

Welcome!

At Heritage Community Initiatives, we believe that building sustainable communities in the Mon Valley begins with families. Our programs are designed to address some of a family's most fundamental needs.

Providing for the children is the essential building block for a family's success. At the Heritage 4 Kids Early Learning Center (4 Kids), 110 children, 98% of whom live at or below the poverty level, are educated, nurtured and set on a path for success in school life. Similarly, at the Heritage Out of School Time (HOST) program, 55 children have a safe, dependable, and reliable place where they are cared for when school is not in session.

In the Mon Valley, transportation is often the single largest barrier to access to employment or other services. The Heritage WorkLink (WorkLink) program provides more than 13,000 rides per month and enables almost 3,000 riders to maintain gainful employment and provide for their families.

Every family deserves a thriving community in which to live. Through our Heritage Community Engagement program, we've connected nearly 500 volunteers to projects that have helped revitalize some of the 37 Mon Valley communities we serve.

Our Mission

To enable individuals and organizations in the Mon Valley to improve the health, education, economic strength and social vitality of their communities.

History of Heritage Community Initiatives

Heritage Community Initiatives has a history of service stretching back more than a quarter-century. It was created in 1983 as Heritage Health Foundation, Inc. (HHFI), the endowment management arm of Braddock Medical Center. In 1994, the Foundation launched a highly successful capital campaign that significantly updated the Medical Center's facilities and reinforced its importance in the communities it served. In 1996, Braddock Medical Center became UPMC Braddock, and it was decided that HHFI would take another major step- to become a free-standing, community based nonprofit organization. While it still supported the work of the hospital, it greatly expanded the scope of its direct work with the community and its collaborations with other like-minded organizations.

Through growth and response to changing community needs, in 2008 Heritage's Board of Directors, employees, and community representatives came together to update the organization's mission, restate its vision, and reaffirm its core values. The new name, Heritage Community Initiatives, was chosen to reflect the redeveloped mission, as well as to familiarize funders and collaborators with the diverse services offered by the organization.

Headquartered in the heart of the 37 Mon Valley neighborhoods we serve, Heritage has an on-the-ground understanding of the needs of local communities and residents. Today, Heritage Community Initiatives focuses primarily on three program areas: Education, Transportation, and Community Engagement.

Education

Since roughly 35% of Mon Valley residents live below the poverty line, childcare that is both of good quality and affordable is very important, yet rare to find in the area. 4 Kids prides itself on being one of these rarities.

4 Kids Program Achievements:

- Has provided care for more than 3,500 children and their families in the Mon Valley since it opened in 1998.
- Is licensed by DPW, accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and has received STAR 3 status from Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS program.

HOST provides before and after school care to students in grades K-8 who live in Mon Valley school districts, as well as holiday breaks, summer camp and in-service days when school districts are closed. HOST provides students with an afternoon snack, guided homework and age appropriate enrichment activities to supplement each child's education.

HOST Program Achievements:

- Acquired STAR 4 status within the Keystone STARS program.
- Classroom partners: Braddock Youth Project (BYP), Winchester Thurston School, AmeriCorps, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

Heritage education programs have a long history of partnerships with educational resources available throughout the Greater Pittsburgh Region.

- Experiential Learning & Enrichment Partners: Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank, The National Aviary, Jumpstart, Carnegie Science Center, Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse, and Carnegie Natural History Museum.
- Recent Field Trips: Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, Pittsburgh Pirates game, ice skating, Phipps Conservatory, The Pittsburgh Symphony, Carnegie Science Center, and Triple B Farms.

Transportation

WorkLink helps riders get to jobs, job training and work-related support services. It provides fixed route van transportation to the residents, workers and students of the Mon Valley and connects our riders to bus routes operated by Port Authority of Allegheny County.

Program Facts:

- Service began February 1, 2001.
- Funded through government grants.
- Almost 3,000 registered riders in the Mon Valley.
- Ridership has grown by over 50% since March 2011 Port Authority transit cuts.
- Increased demand means that WorkLink vans are full, and they must pass up 50 or more riders per week.
- Recent changes in the federal funding program have put WorkLink at risk.

Community Engagement

At Heritage Community Initiatives we believe in building strong communities by providing needed services to individual residents. We also take a strong leadership role in community revitalization projects in the communities that we serve. Volunteers help with projects that range from direct service to maintenance and construction projects.

Heritage has partnered with local organizations such as PNC, United Healthcare, GlaxoSmithKline, The Home Depot, UPMC, Carnegie Mellon University, Carlow University and Winchester Thurston School. In the 2011/2012 fiscal year, 495 volunteers donated 3,870 hours in support of projects to benefit communities in the Mon Valley region.

