



NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT: **St. Patrick's Center**

» *"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home... where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination." —Eleanor Roosevelt*

St. Patrick's Center is one of those small places close to home that aims to serve the more complex needs of its community. To its staff and volunteers, providing basic physical necessities like food, shelter and clothing is simply not enough. Love, respect, inclusion and kindness accompany all their charitable transactions, and in doing so, they care for the whole person or family. This holistic approach enables them to support the people of

Wilmington, Delaware in positive and meaningful ways.

In 1971, St. Patrick's Center was founded as a senior center after the closing of St. Patrick's School. They provide midday meals for seniors, aged 60 and older, both onsite and through delivery service, serving more than 10,000 meals each year, in cooperation with City Fare, a meal distribution program of Saint Anthony's Community Center. They help the Food Bank of Delaware in delivering over 2,500 USDA food boxes through the federal Commodity Supplemental Food Program for Seniors. Additionally, they provide over 20,000 trips each year that enable seniors and others to receive health care, go grocery shopping

and participate in other activities that might otherwise be inaccessible due to disability or lack of transportation.

The organization has since grown and evolved to care for a diverse range of needs in its community, from emergency food supplies and fresh produce sharing to shelter and home-like amenities and a clothing bank. Their low-cost breakfast program serves over 14,000 people throughout the year and they provide the space for group activities like Bible studies and game nights. St. Patrick's also offers pharmacy services for those who need co-pay assistance, with help from Greenhill Pharmacy, and social work services that address a variety of challenging situations.

Did you know...

Most Delawareans are familiar with the St. Patrick's Day Society Communion Breakfast on St. Patrick's Day, a celebration of Irish culture and the organization's main fundraising event.

But you might not know that:

- The daily meals program serves over 100 seniors a day
- The morning breakfast program is open to all and feeds over 50 people daily.
- The Center provides fresh produce twice a week to over 800 individuals per month.
- It provides emergency food to over 1,300 households monthly.
- The Center maintains a Clothing Closet for those in need.
- Its Homeless Respite program is open every day and provides showers, laundry, storage and computer.
- A partnership with Christiana Care provides access to social workers, resulting in over 250 appointments per month, and has reduced recidivism at the Wilmington Hospital ER by 10%.
- Through a partnership with Greenhill Pharmacy, the Center offers a free prescription service for qualified clients.
- Through National Able, the Center has a Senior Employment program.
- The St. Patrick's Center provides all its services with a full-time staff of four people.

Chairman's Message

BY GARY STOCKBRIDGE

»» As business leaders, we all understand the importance of a strong workforce and how crucial early development is for an individual's success in our ever-changing economy. To continue to nurture these characteristics here in Delaware, the Chamber continues to strengthen its partnership with Delaware Pathways and we encourage our members and the broader business community to look for opportunities to get involved.

Delaware Pathways works to ensure all youth are given the opportunity to fulfill their educational goals and career aspirations. Engagement from the Delaware business community is crucial to the program's success and feedback from businesses is vital to identifying the skills and educational requirements needed for various roles in industries, such as biomedical sciences, computer science, energy, finance, and many others that are prominent in Delaware.

At Delmarva Power, we have spent years working through Delaware Pathways to partner with selected schools around Wilmington to enhance their curriculums. With their support, we've built amazing relationships with our partner schools that have allowed us to create job shadowing, internships, co-op experiences, as well as mentoring and coaching opportunities. We have found that meeting with these schools on a regular basis and providing seed funding has helped us all understand the value in creating effective, work-based learning experiences for students and our communities.

One of the Delaware Pathways' key partners, the Delaware Technical

Community College's Office of Work-Based Learning (OWBL), has been

invaluable in our effort. Since its inception in 2017, OWBL's mission has been to increase employer engagement and build a network of work-based learning opportunities for students in grades seven through the first two years of college. Together, we've seen firsthand how work-based learning not only exposes students to a potential career and strengthens their occupational knowledge, it also helps illustrate the relationship between education and training, fostering an appreciation of how academic concepts are applied in a real-world setting.

In the coming year, Delmarva Power has plans to partner with other companies to build on our relationships with our partner schools and make these experiences even more beneficial for educators and students. While I recognize that every business has different levels of resources to devote to this effort, I strongly encourage all Delaware business leaders to take the initiative to learn where their workforce is heading and how you can act now to prepare your future employees. Whether it's through OWBL or the many community-based organizations, such as Junior Achievement, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, FAME or United Way, we all have resources available to us to deliver meaningful experiences to youth in need of assistance, and it's all of our responsibility to lay the foundation for Delaware's future workforce.

