

Beginning Eviction Prevention Pilot Program for HACP Family Communities

In the fall of 2019 Ursuline Support Services initiated the Eviction Prevention Pilot (EPP) in collaboration with the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP). The pilot began at the Homewood North family community with approximately 120 residents. Audrey Lee, a Service Coordinator with our Supportive Living Enhancement Program (SLEP), stepped into the EPP Coordinator position and worked closely with the HACP staff and other community resource partners to work toward the prevention of evictions due mostly to financial challenges.



**Ursuline's Eviction Prevention Program (EPP) team (from L to R):
Gwen Harris, Karla Barham, Cheryl Williams, and Audrey Lee.**

One of the first steps in the pilot was to connect residents to resources for rental assistance. As we soon discovered, quite a few residents owed large outstanding rental amounts for various reasons: loss/lack of income; physical/mental health issues; lack of adequate budgeting skills; drug/alcohol addiction; as well as domestic violence, just to name a few.

Starting with the monthly Profile of Accounts (POA) from the housing manager (a listing of all the residents in the community, their current rental amount, and any delinquent balance), the EPP Coordinator began familiarizing herself with HACP's process as well as individual residents. Initially, there was concern about how the residents would receive EPP, since this was a new program, and the coordinator represented yet another person they would have to work with.

We soon discovered that such concerns were unfounded because the residents were very receptive to the support being offered.

The EPP Coordinator began to meet with each resident who was delinquent in paying their rent, assessing their needs, along with accessing the resources that best addressed those needs. The EPP Coordinator soon discovered that many residents who were employed found themselves at a disadvantage because their rent increased. Each rise in income caused their rent amount to increase to more than what they were accustomed to paying. Their limited budgeting skills prevented them from making the necessary adjustments for their increased rent each month. In one example, a couple's rent increased a total of nearly \$900 dollars along with their income.

EPP cont. from Page 1

While they cleared a little over \$1,700 a month, they found themselves with a monthly deficit when rent, car payment, auto insurance, food and other essentials were considered. In this case, the coordinator suggested the residents explore changing car Insurance companies. Together they discovered another insurance agency with lower rates. The couple was surprised and grateful how such a simple change made a difference in their ability to make ends meet at the end of each month.

In another effort to bring additional resources and skill development to the impacted residents, Ursuline's EPP collaborated with HACP'S Resident Self-Sufficiency (RSS) program and invited PNC Bank to facilitate two budgeting workshops. The workshops assisted residents in navigating their finances more efficiently. All the residents who participated appreciated the information they received.

In March of 2020, the advent of the COVID pandemic was thrust upon us thus presenting a new challenge to the EPP effort. The coordinator was no longer allowed to meet with residents face to face and, as a result, EPP was challenged to be creative by assisting with applications for community rental assistance supports by way of phone. EPP began conducting three-way calls between impacted residents and 211, Urban League, and/or Operation Better Block to help the resident access some of the many resources that were still available. Although these limitations proved challenging, the Homewood North residents were still able to obtain the assistance through EPP that they needed during that time.

As a result of the success of the EPP pilot at Homewood North, even in the midst of the COVID pandemic, HACP asked Ursuline to transition the pilot into a contracted program and add the Bedford

Dwellings family community in the Hill District to the effort beginning in the fall of 2020, and then again expand the program to the Northside family communities of Northview Heights and Allegheny Dwellings in the fall of 2021.

Much of the effort in all four of these communities during the pandemic years has been to connect residents to the federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

Earlier this year, HACP recognized Ursuline and its other community partners for helping them bring more than \$1 million in ERAP funds into the community in support of HACP disadvantaged residents.

Finally, this effort has evolved this past spring of 2022 with the addition of a coordinator to work exclusively with Emergency Housing Choice Voucher (HCV, Section 8) referrals received through the Allegheny County Department of Human Services' programs for victims of Homelessness, Domestic Violence, and Sex Trafficking. Once again, EPP Coordinator Audrey Lee has stepped forward to help USS transition into this new collaborative effort with HACP.

Ursuline is so proud of our efforts by this strong group of dedicated professionals who is reaching some of our most vulnerable neighbors during a period of unprecedented challenge facing all of us. We look forward to growing this relationship with HACP and those we serve to continue to make a difference in the lives of those who need USS most!



Ursuline
Support Services
Help navigating life's transitions

LEADERSHIP STAFF

Anthony J. Turo, MPA
Executive Director

John A. Daub, MBA
Director, Finance & Operations

Melissa Osman
Director, Protective Services

Michelle Smart, MS, NPM
Director, Guardianship & *OnYourBehalf* Services

Karen Miller Tobin, MEd
Director, Independence Support Services



40 Year History at the “Heart” of Ursuline

If you have been anywhere around Ursuline Support Services over the past couple of years, you have heard me say many times that we are celebrating 40 years of service to Pittsburgh and surrounding communities! This “Ruby” anniversary, marks 40-plus years in operation since, in the fall of 1981, the original Ursuline “Center” opened for business as a multi-service community center in the old Winebiddle Avenue manse that housed the Ursuline Academy. For nearly 100 years prior to that, generations of Ursuline Sisters out of Louisville, Kentucky educated and molded class after class of “refined young ladies” right here in the Friendship neighborhood of Pittsburgh, where our agency first got its start.