Nature of Volunteering

This Manual is neither an employment nor volunteer contract and is not intended to create contractual obligation of any kind. Neither you nor Heritage is bound to continue the volunteer relationship if either you or Heritage chooses, at will, to end the relationship at any time.

Definition of Volunteer

Heritage defines a volunteer as any individual providing time or a service for Heritage or one of Heritage's programs free of charge and without monetary compensation from Heritage.

Volunteer Opportunities and Requirements

One-Time Volunteer Opportunities:

Corporate/Community/School Group Volunteer Day: Contact the Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager to discuss potential projects, dates, and times. We will work with your group to provide a valuable experience that is tailored to interests, skill level, and goals. Consider a volunteer day for team building or service learning. For corporate groups, find out if your employer offers benefits for volunteering. We are happy to work with groups on an on-going basis throughout the year.

Community Engagement Projects: Volunteers will assist with various projects throughout the 37 Mon Valley communities served by Heritage. Tasks may include landscaping, gardening, painting, carpentry, and general labor. No advanced skills or experience is required.

Community Clean-up Day: Community Clean-up Days may include gardening & landscaping, painting, trash pickup, or other general tasks. Projects will be scheduled as needed. No advanced skills or experience is required.

4 Kids and HOST Site Maintenance: Maintenance projects at the Heritage 4 Kids Early Learning Center and Heritage Out of School Time (HOST) Program may include gardening, landscaping, painting, construction and/or cleaning. Projects will be scheduled as needed. No advanced skills or experience is required.

Requirements for One-Time Volunteer Opportunities:

- Volunteer data sheet
- Liability waiver and photo release form

On-going Volunteer Opportunities (Out of classroom):

Office Assistant: Work in the office assisting with filing, mailings, contacting constituents, and other office duties as assigned.

Event Committee: Help the staff with special events such as the Chair-ity Auction & Cocktail Party or the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community.

Intern/Work Study: Students may maintain regular hours for course credit working with one of our departments: Development, Transportation, Finance, Human Resources, Education, Technology, Community Engagement.

Requirements for On-going Volunteer Opportunities (out of classroom):

- Orientation
- Proof of age (at least 16)
- Volunteer data sheet
- Liability waiver and photo release form
- Confidentiality agreement

On-going Volunteer Opportunities (In classroom):

4 Kids Early Learning Center Classroom Aides: 4 Kids Classroom Aides will assist Lead and Assistant Teachers with the daily activities of the 4 Kids Early Learning Center. There is also the opportunity to rock babies in the Infant Room. To maintain continuity in the classroom, 4 Kids volunteers must be able to commit to a fixed schedule for a 6 month timeframe. Available hours: Year round; Monday-Friday: 6am-6pm.

HOST Tutors: HOST Tutors can provide homework help to students in grades K-8 on reading, math and science, or other subjects. To maintain continuity in the classroom, HOST Tutors should be able to volunteer 2-3 hours on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for a 3-4 month timeframe. Available hours: September-May; Monday-Friday: 3-6pm.

HOST Summer Camp Assistants: HOST Summer Camp assistants will assist in the following: facilitating clubs, mentoring children in small groups, and facilitating gross motor activities at the playground and gym. Summer camp is anticipated to start June 3rd and run until August 23rd; Monday-Friday: 6am-6pm.

HOST Play Associate: HOST Play Associates will participate in play associate training and facilitate play with the Imagination Playground™ at the HOST program or the KaBOOM! playground! September-May; Monday-Friday; 3-6pm. Summer Camp: June- August; Monday-Friday: 6am-6pm.

Requirements for On-going Volunteer Opportunities (in classroom):

- Orientation
- Proof of age
- Volunteer data sheet
- Liability waiver and photo release form
- Confidentiality agreement
- Health assessment with TB test
- 2 written reference letters
- Clearances within 30 days of start

Clearances

Any volunteer 18 or older must obtain clearances within 30 days of start and have copies on file with Heritage Community Initiatives in order to volunteer in the classroom at 4 Kids Early Learning Center and HOST. Visit www.dpw.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm

- PA Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 151)
- PA Criminal Background Check (Act 34)
- FBI Criminal Background Check

*Volunteers working outside of the classroom are not required to obtain clearances

Reimbursement of Clearances

Heritage Community Initiatives does not wish for the cost of clearances to impede your ability to volunteer and will reimburse or pay for volunteer clearances on a case-by-case basis as long as the volunteer will commit, in writing, to 6 months of service.

Personal Data Changes

It is important for you to notify Heritage Community Initiatives of any changes in personal data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency (an emergency phone number can be vital), and other such status reports should be kept accurate at all times. Please call the Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager at 412.351.0535 to make updates as necessary.

