



A publication of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

*Serving Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield,
East Liberty, and Lawrenceville since 1975*

**‘Pints for Pickets’
fundraiser to benefit
striking workers**

By Alan Guenther

Bulletin contributor, BGC Board Member

Bloomfield – After living in France, Panama, Armenia, Japan, and New Zealand, Sarah Moe returned to the United States with a headful of questions.

In almost every country, workers had better benefits than their American counterparts. So why, Moe wondered, do American workers accept the raw deal they get from their bosses?

In many American workplaces, employees lose money, or even their jobs, if they stay home when they are sick. An unexpected hospital bill can burden families with crushing debt.

“Why does someone making minimum wage [seemingly] get taxed more than

See **Strike Fund** | page 2



ABOVE: Community members discuss the pending arrival of Mary’s Bar (5128 Penn Ave.) in Garfield. The bar’s owner is now seeking city approval to operate Mary’s as a live performance venue. Learn more about the Oct. 23 meeting on page 8. Photo by Alan Guenther.



ABOVE: (left to right) Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council CEO Patrick Fisher, ELDI Deputy Director Skip Schwab, President of the Rooney Sports & Entertainment Group Tom Rooney, and ULEAD Creative Strategist Christine McCray-Bethea take a site tour of Sts. Peter & Paul Church in Larimer. Read about the church’s redevelopment at right.

**Mother-daughter duo helps ELDI shape
future of Sts. Peter & Paul Church**

By Elizabeth Sensky East Liberty Development, Inc.

Larimer - The ongoing journey to redevelop the long-vacant Sts. Peter & Paul Church is full of highs and lows.

With each step, East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI) gets closer to bringing an architectural gem and community landmark back online for productive use.

One of ELDI’s early partners in this project was the mother-daughter duo, Brigitte Bethea and Christine McCray-Bethea, behind the Pittsburgh-based leadership consultancy ULEAD.

Back in 2018, they led an engagement

process to help ELDI understand the community’s hopes for the church site.

The process centered on a series of walk-and-talk tours, and an “Arts Town Hall” where community members and artists shared ideas for how they would like to see the site re-envisioned.

It became clear that local stakeholders wanted a multi-purpose, arts and event space, the likes of which ELDI is now working to bring to fruition with the help of the Rooney Sports & Entertainment Group.

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billionaires?” Moe asked a reporter from *The Bulletin*. “Why aren’t [workers with children] offered childcare or paid family leave? Why hasn’t the federal minimum wage been raised since 2009? And why is healthcare still so tied to employment?”

These injustices, Moe maintains, are why she started a nonprofit group called “Strike For Our Rights” in June 2022.

“We support and promote striking as a means of advocating for equity, justice, and systemic change with the eventual goal being a national general strike,” she said. “I want folks to know we are supporting striking workers now and helping those folks now because we know that the more normalized and utilized striking becomes, the more folks will feel empowered to join in a general strike.”

Moe, who moved to Garfield from Portland, Oregon, four months ago, and her group are hosting a fundraiser dubbed “Pints for Pickets” on Monday, Nov. 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Trace Brewing Co. (4312 Main St.) in Bloomfield.

Strike For Our Rights will receive \$1 from every drink served that night.

The money will go straight to the group’s

strike fund. The more customers drink, the more local striking workers benefit, so responsible debauchery is definitely encouraged.

“People have felt discontent and helplessness in making change,” Moe said. “We’ve voted. We’ve protested. And nothing seems to change. And what we do know works is striking.”

An attorney and a software engineer, Moe is the volunteer executive director and founder of Strike For Our Rights. Asked how she came up with the idea, she said she was living in Los Angeles and realized she would never be able to pay rent and pay her student loans.

So, she decided she would be a house-sitter, living in peoples’ homes all over the world. Instead of paying rent, she would travel the world and get paid to do it.

What she saw opened her eyes. In France, especially, workers who strike can get their back pay when they return from a strike. In most cases, they can’t be fired for walking off the job. The long-term goal is to get the same protections for workers in America, Moe said.