Responding to a community needs survey, conducted by the founding Executive Director Sr. Elaine Eckert, OSU, the first Center provided not only services to our aging neighbors, but to families and children as well through childcare, job-training, and even a “Friendship House” for the families of patients being cared for at nearby St. Francis Hospital. In the 1990’s, the Ursuline Sisters sold the old Academy building to a private developer and moved the agency to a space on Baum Boulevard. At the same time, they called the remainder of their Sisters home to Louisville and turned the agency over to the local community simultaneously changing its name to Ursuline “Services.”

Over the years, the agency’s concentration of services gradually focused more fully on those for elderly neighbors aging in place through the provision of care management and protective services. At the same time, the agency was established as a sole-source provider of guardianship services for seniors under an agreement with the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging. As a result, the agency updated its name to Ursuline “Senior” Services in 2005 to reflect its more specific service to our older neighbors.

In 2012, after the acquisition and operation of the Good Grief Center for several years, the agency finally settled on the name Ursuline “Support” Services to better communicate the comprehensive nature of the services we provide, those that “help navigate life’s

transitions,” in all the many forms such changes can take. The agency’s staff completed its move to the former grief center location on Murray Avenue in Squirrel Hill in 2017, where we remain today.

Through all the twists and turns of our forty-year history, one thing has endured: the compassionate care provided by those who have worked with USS for the benefit of our aging, disabled, and disadvantaged neighbors--what we call *The Ursuline Way*. Our goal remains to treat all those we meet with dignity, respect, trust, and (most especially) kindness. At Ursuline, we never turn anyone away who requests help—even if all we can offer is an appropriate referral for a service we may not provide.

Sr. Rita Joseph Jarrell, OSU (the last principal to serve the Ursuline Academy of Pittsburgh when it graduated its last class in 1981) coined the phrase “the Coeur d’Ursuline” (the “Heart” of Ursuline), in commemoration of the legacy the Academy has left in the community-benefit organization Ursuline Support Services has become. And she never falters in reminding her remaining “refined young ladies” that the heart of their alma mater still beats in the important work Ursuline continues to provide across this community every day!



God bless,

Tony Turo

Ursuline Executive Director Tony Turo and Sr. Rita Joseph Jarrell

When the Ursuline Academy holds its biennial reunion this October, we will be celebrating the Coeur d’Ursuline with a special “Homecoming 40th Anniversary Reception” at the site of the old Ursuline Academy and home of the original Ursuline “Center” (currently the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh).

We invite the Ursuline Academy alumni, our friends and supporters, staff, board members, and volunteers (past and present) to join USS for this special recognition event on Friday, October 21, 2022, beginning at 5:30 p.m. (See the back cover of this issue for more information.)

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

Annual FINANCIAL Report*

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

INCOME

Public Guardianship*	\$510,000
Protective Services*	485,000
Administrative/Fundraising**	409,528
Private Guardianship	
Fee for Service	190,520
Medical Assistance Fees	67,255
Service Coordination	
SLEP***	151,230
Eviction Prevention Program***	121,052
Glen Hazel RAD	14,000
Independence Support Programs	
Money Management Program*	37,821
Representative Payee Program	34,907
TOTAL	\$2,021,313

EXPENSES

Public Guardianship*	\$ 510,000
Protective Services*	485,003
Administrative/Fundraising**	308,459
Private Guardianship	
Fee for Service	274,087
Service Coordination	
SLEP***	151,230
Eviction Prevention Program***	121,054
Glen Hazel RAD	13,896
Independence Support Programs	
Money Management Program*	37,821
Representative Payee Program	35,581
TOTAL	\$1,937,131

* Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging programs

** \$126,799 of Administration income & expense is included in the contract amounts of the AAA & HACP programs. \$34,150 of Administrative income & expense is included in the remaining program budgets.

*** Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh programs (HACP)

Annual PROGRAM Report

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

CORE PROGRAMS

Guardianship	144
	Wards
Allegheny Public Guardianship	59 Wards
(Includes Kane & Protective Services)	19 gained, 9 passed away
Fee-for-Service Guardianship	34 Wards
(Includes Trust Services)	34 gained, 2 passed away
Out of County	51 Wards
(Includes Cambria Care Center)	9 gained, 19 passed away
Protective Services.....	1,047
	Reports of Need

INDEPENDENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

Service Coordination	786
	Residents Served*
<i>* limited contacts due to COVID-19</i>	
Eviction Prevention Program (EPP)	575
	Residents Served
Checks & Balance	119
	Participants
Representative Payee – 112 Participants	(66 active, 33 pending, 13 closed)
Volunteer Bill Pay – 7 Participants	

OTHER SERVICES

Volunteers	25
	Volunteers
Administrative Volunteers – 2	
Community Volunteer Bill Payers – 5	
Board of Directors – 18	



From the Board Chair

I am excited about the chance to serve as Ursuline Support Services' Board Chair and I see a wonderful opportunity for Ursuline to support even more people in Western Pennsylvania. I am also grateful for all of the hard work put in by our Executive Director Tony Turo and his leadership team, the Board of Directors, and all of the community supporters/stakeholders who have helped to get us to the place we are today. From this strong base of continued success, Ursuline can continue to serve now and for years to come.

– Bob O'Connor

From the Past Board Chair

I assumed the role of Ursuline Support Services (USS) Board Chair shortly after returning home from an Army deployment to Kosovo in 2017. As a member of the Army National Guard for over 23 years, my professional career has always been a blend of military service and my civilian vocation. It didn't take me long to apply some concepts that I had recently learned from the Army's Command and General's Staff College to the Board's most current task, update USS's vision statement. It was as appropriate a task a new Board Chair could ask for. It had been some years since its content was re-examined and updated.

While a vision statement is usually one or two sentences, the concepts underpin the fundamental nature of who the organization is and what it does. I learned from the Army that the vision process begins with the "What" and "Why," a picture of the future framed by a value-based purpose. Then, leaders conduct an initial assessment of the organization and identify goals that creates a path to drive behavior, change, and motivation ("How"). Finally, leaders create a strategy to navigate the path and implement the vision for leading change. The board discussed at length the ideas and words that should be used to describe our vision. Words that continually resurfaced where, caring, supportive,

guardian, personalized, and adapting. Over the last four years we have put those words into action by continually striving to enable and uphold USS's vision. During this time the board has made impactful decisions that included the closure of the Good Grief Center, recruiting new board members, fulfilling PANO requirements, steps towards eliminating USS's reliance on the line of credit, navigating the COVID pandemic, and structuring a fee for service business model that aligns with USS strategic objectives as outlined in our HillCap Grant award.

As I prepare to deploy yet again with the Army, I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve on the USS board of directors as its Past Chair and proud of what has been accomplished during my time as Board Chair. While challenges undoubtedly lie ahead, I am confident that USS is expertly poised to address them in a way that exemplifies USS's vision:

Ursuline Support Services aspires to become Southwestern Pennsylvania's leading provider of services that support life's challenging transitions. In order to add hope, respect, and compassion to our region's aging and other vulnerable individuals in need, we offer professional and personalized care focused on protection and enhanced quality of life.

Thank you, Ursuline Support Services leadership and staff, for all that you do. It has been an honor.

Hooah!

– Adam Zihar



Former USS Board Chair Adam Zihar is serving as senior legal advisor to the Iraq Counter Terrorism Service (CTS), in its Special Forces unit. Thank you for your service, Adam!



Ursuline Support Services

Board of Directors 2021-23



Since 2014

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Executive Director, General Manager
Aetna

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Program Manager, Customer Alignment
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CRU North America, Inc.

Adam Zihar, JD, *Board Past Chair*
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PNC Private Bank

Anthony J. Turo, MPA (*Non-Voting*)
Executive Director
Ursuline Support Services

DIRECTORS

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Innovation Manager
Covestro, LLC

Randy Detweiler
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PALS (People Able to Lend Support)
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American Eagle Outfitters

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University of Pittsburgh
Senior Clinical Advisor, UPMC

Katherine Leech Vollen, Esq.
Founding Partner
Vollen, Anderson & Long, LLC

Amanda Wells
Customer Care Communications Analyst
American Eagle Outfitters

Members rotating off the Board of Directors:

Tony Johnson

Katie Le (*left the board during 2021*)

Katie Vollen (*completed two terms as Board Secretary as of June 30, 2022*)

Directors Emeriti

Jean Robinson, Community Volunteer, Deceased, January 2021

Barbara K. Shore, Ph.D., *Retired*, University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, Deceased, October 2018

Guy Tumolo, *Retired*, Controller's Office, Allegheny County

Allegheny County Protective Services Enhances Staffing to Better Protect Senior Neighbors

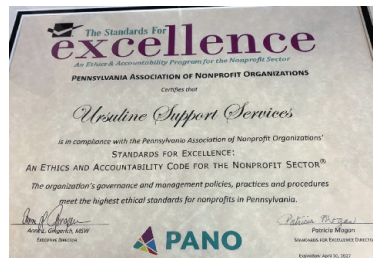
Over the past year, Ursuline has been working closely with the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging (AC/AAA) on an effort to improve the county's Older Adult Protective Services. In conjunction with the AAA and the two other contracted providers, Eastern Area Adult Services and LifeSpan, our county Protective Services units have been participating in intensive strategy sessions to address everything from appropriate staffing of each unit to more efficient processing of Reports of Need (RONs) by each individual Protective Services Investigator (PSI).

