



# Welcome 2024-2025 Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps Members!



We are excited to welcome our new class of AmeriCorps members. This Fall we currently have **87** AmeriCorps members who are serving in the Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps program. Among them are 39 Youth members, 25 School Based members, 14 Community Based members and 9 House of Trades members. Our members are serving in Allegheny, Jefferson, Butler, Clarion, Venango, Erie, Crawford and Mercer counties. We are looking forward to hearing all of your "Great Stories" especially the pictures from your service sites that you will share with us.



## **New AmeriCorps Host Sites and Alum Barb Buzzard**

Keystone SMILES would like to welcome a returning and new host to our service family. Crawford Central School District and Union City Area School District. Both school districts are piloting a youth corps member for the 2024-2025 school year as well as the traditional AmeriCorps program in the Crawford Central School District.

Barb, a returning AmeriCorps Alum and retired Keystone SMILES employee continues to assist with CPR training this year traveling with Heather Custer to our AmeriCorps sites. She also volunteered to help while a staff member was on Medical Leave. Thanks Barb for your continued support.

## Franklin Fire Restoration Project, Franklin, PA

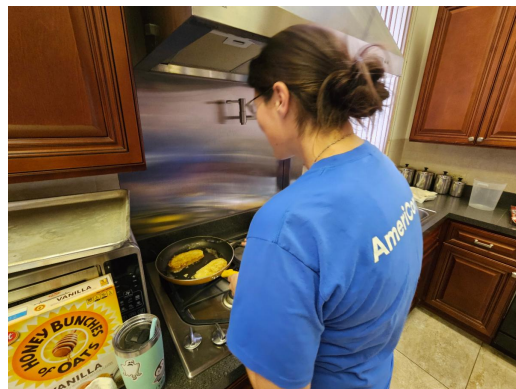
The House of Trades team is currently partnered with Mustard Seed Ministries in helping a Franklin resident restore his home which was heavily damaged in a house fire. The team is currently hanging drywall for a new ceiling. In exchange for this collaboration, Mustard Seed Ministries will be assisting the HOT team with the installation of a wheelchair ramp for the Hadden House in Farrell for the preschool mental house counseling center which is an AmeriCorps Host Site, Zion Education Center.



## Senior Breakfast, Knox, PA

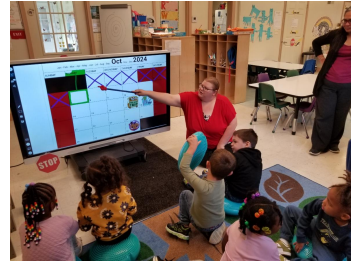
Knox preschool AmeriCorps members hosted the monthly Senior Breakfast and BINGO. They made a delicious French toast breakfast and called BINGO.

Every month the Seniors in the Knox community meet at 525 Main Street in Knox. Keystone SMILES members decorate, prepare and serve breakfast. The children from our preschool also come and entertain the attendees with a few songs and craft. If you know of anyone who may want to attend please spread the word. It is the third Wednesday of every month at 9:30am. The proceeds from BINGO support the local Horsethief festival.



## Sharpsville Gardens. Sharpsville, PA

Sharpsville Gardens teacher Nicole Potase, Teacher's Aide Lonnie and new AmeriCorps member Neely have been teaching the children all about their bodies and learning new letters. Meanwhile Miss Karla has been cooking healthy meals for the children. Sharpsville Gardens is located in one of the Mercer County Housing Authority's communities. Starting in October the staff and AmeriCorps member will be traveling to six MCHA communities located in Mercer County to implement after school programs for residents' children. A huge thank you Mila Hiles for coordinating the MCHA AmeriCorps afterschool and preschool programs during the school year.



## Weed & Seed AmeriCorps Service Project, Oil City, PA

Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps Weed & Seed team and members from Knox and House of Trades presented the 1st Annual Halloween BOO-tique at the Hope 21 Boutique.

It was an amazing night with a registration line backed up all the way down to First Street.!

190 children received free Halloween costumes & accessories. Activities, food, and fun were had by all.



# WELCOME NEW STAFF!

We would like to introduce you to three new staff members at Keystone SMILES. We are very happy to welcome them to our organization.

## Jacki Struthers

Through many months of searching for a new qualified fiscal staff member, the Keystone SMILES Board of Directors selected Jacki Struthers to expand capacity for the financial department. Jacki worked in long-term care as the Billing Office Manager previously in her job of 23 years. She not only brings to our agency fiscal experience but also training as a Certified Nurse Assistant. Additionally, Jacki will assist in this area if needed.



## Jennifer Welton

Jen is a returning Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps staff member. She moved to Michigan with her family more than 8 years ago and she and her family are returning to the Knox area. Jen has a teaching degree, experience in grant writing, and a thorough knowledge of the Keystone SMILES mission and goals. Jen will be utilizing her experience and knowledge to support sustainability efforts for Keystone SMILES CLC's systems and programs. Welcome Back Jen!

## Farrell, PA

AmeriCorps Member Dianna Newby's request to have a wheelchair ramp build for the Hadden House for Zion Education Center became a reality when Keystone SMILES staff and a collaboration with Mustard Seed Ministries began construction on the ramp Friday, October 25th. More to come in the next issue.



# UPCOMING EVENTS!!!



## KNOX LIGHT UP NIGHT

November 22, 2024 Knox Borough, Keystone SMILES along with Once Upon a Christmas, and local businesses will light up the town. There will be lots of activities, snacks and drinks and, of course, Santa himself. Join us as we ring in the Holiday Season. 6:00 pm-8:00pm Main Street Knox. This year, the event will be hosting a service project entitled: "Light Up the South" collecting specific needs to help the hurricane victims. More to come.



## SANTA BASKETS

December 20th Keystone SMILES will assemble and deliver all of the fixings for a Christmas breakfast and dinner to local families who need a little extra help this Christmas. If you know of a family in the Knox/Oil City area who are in need of a Christmas meal or you would like to make a donation please contact Judy Wile. Last donations supported 91 families.

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