According to Jen Christopher, the board



ABOVE: Sarah Moe founded the nonprofit ‘Strike For Our Rights’ group to generate support for a national, general strike. Her organization will host a fundraiser at Bloomfield’s Trace Brewing on Monday, Nov. 13. Photo by Alan Guenther.

chair of the nonprofit group, Strike For Our Rights has about 100 volunteers working in 10 states. Locally, Strike For Our Rights has provided water and other support for the workers at the *Post-Gazette*, who have been on strike for more than a year.

Organizers acknowledge they have a long way to go. When interviewed last month at Constellation Coffee on Penn Avenue, Moe said the group had recently paid out benefits to local strikers, leaving \$104.06 in the Strike For Our Rights bank account.

Eventually, as the group works toward growing its membership and visibility, the goal is to get 11 million American workers to participate in a general strike. That represents about 3.5% of the workforce, a figure that has been effective in other countries. There are many hurdles to overcome.

Unions will have to come together. Workers, students, artists, entrepreneurs, and people from all walks of life will have to support each other and believe in a shared future, Moe says.

Ultimately, the group is trying to change and reform capitalist traditions that have been entrenched for generations.

That’s a tall order. Meanwhile, every drink at Trace on Nov. 13 will yield \$1 to help local striking workers. The Syrian Aroma food cart will also be on hand at the fundraiser, donating 10% of its sales that day to the strike fund.

“Show up and show some solidarity with your local striking workers,” Moe said. “The money is going to be distributed as soon as it hits our strike fund.”

Reach Alan Guenther at guenthera30@gmail.com. ♦

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BGC luncheon: meet our keynote speaker, 'Aggie Award' winners

A Message from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - In advance of the annual Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) luncheon on Friday, Nov. 3, we'd like to spotlight our "Aggie Award" winners and their contributions to Penn Avenue's arts scene. The luncheon's keynote speaker, La'Tasha D. Mayes, also deserves some recognition for her work bridging the metaphorical gap between Garfield and Harrisburg.

La'Tasha D. Mayes is a trailblazer in Pennsylvania politics: she was elected in 2022 as the first woman to represent House District 24, which includes Garfield and the Penn Ave. Arts & Commercial District. She is also the first openly lesbian member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Originally from West Philadelphia, Mayes made Pittsburgh her home in 1999, where she pursued higher education and emerged as a dedicated community leader in the region.

Throughout her career, Mayes has been a force for positive change, notably as the founder of New Voices for Reproductive Justice, where she served as president & CEO for 18 years. Her tireless advocacy and focus on improving the health and well-being of marginalized communities, particularly Black women, femmes, girls, and gender-expansive individuals, have earned her national attention and a statewide reputation.

Mayes' commitment to public service extends to various governmental and community roles, including her service on the Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs under Gov. Tom Wolf - and her groundbreaking role as the inaugural Vice Chair of the Allegheny County Human Relations Commission, where she actively expanded civil rights protections for LGBTQIA+ residents.

Mayes has remained a steadfast champion of minority, women, and disadvantaged business enterprises (MWDBE) at both the state and local government levels.

Her passion for justice and advocacy was instilled at a young age by her mother's example as a single mom, Army veteran, and union member. La'Tasha D. Mayes' remarkable journey in public service continues to inspire meaningful change and empowerment in Pennsylvania.

the
Bulletin

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since 1975

with the mission of reporting on issues affecting underserved communities and facilitating local residents' exchange of ideas.

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Board Meetings are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month; these monthly meetings are open to the public. For more details, email Pam@Bloomfield-Garfield.org.

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Bloomfield-Garfield.org

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Sheila Ali - Igniting Creative Minds at the Irma Freeman Center

For 15 years, Sheila Ali has pioneered the Irma Freeman Center for Imagination, a thriving artistic hub on Penn Avenue that provides opportunities for diverse talents to collaborate and showcase their work. Through exhibitions, performances, and workshops, the center empowers artists to explore diverse forms of expression and address social issues, fostering a nurturing environment for growth.

ANQWENIQUE - A Versatile Vocalist and Advocate for Arts Education

ANQWENIQUE, a highly accomplished Pittsburgh native, has a profound impact on the avenue's vibrant arts ecosystem through her involvement with BOOM Concepts. She supports the community, connects her neighbors with collaborative opportunities, and champions arts education for emerging artists - while also showcasing her exceptional vocal talents performing opera, classical, jazz, and soul music.

