

*SHENANGO VALLEY
URBAN LEAGUE, INC.*

*ANNUAL
REPORT*



2016-2017

www.svurbanleague.org

*SHENANGO
VALLEY URBAN
LEAGUE, INC.*

*Board of
Directors*



Executive Committee
Joseph Walsh-Board Chair
Rocco Russo
Mark Malcolmson
Ronald Heiman, Esq.

Members
Diane Gardner
Autumn Johnson, Esq.
Kavon Wright
Michael Muha, Esq.
Christine Burger
Deborah Stiger

Mission

&

Vision



The mission of the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. is to ensure equal access and opportunity for African-Americans and others in need to empower individuals to cultivate and exercise their full human potential. The Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. implements its mission through advocacy, bridge building and program services.

Our vision is a community where all citizens have equal opportunity to achieve their fullest potential, where everyone contributes to improving the quality of life and shares in prosperity.

Message from the President / CEO and Board Chair



The Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. prides itself on being an outlet for individuals in need through our health & welfare, housing, and education services. As it is our mission to encourage and empower individuals in Mercer County to reach their full potential, we will continue to advocate for social justice and equality for all individuals. Through our programming, we will continue to make great impacts on youth and adults and provide them with the education and resources that are necessary during their time of need. With many obstacles such as unemployment, and lack of food, the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. strives to provide supportive outreach initiatives and programs in the areas most needed by the community. Furthermore, the partnership with the United Way of Mercer County is invaluable and through co-branding efforts we will collectively work toward lifting families out of poverty. Through these efforts, the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. Board of Directors and staff will continue to focus on serving diverse populations throughout Mercer County.



Administrative Staff



Dr. Erin R. Houston-President/CEO

Virginia Gibson-Thurman-Fiscal Director (July-Feb)

Raymond Bianco-Fiscal Director

Tami Hammond-Housing Director

Corwin Somerset-Program Coordinator

Elizabeth Lampkins-WIC Director

Cornelius Holmes-WIC Fiscal Administrator

Teresa Hall-Housing Assistant

Lori Graham-Administrative Assistant

MAINTENANCE

Bruce Barfield

WIC Staff

Joyce Harrison, Administrative Assistant

Erica Peiffer, CPA

Mandy Marsh, NT/PC-OM

Pamela Shepard, NT

Lesley Martin, CPA

Bobbi Jo Horn, PC

Patrice Lee, NT

Lori Kocholek, PC

Lauriethel Ward, RS/OC-CIT

Marci Cirell, CPA/NE-BFC



Education



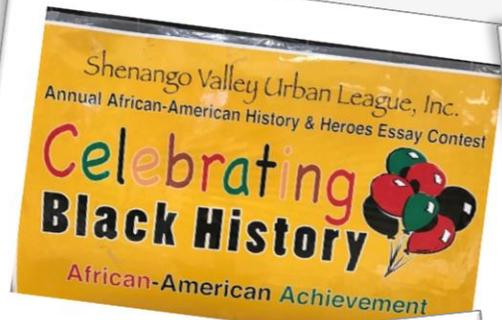
Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Remembrance Breakfast



Held at the City of Farrell Municipal building, the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. observed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Viewing this day as a “day on” and not a day off, we invited the community to honor the work, memory, and legacy of Dr. King while youth, Noah Uhrin and Aaliyah Hunt, members our the Urban League’s Nulites program reflected on how the leadership of Dr. Kings has impacted their lives today. The keynote address focused on racism and social injustices of today was given by Rev. T James Harrison, Pastor of Valley Baptist Church, Farrell, PA.

Black History Essay Contest & Luncheon

The 43rd Annual Black History & Heroes Essay Contest was held throughout several local school districts in Mercer County. Fifth and Sixth grade students submitted essays on their favorite African American heroes and detailed how they have impacted the culture and society overall. First place and honorable mention winners are honored at an annual luncheon that rotates each year to a different school district. This contest provides students, parents, and the community an opportunity to learn about many civil rights leaders and African American inventors. This year the luncheon was held at Sharon Middle/High School.