Much of the work since the beginning of this calendar year has been on the expansion of our Protective Services program across the county with the addition of much-needed resources made available through the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. The positive impact on our agency, and on each of our partner providers, will be the doubling of the size of our current Protective Services program county-wide. Once all the positions in question are onboarded, before the end of this year, we are hopeful that our PSIs will be in a better position to expedite the response to and investigation of each new RON referral. Each case can then be expedited so that any imminent risk a senior citizen may be facing can be ameliorated in a positive, efficient, and successful manner.

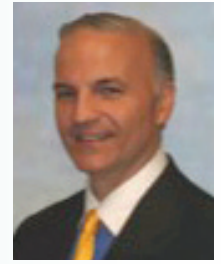
If you suspect elder abuse in any form—self-neglect; caregiver neglect; financial exploitation; physical abuse; and/or sexual abuse—please call the Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-490-8505. All calls are strictly confidential.

PANO Re-Accreditation

After more than a year-long process, Ursuline Support Services was informed in June of this year that we had satisfactorily completed all the requirements for our application for re-accreditation under the national Standards for Excellence, through the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations (PANO). First accredited in 2009, this re-accreditation represents the fourth time Ursuline has received this prestigious recognition. Special thanks go out to Board member Jen Martchek for her tireless efforts as PANO Liaison to support the agency's leadership in completing our application successfully!



Welcome Bob Marbella



In July, Ursuline Support Services' *OnYourBehalf* program had the pleasure of welcoming Bob Marbella to its team as our new Business Development Specialist. Bob joins USS with extensive experience in the healthcare industry, along with 20+ years of award-winning sales experience in the hospital, pharmaceutical, and health insurance industries, with a demonstrated record of achievement.

Bob's mission will be to develop and expand necessary relationships with various channel markets to spread the word about new fee-for-service offerings Ursuline now can provide to all community members who may need them, namely: Power of Attorney & Guardianship; Financial Support Services; and Family Guardian Support. Bob is competent in SalesForce, the new CRM the agency is integrating into this project, as well as developing sales plans and facilitating effective communications, all necessary to the success of our *OnYourBehalf* business plan.

If you have questions about our *OnYourBehalf* service offerings, feel free to contact Bob directly at rmarbella@ursulinesupport.org or check out our website at www.UrsulineOnYourBehalf.org.

Thank you to our 2022 Highmark "Walk for a Healthy Community" Sponsors!



Pipitonegroup

INTEGRATE THINKING



Ursuline Support Services

Help navigating life's transitions

Administrative Center
2717 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Phone: 412-224-4700
FAX: 412-224-4717
Toll Free: 1-888-474-3388
ursulinesupportservices.org

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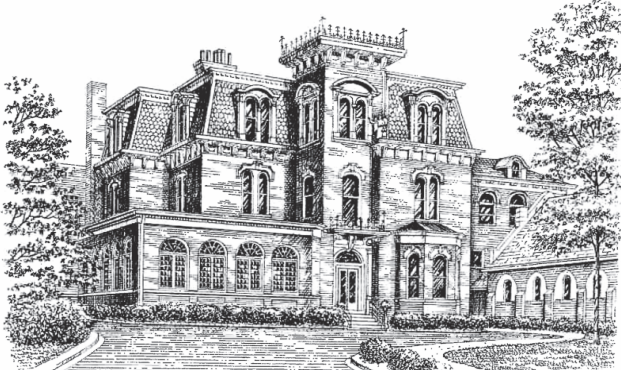
SAVE THE DATE!

October 21-22, 2022

*Ursuline Support Services
40th Anniversary "Homecoming" Reception*

In conjunction with the Ursuline Academy Reunion Weekend in 2022, Ursuline Support Services will be marking our 40th Anniversary. We will be hosting a reception **Friday evening, October 21, 2022**, for friends of Ursuline Support Services and alumni of the Ursuline Academy of Pittsburgh. Please save the date and plan to be with USS for this special evening!

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh
(former Ursuline Academy and original agency headquarters)
201 S. Winebiddle Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224
5:30-7:30 p.m.



Ursuline Academy Pittsburgh

1894 - 1981

All Class Reunion Coeur d'Ursuline



Ursuline Support Services helps individuals experiencing challenges posed by life's transitions, inspiring hope through protection, education, and advocacy.

United Way Donor Designation Code: 281



Ursuline Support Services was awarded this Seal of Excellence by the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations (PANO), under the Standards for Excellence.