Heather McElwee - 20 Years of Transformative Leadership at the PGH Glass Center

Heather McElwee's leadership as the Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) for over 20 years has attracted thousands of visitors and students annually to experience the art of glassmaking in its hot and cold shops. McElwee's innovative programming, along with the center's ongoing \$15 million expansion project, ensures that PGC will continue influencing the growing Penn Ave. Arts & Commercial District for years to come.

janera solomon: Illuminating the Arts and Empowering Community

janera solomon's visionary dedication to community engagement has helped transform the avenue's arts community. As the founding Executive Director of the Kelly Strayhorn Theater, she connected East Liberty residents with the arts, empowering local artists through residencies and programs for a decade. Her impact extends beyond the theater, as evidenced by her role in opening the Fieldwork contemporary art gallery, further enriching the cultural landscape of the city's East End. ♦



The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Board of Directors
cordially invites you to the

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Keynote Speaker

La'Tasha D. Mayes, PA State Representative

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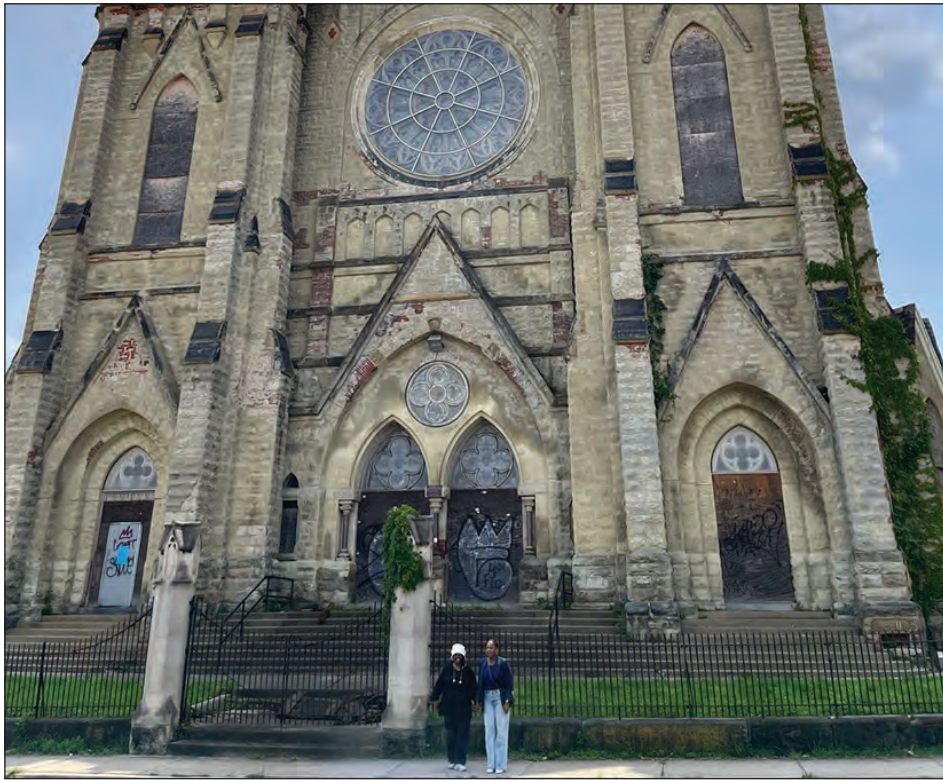
janera solomon
Writer
Cultural Strategist

ULEAD continued from page 1

This time around, ULEAD is building on its previous work and engaging with local arts and cultural organizations to better understand how this space, as well as the proposed attached “black box theater,” could best be utilized and managed. The duo will also help ELDI develop an effective request for proposals (RFP) to find an organization that can facilitate operations at the church.

Now that the project is underway, ELDI recently caught up with Brigitte and Christine to hear more about their approach, as well as their connection to the East Liberty neighborhood. [The following conversation has been edited for space. Read the full transcript at eastliberty.org.]