Frank J. Nagy Scholarship Fund Essay Contest



The Education Department conducted its fifth essay contest for a \$1,000 scholarship award. High School Seniors from throughout Mercer could submit an essay responding in 500 words to the question, "how you have demonstrated leadership ability both academically and socially and what role you have played in making a positive impact in the urban community." Essay submissions were submitted from the following high schools in Mercer County: Farrell, Sharon, Hickory, West Middlesex, Sharpsville, Kennedy. After a committee of community judges read and scored the essays a first place winner was selected. Kaylen E. Woods, a senior at Hickory High School was the 2017 recipient and winner of the Frank J. Nagy Scholarship and was recognized and awarded at Hickory High School's senior recognition day. The scholarship fund provides financial support to a deserving Mercer County student and highlights our commitment to education.

Urban Scholars & Educators Awards



The 3rd Annual Urban Scholars & Educator Awards Scholarship Fundraiser was held to recognize five excellent students (grades 9-12) and five educators (K-12) in Mercer County. Also, funds raised benefitted the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. Frank J. Nagy Scholarship Fund. Nominations of faculty (K-12) were made by School Board members, Superintendents, Principals, or any school administrator/official.

Nominations of students (9-12) can be made by Faculty, School Board members, Superintendents, Principals, or any school administrator/official.

For the Distinguished Urban Educator of the Year and Distinguished Urban Student of the Year Awards only Superintendents could make nominations.

Summer Youth Apprenticeship Program (SYAP)



The Summer Youth Apprenticeship Program provides Mercer County students (age 11-15) an opportunity to job shadow different career fields and earn a stipend. First beginning in the mid 1990's, this program has impacted many students, the majority of whom have graduated high school and have gone to college or military. This program operates from the end of June-mid August each summer and works with students on developing leadership skills, social skills, and life skills. Components of the program include, one-on-one interviewing, weekly enrichment group sessions, lunch with leaders series, career camp, and job shadowing. Students who successfully complete the program receive a stipend, achievement awards, commemorative t-shirt, and certificate of completion at the conclusion of the program.

Fall Give Back



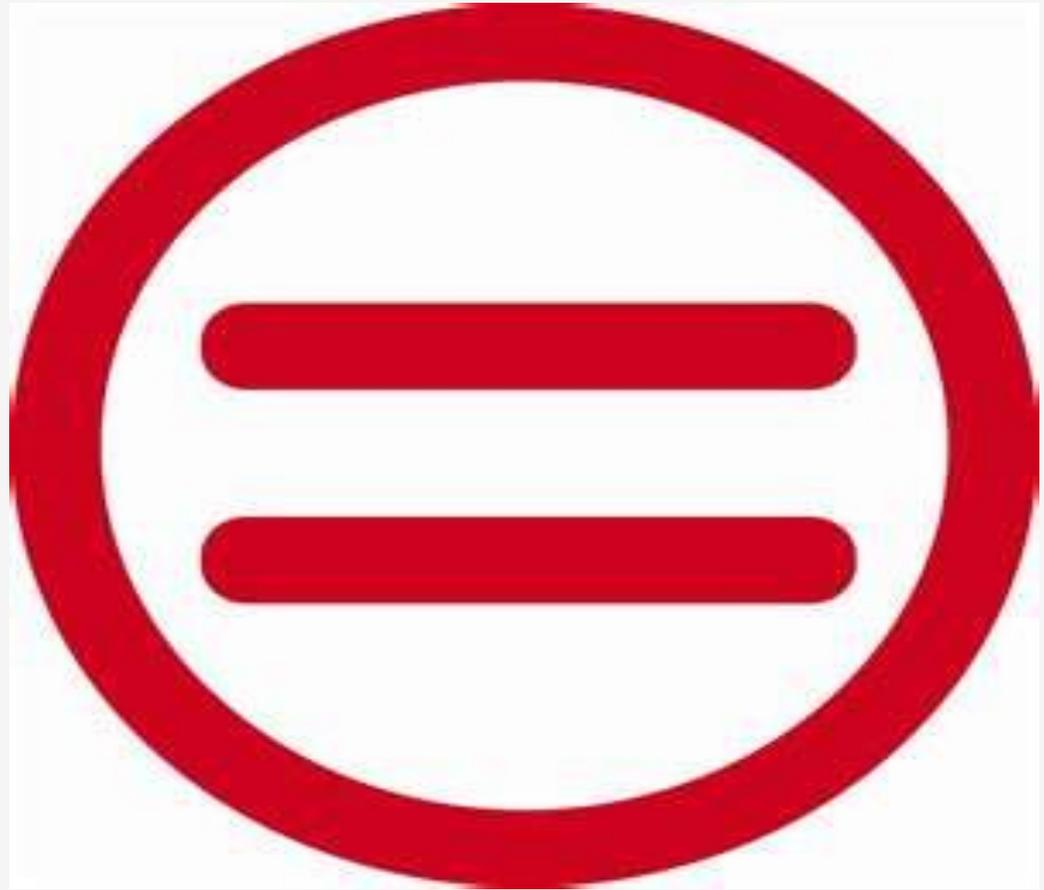
Student participants in the Nulites and Summer Youth Apprenticeship programs participated in a community service project to understand the importance of service learning. Youth and staff collected specific items for Joshua's Haven City Mission, a homeless men's shelter during our Annual Secret Santa Christmas Gift Collection. The items were a part of the shelter's "wish list" and helped defray costs of having to purchase the items themselves.



