationally recognized and evidence-based crisis intervention program. The primary goal is to assemble a team to respond to a critical situation when a child is at imminent risk of being removed from his or her home to help the family stay together. The focus of this program is on the entire family and our dedicated and efficient Homebuilders® team works with each individual family to plot a plan for success.

Auberle was selected with three others to provide a significantly increased Teen Foster Care program that corrects a large imbalance between homes for foster youth ages 12–21 and the demand. Many teens can leave shelters and group home for the warmth and love of a family if we succeed. Our Foster Care program has steadily grown to over 100 children in homes across the region even with a record number of adoptions last year. Our foster families are diverse and passionate about working with teens and continue to show us the dedication and commitment it takes to lead by example.

Our Employment Institute has doubled in size from last year. We implemented the nationally recognized Youthbuild program, increased the number of national certifications we offer to nine, and started our own digital Work Ethic

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Matt S.: A Story of Success and Intelligence



Pursue a Career at Auberle

Meet Matt S. He enjoys reading. While he reads about adventures of heroes and stories of science fiction and assigned school reading material, one story that has yet to be told has been the tale of Matt, a hard-working and intelligent young man who is thriving in and out of the classroom.

"I owe a lot of my hard work and success to Auberle. My biggest influence here has been Ms. Janeen ... and Craig..., who have been with me since day one. They have helped me with getting a job, helped me maintain the job, and helped me make good decisions at work and in life."

MATT S.

Growing up without the support of his family, Matt was referred by CYF to Auberle when he was just 14 years old. Three years later, Matt is a young man on the right path to a very successful future.

Matt's studies are very important to him, and out of all the subjects at school, government is his favorite. He likes government because he finds history interesting. But, outside of the eight-hour school day, his true passion is cooking. In fact, Matt was introduced to the Culinary Arts Certification Program in Auberle's Employment Institute by his roommate, who could not attend a catering event. This chance event presented Matt the opportunity to fill in for him and last year, the 17-year-old showed off his culinary skills at the Employment Institute's Culinary Banquet

that culminated with him and his peers receiving their ServSafe Certification.

Matt now has a part-time job at Pizza Hut, but after graduation from high school has dreams of attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Culinary Arts Program while pursuing his business degree.

Aside from his love for culinary and career aspirations, Matt is an outstanding student. Most recently, he received two awards for his educational accomplishments. He was inducted into the National Honor Society for a grade point average well beyond a 4.0 and received the Boys Education Award at Auberle's 30th Annual All Star Banquet.

At Auberle, Matt also participated in JumpStart Success, a job readiness program within the Employment Institute that provides youth with career exploration activities, field trips and events.

"I owe a lot of my hard work and success to Auberle," Matt grinned. "My biggest influence here has been Ms. Janeen Garancsi and Craig Seifried, who have been with me since day one. They have helped me with getting a job, helped me maintain the job, and helped me make good decisions at work and in life."

When Matt is not hitting the books or working hard in the kitchen, he enjoys playing sports, hanging out with his friends and competing against his peers in video games.

Matt is very focused on school, his job and building his own successful path to a bright future. For now though, he wants to work hard in school, do well at his job at Pizza Hut, and prepare himself for college and writing his own happy ending.

It's a great time to work at Auberle. From the introduction of new programs to recruitment of summer internships, we are always accepting applications for full-time, part-time and internship employment.

Two years ago, Auberle underwent an extremely successful engagement study conducted by The Harris Group. This survey revealed that 81% of our employees feel actively engaged with the agency, a percentage that is substantially higher than the average engagement scores for both inside and outside the nonprofit sector.

Moreover, Auberle employees voted the agency as the No. 1 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Healthiest Employers, our fourth consecutive year on the list. Auberle was also named one of the *Pittsburgh Business Times* Top Places to Work.

If you are interested in a career at Auberle, please contact Sharon Mulvihill in the Human Resources Department at 412-673-5856 ext. 1311 or email sharonmu@aubarle.org.