BELOW: Christine McCray-Bethea (left) and Brigitte Bethea (right), the mother-daughter duo behind ULEAD, a consultancy group leading arts and cultural engagement for the Sts. Peter & Paul Church project. Photo courtesy of ELDI.



ELDI: What is ULEAD's origin story?

Brigitte: “ULEAD’s story starts with my military background. I was in the Army for around eight years as a military intelligence officer. In that role, I spent a lot of time being very observant, critical, and interested in leadership - how people motivated other people, how people built strong teams, how folks felt connected to mission, vision, goals, etc. I grew a love for, and an interest in, leadership and building community capacity.

“When I left the army in 2012, I knew I wanted to go to grad school, and I got accepted to Georgetown’s Master’s in Leadership program, which is housed in the McDonough School of Business. The program had an interesting marriage between what I loved around leadership and the business aspect of it. As I was going through my studies, I decided that I wanted to focus my efforts on Pittsburgh and the organizations and initiatives that were creating positive outcomes. I would go back and forth from D.C. to Pittsburgh to interview people in local organizations or sit in on talks. I decided in those moments—that was around 2014—that I wanted to start a business focused on building leadership capacity throughout diverse communities, and that I wanted to do this work in Pittsburgh. At the end of the program, we had a chance to create either a regular thesis or a business plan. I wrote a business plan, and I focused on building leadership capacity in Pittsburgh. The plan won the award for best project in my cohort. I thought it was really cool that a lot of people connected to something very local in a whole other place and space.”

ELDI: How did you start working with your mother, Christine McCray-Bethea?

Brigitte: “She came on in 2018 during the first Sts. Peter & Paul engagement process. I always say we are two sides of the same house. I’m the CEO and lead strategist of the company and she’s my creative strategist. Oftentimes, we find ourselves in between arts and cultural outreach and bridge building/liasing. My mother is an artist/arts admin-

- continued on page 15 -

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URA program assists Garfield residents with critical home repairs

By Carlee Benhart Kukula Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - Since August 2022, the BGC has worked with Garfield homeowners to help them take advantage of the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) to make needed repairs to their properties.

The HAP serves homeowners who earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) in Allegheny County, which starts at \$53,100 for households with one person.

To date, the BGC has provided technical assistance to two homeowners. Both had concerns about being able to address ongoing issues in their homes, given their incomes.

Each project was very different in scale - for one, it was repairing the concrete and stucco surfaces on her exterior foundation wall. For the other, it started with an attempt at correcting an uneven kitchen floor and the reframing of a back window.

But upon closer scrutiny, the scope had to be expanded to cover rebuilding the entire back half of her home. A previous contractor had constructed an addition onto the rear of the second home years ago, but failed to lay a proper foundation. This work occurred before the current homeowner inherited the house, and now the addition is separating from the rest of the house.

In each project, the BGC has helped the homeowners find a contractor who had the capabilities to do high-quality work. The URA has set standards for the specifications of the work to be done that are higher than what conventional lenders normally require. Some contractors prefer not to do URA-funded work because the paperwork load is indeed greater.

For homeowners who have applied for the HAP and are still waiting on their project to begin, finding a detail-oriented contractor can speed up approval of their projects by weeks. Contractors also must be able to start an HAP-funded project without any payment from the homeowner up-front, due to URA restrictions stemming from the use of public dollars. Generally, contractors have to be able to front up to the first \$10,000 in work before they can invoice for payment, which is often a struggle for smaller contractors.

Once the homeowner has a bid in hand from a reputable contractor, and that bid is then reviewed and accepted by the URA, a homeowner can usually move forward with construction without any further obstacles. On larger projects, a draw schedule is set up and contractors are then paid on the basis of the percentage of work completed.

However, in the case of the one homeowner with the expanded work scope, her project grew beyond the maximum amount for any HAP-funded renovation, which is limited

to a loan of up to \$30,000 and a grant of \$5,000. The BGC had to help the homeowner locate a matching source of funding to fill out the rest of the budget for the project.

The BGC found a willing lender in the recently-opened New Alliance Federal Credit Union in Lawrenceville. The homeowner has been approved for a loan by New Alliance that has a manageable monthly payment, and the hope now is that construction on her project can begin this month.