Youth Participants

- Summer Youth Apprenticeship Program: 25
- African American History & Hero Essay Contest: 445
- Frank J. Nagy Scholarship Essay Contest: 5
- Urban Scholars & Educators Awards: 8
- NULITES: 17
- Youth Activism Leadership Skills Development: 17





Human Relations & Employment

Human Relations



The purpose of this program is to provide service to clients in Mercer County seeking human relations assistance in the areas of employment, education, public accommodation, and housing.

Total number of complaints received: 6

Total number of cities and municipalities where complaints were: 3

Program highlights:

Continue to assist the community, providing human relations services

Act as mediator to work out an amicable solution between parties involved in a complaint

Continue to provide up to date information regarding human relations issues to the general public and cooperate with the PA Human Relations Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Employment



- The employment department addresses the job needs of the community. Resume and cover letter development, job search, and skills assessments are provided to individuals seeking full or part time employment.
- **Program highlights:**
- Performed ongoing job search and placement for 13 individuals
- Served as a resource for 13 employers
- Resumes and cover letters were prepared or updated for 13 individuals
- Total number of cities and municipalities where clients resided: 3

Human Relations

Eight individuals sought assistance with discrimination complaints; 6 from Sharon, 1 Greenville, 1 Wheatland

- 5 African American, 2 Caucasian, 1 Multi-racial
- Age 19-24: 1
- Age 35-54: 5
- Age 65-74: 2

Employment

Thirteen individuals sought assistance with employment; resume and job search; 8 from Farrell, 2 Grove City, 3 Sharon

- 10 African American, 2 Caucasian, 1 Hispanic
 - Age 19-24: 1
 - Age 25-34: 4
 - Age 35-54: 8
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Housing



Homeless Assistance Program (HAP)



