

# Holy Family Welcomes New Service Corps Members

ON SEPTEMBER 9TH, Holy Family staff commissioned five new members of the Holy Family Service Corps (HFSC), celebrating their commitment to Holy Family Institute's mission and praying over their upcoming year of service. This service program, a partnership with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth (CSFN), invites college graduates to gain valuable field experience while supporting Holy Family Institute's mission of hope and healing. Each HFSC member also meets regularly with a Sister Companion from CSFN, who offers guidance, encouragement, and assistance with day-to-day challenges.

Holy Family Service Corps consists of two tracks: Holy Family Teaching Fellowship, a two-year teaching opportunity for applicants to teach in an urban school setting; and Nazareth Year, an 11-month experience that combines service opportunities, academic mentorship, and

job coaching. Three of our new members—**Ryan Crawford**, **Adele Smith**, and **Julia Natalia**—are following the Teaching Fellowship track, spending their service year at Nazareth Prep. Ryan is teaching theology, Adele is teaching Freshman Leadership, and Julia is teaching Cultural Literacy. In addition to teaching, these three are also working towards a master's degree in Education through Duquesne University.

Our two remaining Service Corps members, **Keilah Gussie** and **Maria Montoya**, are following the Nazareth Year track and are serving in different programs at Holy Family Institute. Keilah works closely with teachers and counselors at our Specialized Learning School and plans to create a literacy and reading intervention program, writing the curriculum and training volunteers to work one-on-one with the students. Maria serves in our Journey of Hope program, caring for unaccompanied children and teens who have been placed in our care after crossing the US-Mexico border.

(Left to right) **Keilah Gussie**, **Maria Montoya**, **Julie Natalia**, **Ryan Crawford**, and **Adele Smith**.



## Great news if your portfolio has done well this year!

THE TAX LAW RECOGNIZES stock donated to non-profits at face value on the day it was donated, not the day it was purchased. In general, your stock donation is not subject to a capital gains tax. To learn more or to donate stock to Holy Family, please contact our Chief Financial Officer, Mark Palastro, at 412-766-9020 x1291.

## Donate to our YES Fund!

IF YOU PAY PERSONAL INCOME TAX in Pennsylvania, you may be able to donate up to the equivalent of 90% of your tax liability while receiving a 90% Educational Improvement Tax Credit. For example, if your 2019 PA income tax totals \$10,000 and you contribute \$10,000 through our Youth Employment Scholarship (YES) Fund, you will receive a \$9,000 credit on your 2019 taxes. To learn more about the YES Fund, contact Michael Sexauer at 412-766-9020 x1244.

# H O L Y L I G H T

CHRISTMAS 2019

A NEWSLETTER OF HOLY FAMILY INSTITUTE

## 27th Annual Arthur J. Rooney, Sr. Courage House Luncheon

### Courage Award Winners

ON NOVEMBER 5TH, over 350 supporters and friends of Holy Family Institute gathered at Heinz Field for the 27th Annual Arthur J. Rooney, Sr. Courage House Luncheon. Each year, the Pittsburgh Steelers and Holy Family Institute partner for this inspiring event, held to honor a Steeler and a Holy Family alum who have shown exceptional courage and resilience in overcoming



**Leonard and Lori Seitz** receiving their award, presented by Sister Linda Yankoski and Art Rooney II.

a challenge in their lives. This year's winners were Steelers running back, James Conner, and reigning Miss Pennsylvania, Tiffany Seitz.

This year's event included the presentation of awards by Sister Linda and Art Rooney II to James and Tiffany, plus a surprise Lifetime Achievement Award given to Tiffany's parents, Leonard and Lori Seitz, for their commitment to Holy Family Institute's foster, adoption, and other family support programs over the years. An extensive silent auction featured unique items from local businesses and raised over \$25,000. Overall, the luncheon raised nearly \$170,000 to support Holy Family's education and social service programs.