Time is of the essence, as the problems with the original addition are only growing worse and could be exacerbated by another freeze-thaw cycle if the project suffers any further delays.

We will keep readers posted on how this project unfolds. ♦

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Mary's

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ENEC achieves watershed moment: 100 job placements in 2023

By Paris Wright Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - Last month, we reached a remarkable milestone at the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC): helping over 100 individuals find jobs this year.

For the first time since 2017, the center (113 N. Pacific Ave.) was able to hit this century mark in less than a calendar year, with months to spare, and we couldn't be prouder.

This achievement stands as a testament to our unwavering dedication and comprehensive array of services - including workforce development, job-readiness training, career counseling, and job-placement assistance. I take immense pride, as ENEC Manager, in our mission as a project of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC).

For over a quarter of a century, our focus has been to enhance the economic and social vitality of our community, providing the people of Allegheny County with the essential tools to secure and excel in employment opportunities in the 21st-century job market.

Job-seekers are facing many challenges in an ever-changing landscape this year. While employment opportunities are available, breakdowns in communication, shifting employer needs, and other roadblocks tend to hinder progress.

Our unique, highly effective approach at the ENEC revolves around recognizing each individual's distinct needs and aspirations.

We provide personalized, one-on-one services with a strong emphasis on improving

our clients' resume-writing and interview skills.

We aim to not only help individuals secure employment, but also help them thrive in their respective work environments by maintaining a focus on workplace culture.

This year, more than 100 individuals found employment, across a range of industries, thanks to the ENEC. The employment center linked job-seekers with myriad opportunities - from food service & human services to education, health sciences, and retail.

Such diversity across sectors underlines our commitment to addressing our clients' unique requirements and helping them carve their own niche in the job market.

Looking ahead, my vision as the manager is clear. We remain committed to equipping individuals with the tools to succeed - not only in their professional lives, but also in their personal endeavors - and we celebrate their accomplishments.

We are resolute with this proven approach, and will continue helping people find new roads. Our accomplishment of assisting 100 individuals this year is not merely a numerical milestone.

It speaks to our unyielding commitment to the community - and underscores the power of individualized support, community dedication, and the promise of a brighter future for all. We look to provide a beacon of hope for all job-seekers in 2024. ♦

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Assemble helps 'Ramp Up' careers in arts education

By Alex Bastianini *Assemble*

Garfield - Assemble recently kicked off its "Ramp Up" fellowship, supported by Partner4Work's TANF funds (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and a Remake Learning Moonshot Grant.

The project is a paid program for teaching artists, aged 18 to 24 years, which runs from October 2023 to May 2024; rolling admissions will remain open until January 2024.

The Ramp Up fellowship is geared to individuals who are interested in working in youth development as teaching artists and informal educators.

In particular, the program is intended for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ youths to "ramp up" their personal, professional, and artistic success.

Fellows will be paid as part-time Assemble staff members during the fellowship period, earning a wage of \$16.24 per hour.

Tailored to suit fellows' individual needs and goals, the program includes in-person workshops, field trips, and virtual learning engagements.

The fellowship idea first came to light in 2019, as part of the Social Venture Partners (SVP) Full Circle program, and was advised by the talented expertise of Leigh Solomon Pugliano (entrepreneur, educator, and strategist).

The project was slated for a 2020 debut, but unforeseen [pandemic] events delayed the fellowship's premiere until the following year, when several gifts from the Remake Learning Moonshot Grant



ABOVE: Assemble's first cohort of arts educators piloted the 'Ramp Up' fellowship program last year. Photo courtesy of Assemble.

They were missed then. They're missed now.



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and the Arts Education Collective Action Grant helped make the initiative possible.

In collaboration with Legacy Arts Project, Assemble launched the Ramp Up fellowship in January 2022.

During the pilot year of the fellowship, Assemble brought on four full-time fellows. Through the end of September 2022, the fellows worked at Assemble and Legacy Arts Project, where they engaged in professional development, explored opportunities for teaching artists and informal educators, and enjoyed opportunities to hone their artistic practices.

Three of the four 2022 fellows completed the fellowship. Former fellows Azadiel Watts, Breydon Prioleau, and Veronica Green went on to work at youth education centers.