188
Households served

Provided Mortgage Foreclosure Assistance to **25** families

431 adults and children served in total

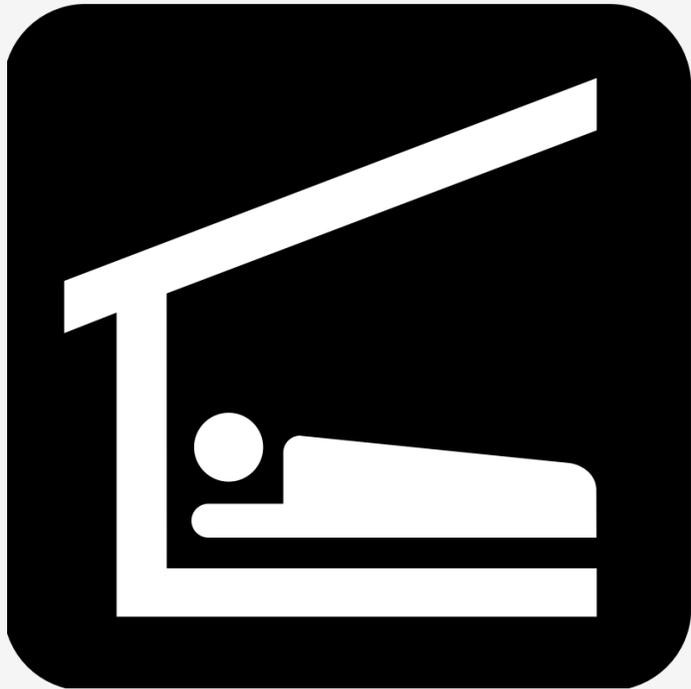
Rent Assistance

The Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. has been designated by the Mercer County Commissioners to administer the HAP Program. The purpose of the HAP program is two-fold; 1.) the program assists Mercer County residents in need of acquiring or maintaining rental housing and 2.) the program provides funding to the Emergency Shelter Program administered by the Salvation Army.



The types of assistance consist of rental counseling, unit search, budget counseling, and a financial grant of \$300.00 toward the first month's rent or the delinquent rent. All applicants must have a face-to-face interview with the Housing Counselor.

Emergency Shelter



In the Emergency Shelter Program administered by the Salvation Army, emergency shelter is defined as housing individuals facing imminent crisis with temporary overnight housing up to a period of one week. For the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Salvation Army provided housing for 338 Mercer County adults and children. The amount of money sub-granted from the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. to the Salvation Army was \$7,741.00

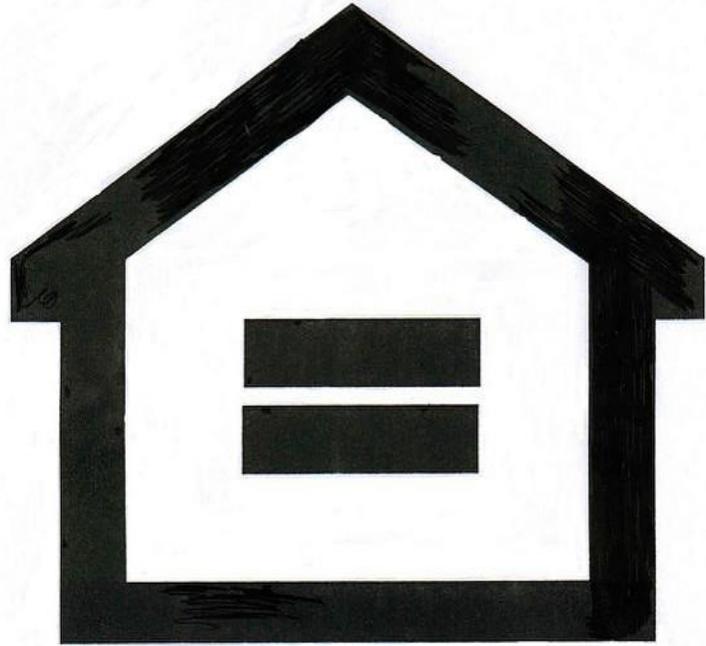
Homeowners Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (HEMAP)

The Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. is certified by HUD (Housing and Urban Development) to provide mortgage default counseling to homeowners facing foreclosure. During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc. processed 25 applications to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) for emergency mortgage loan assistance through the states Homeowners Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program.