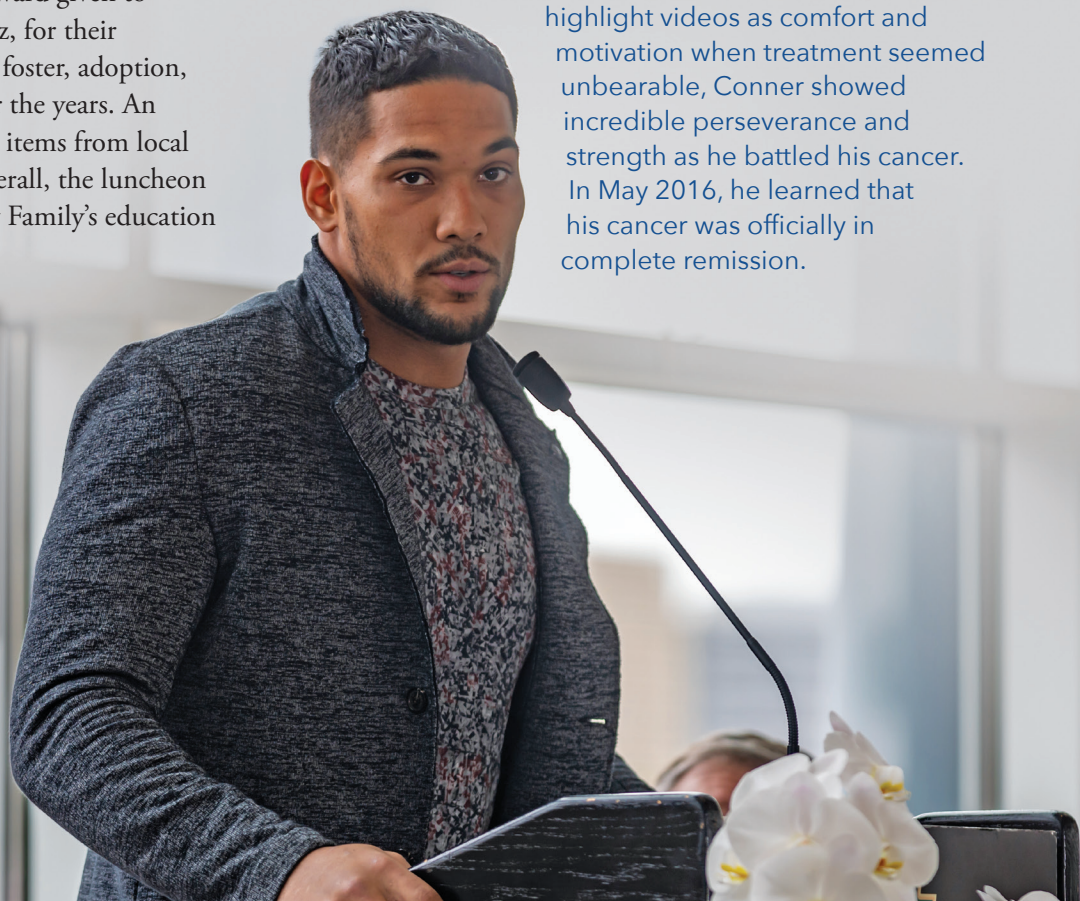
Local speed-painter, **Cody Sabol**, creates unique portrait of James Conner.



**Tiffany Seitz** was born dependent on cocaine as a result of maternal cocaine usage and was not expected to live past two weeks. She was removed from her birth parents' custody and placed in foster care through Holy Family Institute. In March 1998, at two and a half years old, having long surpassed doctors' expectations for her life

span, Tiffany was adopted by foster parents Leonard and Lori Seitz. In 2019, she was awarded the Miss Pennsylvania title and will go on to compete in the Miss America Pageant in December 2019.

In 2015, while a student at the University of Pittsburgh, **James Conner** was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma and spent six exhausting months in chemotherapy treatments. Using prayer and his own highlight videos as comfort and motivation when treatment seemed unbearable, Conner showed incredible perseverance and strength as he battled his cancer. In May 2016, he learned that his cancer was officially in complete remission.





# A Celebration of Students ‘Using Their SNAP’

IN LATE AUGUST, families, students and the staff of HFI’s Stop Now And Plan (SNAP®) program gathered at Fairhaven Park to celebrate the start of a new school year. This Family Fun Nite has become a beloved tradition for the children and families who enroll in the program. As staff raffled off board games and treats, students and their siblings enjoyed snacks, a sack race and a visit from the Armstrong Fire Department.

Designed specifically for young students, SNAP® is a behavioral therapy program that teaches kids to pause unhealthy behaviors, identify negative feelings and make smarter choices. These strategies help students avoid school suspensions — which can lead to interactions with the justice system — and successfully advance to the next grade.

“One of my students was a very shy kid with a stuttering problem,” said Draper, an experienced SNAP® counselor. “After using what he learned in SNAP®, his behavioral struggles have decreased. Now he shows a great ability to think positively, focus on his schoolwork, and make healthier choices.”