Watts works with the YCreator Space at the Homewood-Brushton YMCA, and Prioleau has since been expanding his art practices and selling his art work.

Meanwhile, longtime Assembler Veronica Green continues to grow with Assemble

in a full-time Coordinator role.

The Ramp Up fellowship aims to build a supportive environment to help the fellows attain their specific goals. Once they complete the program, Assemble continues helping fellows connect with potential employers to ramp up their careers.

Assemble is looking for 18-24 year olds who are interested in working with youths, and are excited to share their creativity.

The fellowship centers on young adults who identify as folks from oppressed identities such as BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities.

For this term, Assemble will host a total of 14 fellows: seven fellows living in the city, and seven hailing from all over Allegheny County. Assemble encourages Garfield residents who are interested in working at summer camps, afterschool programs, libraries, and more to apply.

Anyone interested in applying for the fellowship may contact the Ramp Up Coordinator, Emily Armstrong (emily@assemblepg.org), with any questions. ♦



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We promise not to overshare!

NeighborhoodFOCUS

Penn Avenue neighbors hear plans for ‘queer-friendly’ Mary’s Bar

By Alan Guenther *Bulletin contributor, BGC Board Member*

Penn Avenue - On Oct. 23, approximately 40 people attended a polite, generally supportive community meeting to hear Laura Longenecker, owner of Mary’s (5128 Penn Ave.), discuss her plans to open a new live entertainment bar in February.

“I am excited to have Mary’s open,” said Jennifer Haven, a member of the Friendship Community Group, as the meeting was coming to an end.

“I’m excited to have an LGBTQ+ friendly bar on Penn Avenue. I think it’s really going to add another layer of love and community, and freedom of expression to Penn Avenue, and to the Friendship neighborhood especially,” Haven said.

“The only concern that I have is that [Longenecker] runs a successful business. And part of that is going to be making sure the neighbors are happy. So, we have a meeting like this to really allow the neighbors to express their concerns over parking, sound, light, smoking, and noise,” Haven said, “so that when she opens, she doesn’t have to worry about neighborhood complaints. She can then just open, be happy, and be welcoming to the community.”

Haven said she had seen the interior of Mary’s and described it as “very pink and very sparkly.” During the meeting at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation’s community activity center (113 N. Pacific Ave.), executive director Rick Swartz told

‘This will be your local glam dive and neighborhood bar.’

- Laura Longenecker, owner, Mary’s


the crowd that Longenecker had invested more than \$1 million to purchase and renovate the former Toros Tavern, and that he did not think she would risk her investment by allowing crowds to get out of hand.

Swartz said Mary’s, which seats about 65 people, would provide an “intimate experience,” hopefully without a lot of loud noise to bother neighbors.

“We don’t want Penn Avenue becoming the next South Side,” Swartz said. On the South Side, police and bar owners have faced challenges in dealing with rowdy patrons and the impact they have on the neighborhood’s equilibrium.

Swartz said that, to ensure the community’s concerns were heard, the Friendship Community Group and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation would draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to cement the commitments Longenecker made to the community during the Oct. 23 meeting.

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AHN WEST PENN

BELOW: With plans to launch in February, Mary's Bar (5128 Penn Ave.) will feature live music and drag performances. Photo by Andrew McKeon.



- continued from previous page -

Longenecker said she would be willing to sign the MOU after reviewing it with her attorney. She made the following commitments during the 80-minute meeting:

- Live music at the bar would end at about 11 p.m. each night. Drag shows would end later, at about 12:30 a.m., Longenecker said.
- The bar's hours of operation would not interfere with classes and events at the private Waldorf K-8 School nearby.
- A limited amount of food would be prepared behind the bar. Large bands with lots of equipment would not fit within the limited space that Mary's will have for performances. Smoking and mingling outside of the bar would be carefully monitored by Longenecker and a general manager she plans to hire.



ABOVE: Jennifer Haven (left), a representative from the Friendship Community Group, and bar owner Laura Longenecker at the Oct. 23 meeting in Garfield. Photo by Alan Guenther.