Sign up to receive our e-newsletters and email blasts

Visit www.auberle.org and click on "Join our Mailing List" or email debh@aubarle.org.

Auberle Upcoming Events

12th Annual Voices Carry to Benefit Auberle

**Tuesday, September 20, 2016
6:00–10:30 p.m.**

Stage AE, Pittsburgh's North Shore
Visit www.auberle.org/voices-carry

Auberle's Annual Meeting

**Monday, November 21, 2016
4:00–6:00 p.m.**

For more information or to RSVP for any
of the events, please contact Deb Hilton at
debh@auberle.org

Support Auberle

Support Auberle by donating or by becoming
a volunteer today!

DONATE

Visit www.auberle.org to donate online, or send
donations to:

Pauline Auberle Foundation
1101 Hartman Street
McKeesport, PA 15132-9909

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers needed for Auberle's 12th Annual
Voices Carry Event, a unique rock concert
fundraiser benefiting the at-risk children and
families of Auberle.

Voices Carry is a night filled with Pittsburgh
musical legends, live auctions and basket
raffles.

Volunteers are needed for everything from
registration to auction sales and more!

If interested in volunteering at Voices Carry
and/or any other volunteer opportunities,
please contact Abby Spriggs at
abbys@auberle.org or 412-673-5856
ext. 1316.

For At-Risk Young Adults, the Road to Success Goes Through Youthbuild

Finding a job can be a tough task for any young adult. Imagine being a disadvantaged youth with a lack of family support, emotional distress and no high school diploma, and your path to success can have many roadblocks. To drive youth to their full potential and sustainable employment, Auberle introduced Youthbuild, a worldwide initiative and new program offered at Auberle that provides job training and educational opportunities for at-risk youth ages 16–24.

Marquis S. is one of five young men who were recently accepted into Auberle's inaugural Youthbuild class in April. Prior to acceptance into the program, youth must undergo an extensive screening process. Youth will then be eligible to participate in the program and have the opportunity to finish their education and receive their Pre-Apprenticeship Training Certification.

"Youthbuild is a very good program and a great experience," Marquis S. said. "My brother is actually an employee at Auberle and referred me to the program's orientation. We are very blessed to have instructors who show us everything hands-on. They not only help us out in the career force, but we can also turn to them for help with personal problems."

During their time in Youthbuild, the students learn construction skills and split their time between various construction sites and the classroom, where they can earn their GED. While the program's focus is on helping youth learn new skills and finish their education, it also teaches youth important life skills and works with them to overcome any barriers that may stand in the way of their success.

"The program is ideal for these youth," Brian Miller, Auberle's Youthbuild Construction Trainer from Homebuilders International (HBI), said. "Not only are youth learning important construction skills, gaining work experience and obtaining their GED, but they are also prepared to be leaders in their communities. In the few short weeks the program has been up and running, our youth have already learned how to frame, patch, repair and paint walls, hang drywall, hook up plumbing and electrical wires, and work with concrete tools."

On the education side of Youthbuild, youth venture into the classroom for the afternoon to work in the computer lab with Auberle's Youthbuild GED Instructor, Jim Hayden from Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania. In the classroom, each individual learns at his or her own pace in subjects including math, social studies, science and language arts.

To both Miller and Hayden, successes are evident even in the first few weeks of the program. All of the participants now take initiative, work together as a team, and are excelling in the classroom, leading them down a successful road toward a bright future. One student has already earned his GED and several have earned an OSHA-10 Certification.



Attention: Foster Care Teens Look for Loving Homes in Allegheny County

Meet Olivia S. Like many Auberle youth in Foster Care, she experienced various amounts of trauma prior to being placed with a loving foster family. Her foster mother helped Olivia with her hoarding problem, lack of self-confidence and confrontational behavior. Olivia is currently thriving with her Foster Care family. She is an outstanding student in the classroom and recently made the high honor roll. Olivia also joined her high school basketball team and was recently awarded the title of Team Captain.