*What is the
most
pressing
problem
facing our
community?*

- 24.4% Stated lack of meaningful employment
- 15.2% Stated lack of affordable housing and transportation
- 16.0% Stated lack of cooperation among communities
- 34.3% Stated all of the above factors contribute to the problems in our community
- 10.1% No Response

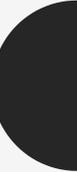


**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

- Provided rental assistance to 188 individual households. Cumulative total of 207 adults and children.
- Provided mortgage foreclosure assistance to 25 households facing delinquency.
- Emergency shelter assistance provided by the Salvation Army, sub recipient of the Urban League, to 266 individual households that supported a cumulative total of 338 adults and children.
- Provided financial support of \$54,859.00 in rental assistance and \$7,741.00 for emergency shelter.
- From July 2016-May 2017, 1,382 housing inquiries have come in to the Shenango Valley Urban League, Inc.



Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)



*Choose
Healthy.
Choose
WIC!*



Pennsylvania Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is the sole funding source for the WIC Program, and it provides a grant used to prevent and improve nutrition-related health problems for women, infants, and children with healthy supplemental foods and nutrition services.

WIC was authorized by Congress in 1972 and was implemented in Pennsylvania in May 1974.

*Choose
Healthy.
Choose
WIC!*

The program is administered through contracts with county and private non-profit agencies that deliver WIC services locally in all 67 counties at about 278 sites.

SVUL Inc. has been providing WIC services since April 1, 1978.



How WIC Helps Families

Offers screenings and referrals to health care and other services

Gives advice for healthy eating

Supports breastfeeding

Provides healthy food



WIC Program Highlights



Received continued funding from Pennsylvania Department of Health in the amount of \$911,551.00 for the WIC and Peer Counselor Project for FFY October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

Provided service in Mercer, Venango & Forest counties, with an average participation of 3,883 clients per month.

Distributed 9,044 Farmers' Market coupons for produce and fruit to 1,537 children and estimated 724 women for the past fiscal year

Distributed 9,582 Farmers' Market checks and for produce to 1,629 children and 767 women.

Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Goals

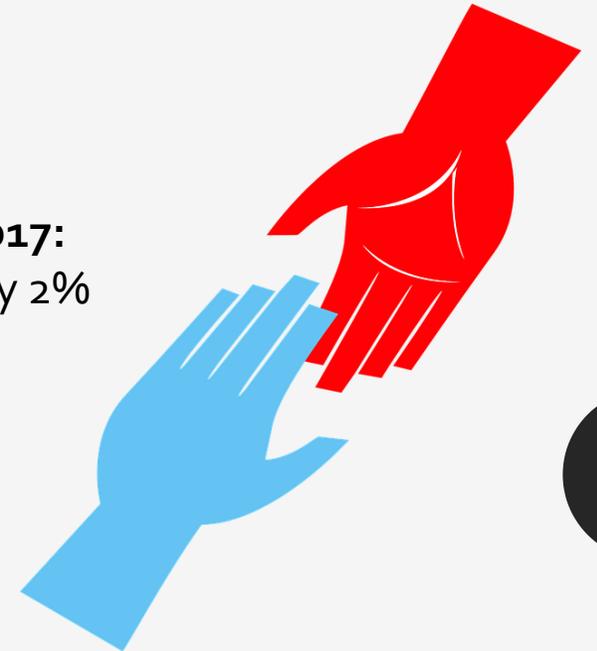
October 1, 2016- September 30, 2017:

Improve the quality of nutrition education through formal observation and appropriate staff training.

Increase breastfeeding awareness in the community

Outreach Goals

October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017:
Increase Local Agency Participation by 2%



WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program



“A Breastfeeding Support Program for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women”

- The WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program is a support program for pregnant and breastfeeding women to help women initiate and continue breastfeeding with the help of Peer Counselors who are trained to assist by offering breastfeeding education, support and role modeling.
- The breastfeeding peer counselor are mothers who have breastfed and have personal experience with breastfeeding and are trained to provides valuable support to increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates.
- The program is funded by USDA using the “Loving Support Model” to for a successful Peer Counseling Program for WIC.
- To learn more about the WIC and Peer Counseling Program, check online at www.health.pa.gov or www.pawic.com, or call 1-800-WIC-WINS (1-800-942-9467).