Volunteer Hours Tracking

It is important that Heritage maintains an accurate record of volunteer hours. The method to track hours will be explained during orientation and may vary depending on volunteer activity and location. Volunteers involved in a one-day, one time activity will have their hours recorded from the sign in sheet.

Privacy Policy

Heritage has a firm commitment to your privacy and will not share your personal information.

Attendance and Punctuality

In order to ensure a smooth operation, we ask that volunteers extend common courtesy in informing us of absences, late arrivals, and early departures. Volunteers are essential to Heritage. In return, Heritage will let volunteers know as soon as possible of any changes in scheduling or cancellations.

Code of Conduct

It is Heritage Community Initiatives' aim to encourage people to work together to achieve Heritage's ultimate mission by creating an environment that supports the diversity of people and their ideas. Heritage is committed to supporting high standards of business ethics in every aspect of its operation. We recognize that people work best when they know what is expected of them and, in turn, expect volunteers to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interest and safety of all Heritage employees and volunteers.

Though it is not possible to list all of the forms of conduct that are unacceptable when volunteering with Heritage, the following list provides some examples that may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or immediate termination of volunteer activity. Depending on specifics of the situation and the severity of the offense, any of the levels of discipline may be bypassed and the volunteer placement may be terminated without prior warnings or suspensions. Examples include:

- Theft.
- Inappropriate removal or possession of Heritage property.
- Falsification of documents (lying).
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (this includes prescription drugs that are not in your name).
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcoholic or illegal drugs volunteering, or while operating any Heritage-owned vehicles or equipment.
- Fighting or threatening violence.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Heritage or another person's property.
- Disrespect to supervisors or any other individuals associated with Heritage.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking in any Heritage building or vehicle.
- Sexual harassment.
- Discrimination.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials.
- Inappropriate gossip or behavior that discredits Heritage's mission or goals.
- Violation of confidentiality agreement.

Disciplinary Procedures:

1. Verbal or Written Warning
2. Suspension (consequence form)
3. Termination

Unlawful Harassment & Discrimination

Heritage Community Initiatives is firmly committed to providing a positive work environment free of discrimination and bias. Each volunteer is personally responsible for maintaining such a work environment. Heritage prohibits any actions, harassment, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, sexual preference, race, ethnic background, age, religion, physical condition, or other legally protected characteristic. Any conduct or action, whether overt or subtle, which creates an offensive or hostile work environment is prohibited and will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action. No volunteer, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtones or conduct, either verbal or physical.

Note: If any volunteer feels that he or she is a victim of sexual or discriminatory harassment, we encourage you to let the harasser know that his or her behavior is unwelcome. Additionally, volunteers who feel they have been harassed must immediately report the matter to the Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager. It is our belief that everyone has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace regardless of the basis for the harassment.

Conflict Resolution

While Heritage Community Initiatives desires every volunteer to receive fair and impartial treatment, it does recognize that conflicts, misunderstandings, and problems arise from time to time. Problems or concerns may arise among volunteers or between volunteers and Heritage Community Initiatives' staff. Although most misunderstandings can and should be solved on an informal basis, more formal provisions have been made in order to resolve difficult problems. The procedure for raising a problem or concern is as follows:

1. The volunteer should directly inform the person who is the source or cause of the problem/concern that a problem/concern exists. Those involved should attempt to resolve the issue informally and independently. If the matter involves harassment – please make the Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager aware, even if the matter is independently resolved.
2. If the volunteer does not wish to communicate directly with the person who is the source or cause of the issue or fails to satisfactorily resolve the issue after discussing it with the other party, the volunteer should then contact the Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager.

Drug & Alcohol Abuse

Heritage Community Initiatives volunteers are required to be medically (physically, emotionally and mentally) capable of performing the required work, free from the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances that diminish or impair their ability to perform the given task. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance on premises or during service hours regardless of location is prohibited. Reporting under the influence of any controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited. Volunteers with a drug, alcohol or other substance dependency are strongly urged to seek professional help.

Smoking

Heritage Community Initiatives has prohibited smoking throughout its workplace and vehicles.

Dress Code

Persons are expected to arrive in appropriate clothing for the occasion. If working at 4 Kids Early Learning Center, HOST, or Heritage Community Initiatives administrative offices, volunteers are expected to dress according to the location's dress code. The Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager will discuss the dress codes during an orientation process.

Court-Ordered Service

Heritage Community Initiatives does not currently have the appropriate staffing to supervise those individuals fulfilling court-ordered community service hours.

Media

Members of the media are occasionally on site and at Heritage Community Initiatives special events. Please do not comment to the media on behalf of the organization unless asked to do so by a member of the staff; please direct media to the President & CEO or the Director of Development. It is Heritage's policy that only approved members of the Senior Staff may speak on behalf of the organization to the media.