For many teenagers like Olivia in the Foster Care system, the transition to adulthood has many new experiences and difficult challenges. Oftentimes, these young adults find it hard to search for affordable housing, pursue higher education or training, look for sustainable employment, manage their finances, and take care of themselves emotionally and physically.

When we think about adoption, we tend to overlook the need for homes for teenagers. At times, people tend to stay away from fostering teens because of the perception that teenagers in the Foster Care system have a troubled past. But, what many do not realize is that these youths have all the same hopes, dreams and goals as any young people their age. More importantly, teenagers can benefit from the emotional and financial stability a family offers, just as much or even more so than a young infant. Fostering a teenager can be a rewarding experience.

Every child, whether young or old, strives for a sense of belonging. Those families who are willing to open their homes and hearts to a teenager can provide them with a sense of safety, create a lasting connection, and provide guidance with important life goals such as enrolling in higher education, finding stable housing, securing employment, and establishing healthy relationships.

To help increase positive outcomes for teenagers in Foster Care, Auberle's Foster Care program places dozens of youth in families throughout Allegheny County. Many have found success and permanent placement, but there is always need for more families for teenagers. To help with the ongoing need, Auberle has teamed up with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families, and other social service agencies in Southwestern PA to be a part of a campaign called "Foster Goodness" in hopes of attracting more families to adopt teens 12–21 years of age.

If you would like more information about becoming an adoptive or foster parent at Auberle, please contact Jeanne Burger, Foster Parent Recruiter and Trainer, at 412-673-1993 ext. 2020, or by email jeanneb@auberle.org. You can help make a difference in the lives of our youth and make more stories like Olivia's a reality instead of a dream.



“I WANT A HOME.”

Right now, there's a teen in your neighborhood who could use support, guidance and, frankly, a break. Do you have room in your home and heart to be a foster parent? Learn more at fostergoodness.org.

Foster parents wanted.

- Married, single or partnered
- All races, ethnicities, religions, genders and sexual orientations
- Want to help a young person succeed
- Often related to or are family friends with a youth in need of care
- Willing to accept a young person, or siblings, as temporary part of family
- Flexible, organized, collaborative and up for a life-changing adventure

Right here in Allegheny County, choose a local agency to answer questions or help you get started.

CEO Corner *Continued from page 2*

badge which documents a “ready to hire” young person. And to get youth started on the right road to their future, our summer work program this year tripled in size to 60 youth. Many of the young people we serve are not in the Foster Care system but rather community youth who need a break to succeed.

While we have had a lot of successes launching programs, it is important to note the impact staff, board members, donors, volunteers, corporate partners and the entire nonprofit community have on Auberle. There is no way that we survive the budget crisis with our services intact and launch new programs in the midst of it without your support.

People often ask me the same question, “How can I get involved in what you are doing?” I

explain that our primary concern is finding a role that is meaningful and respects the value of your gifts of time and treasure. While we have many opportunities for people to get involved at Auberle, it is important to me that we give people the chance to experience something that particularly connects to their interests and passions. That gives the volunteer the most satisfaction and the people we serve the best impact.

Auberle has countless ways to volunteer or donate, internship possibilities and many full-time and part-time job opportunities as a result of our expansion. Here at Auberle, we never stop. We continue to create and think of innovative ways and programs to better the lives of youth and families across this region.

I am always impressed by the amount of time and dedication our staff, board members, corporate partners, volunteers, donors and community bring to support our mission. Thank you for your time, and I hope after reading this edition of Good Kids, you are inspired and ready to make a difference in helping us achieve our mission of helping troubled children and families heal themselves. We look forward to sharing the many more successes of Auberle yet to come.

Warm regards,



John Patrick Lydon

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The generosity of these individuals, groups, corporations and foundations enables our children and families to have the greatest opportunity for success. Auberle gratefully acknowledges ALL pledges and donations received from July 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016.

Auberle also gratefully acknowledges the selfless individuals who give their time to advance the mission of the agency. Their efforts make our work possible. To see a complete list of volunteers from July 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016, please visit www.auberle.org/volunteer-list.

\$10,001–\$250,000

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