SNAP® counselors work directly in the classroom, listening carefully to teacher concerns and showing students how to interact with kindness and respect. Parents, teachers and students collaborate to find a solution that works for everyone. Currently operating in six schools and three districts, the SNAP® program hopes to spread its message of empowerment to more locations soon.



At the park, SNAP® counselor Ann remembered a student whose outbursts made it difficult for classmates to focus. “We listened to her concerns, developed plans that worked for her, and taught her ways to calm down when she started to become upset,” she shares. “Soon, her teacher noticed an improvement in her classroom behavior. The biggest difference I noticed when I next walked into her classroom was the smile on her face!”

The parents and grandparents gathered at the park were also happy to share how the program had helped their families.

“I’m so thankful for SNAP®,” shared one parent. “The people made this experience fun, informative and stress-free. It’s a safe environment to grow and learn. It has helped me improve my self-awareness and focus around areas where we could both be doing things differently.”

Said another parent, “This program has been amazing for [my son]. It’s helped him get control of himself and do better in class. He ‘uses his SNAP®’ a lot, even when he’s at home or with friends.” When students share SNAP® with their friends and siblings, they achieve the program’s ultimate goal: supporting not only the individual, but also the family, school and community.



# NAZARETH School of the Future! PREP

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Nazareth Prep was recognized by the HundrED Spotlight on Pittsburgh Educational Innovation, an initiative that seeks to share new and inspiring changes in K12 education. In their submission, teachers and staff highlighted Nazareth Prep’s project-based learning curriculum and unique-to-this-region internship model, calling it a “school of the future.”

Nazareth Prep’s project-based learning focuses on the exploration of a variety of social justice issues and the application of real-world solutions to these problems. Students tackle difficult topics ranging from sexism to human trafficking to homelessness, receiving guidance from their teachers and feedback from faculty, administrators, community stakeholders, and each other before presenting their final projects at a year-end exhibition.

Nazareth Prep’s innovative curriculum also made the semi-finals in Pittsburgh Quarterly’s *Spring 2019 Pittsburgh Tomorrow Contest* as a suggestion to improve the future of the Pittsburgh region.

One team of ninth graders, whose project focused on homelessness, had originally planned to organize a fundraiser. After meeting with a professional directly involved in advocacy for people experiencing homelessness, however, they realized that their idea failed to address some of the community’s most basic and major needs, such as privacy and simple conveniences. The group went back to the drawing board and created a new project analyzing how tiny houses could be used to ameliorate homelessness.

Nazareth Prep’s unique and effective approach to learning continues to receive recognition. On October 14th, three Nazareth Prep teachers—Marlee Flaherty, Shannon Lafferty, and Emily Yowonske—were invited to present Nazareth Prep’s project-based learning model at the Three Rivers Educational Technology Conference (TRETc) hosted by the Pittsburgh Technology Council. We are so proud of our teachers for their continued leadership in this field!



## Year in Review

### Our Programs



#### IN HOMES

In-Home Family Services  
Family Focused Solution Based Services  
Visit Coaching  
Home-based Family Recovery



#### ON CAMPUS

Nazareth Prep  
International College Preparatory Program  
Journey of Hope



#### IN SCHOOLS

HFI Specialized Learning School  
Stop Now and Plan (SNAP®)  
Student Assistance Program



#### IN THE COMMUNITY

Drug and Alcohol Counseling (SHORES)  
Energy Assistance Programs  
Mental Health Counseling  
Mental Health First Aid  
Parents and Children Together (PACT)

## Outcomes and Positive Community Impact



98%  
Family Focused Services - 98% of children remained in a family setting and 85% of families met their improvement goals.

87%  
Allegheny County In-Home - 87% of families achieved success benchmarks set to measure improved care of their children.



169  
Number of children in the Journey of Hope program safely placed with sponsors.



77%  
Specialized Learning School - 77% of students transferred to an appropriate school setting after discharge (up 60% from previous year).



76%  
SNAP Program - 76% of children demonstrated improved behavior in the classroom.



\$613,318  
Dollar Energy Program (Administered by CAP) - HFI helped families obtain a total of \$613,318 in Dollar Energy grants toward energy bills.



\$26,888  
ALCOSAN Assistance Program - HFI helped families obtain a total of \$26,888 toward their water bills.

Total Individuals and Families Served: 41,700