In an interview after the meeting, Longenecker told *The Bulletin* that a summary of the evening's discussion would be submitted to the City's zoning board to supplement her testimony last month.

The zoning board will need to grant a special exception to allow Mary's to open as the owner intends.

The name "Mary's," Longenecker said, is a gay slang term. Drag performers "call each other 'Marys,'" she said.

"This will be your local glam dive and neighborhood bar," Longenecker said, "a queer-friendly community space, and vibrant arts hub in Pittsburgh."

Reach Alan Guenther at guenthera30@gmail.com. ♦



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New program connects resident artists, summer campers in Hill District

By Thomas Agnew *BOOM Concepts*

Hill District - Over the summer, Garfield’s BOOM Concepts partnered with ACH Clear Pathways, a Hill District nonprofit, to help resident artists connect with students at “Creative Camp.”

Utilizing BOOM’s vast network, ACH was able to bring a teaching artist residency to life at its Hill District headquarters - attracting local creators and educators, with aligned disciplines, to work together in a space dedicated to advancing young minds through creativity and artistry.

In 2009, Tyian Battle founded ACH Clear Pathways out of her own heartbreak when she lost her 7-year-old son, Amon C. Harris, to an undiagnosed heart condition.

Amon loved the arts, and Battle wanted to honor his memory in a way that provides access to the arts, as well as a platform for youths to learn how to manage and express their emotions in a healthy way. Amon’s legacy lives on through Battle’s passion in her work with ACH Clear Pathways.

After ACH linked up with BOOM, the two Black-owned, Pittsburgh-based, arts organizations began collaborating on the concept of a summer showcase (at the El-

sie H. Hillman Auditorium) where campers could perform for an audience of their friends, families, and neighbors.

In week one, BOOM resident artists - Lee Owens, Quaishawn Whitlock, Dom McDuffie, and DeVaughn Rodgers - arrived in the Hill District to begin immersing themselves in the culture of ACH, and synergizing with its staff members. They discussed various goals for the program and collaborated to write skits, block out choreographies, and primed an exterior wall-turned-canvas.

Campers were given their choice of three art-centered majors: visual art, dance, and media/theatre/acting (MTA). Each major partnered an ACH staff member with a BOOM arts educator.

The visual art major, led by ACH Visual Arts Director & BOOM studio resident Takara Canty, focused on beautifying ACH’s exterior. Motivated by the space’s lack of decorations, Canty worked with DeVaughn Rodgers and Lee Owens to help the building become more identifiable as an arts establishment.

“People are looking for an art building, and there’s no art outside,” Canty ex-

BELOW: ‘Creative Camp’ students and teaching artists paint a mural together in the Hill District. BOOM Concepts and ACH Clear Pathways joined forces to connect artists with summer campers as part of a new residency program. Photo courtesy of BOOM Concepts.



plained. “We need something that says ‘Welcome to ACH! We are here!’”

The team of resident artists and empowered youths produced massive wall-paintings, highlighting local community members while also calling attention to the building’s entrance.

The Dance team, led by Amani Hill and Quaishawn Whitlock, choreographed a performance of “Revolting Children” (from Matthew Warchus’s 2022 interpretation of the Roald Dahl classic *Matilda*).

They also helped campers screen-print the ACH logo on t-shirts and scarves.

In MTA, Shakya Johnson and Reese Red-

wood collaborated with Dom McDuffie to write and direct skits for the campers, teaching them various techniques along the way.

The students demonstrated their abilities during a live Hip-Hop and R&B performance at the end of the summer session. In a “Battle of the Bands” spirit, campers competed in a final showcase to determine the “Best Major” from ACH’s 2023 Creative Camp; MTA won the inaugural competition.

BOOM Concepts and ACH are continuing their new partnership to provide students with afterschool programming for the duration of the 23-24 school year. ♦

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West Penn Hospital [WPH, 4800 Liberty Ave.] is looking for community members to be a part of the Patient Safety Committee meeting; you cannot currently be employed by Allegheny Health Network.

The purpose of the committee is to provide oversight and management of the patient safety plan and ensure the hospital meets the patient safety requirements outlined in the Joint Commission standards and the Pennsylvania Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error Act (MCARE).

The Patient Safety Committee's objectives are to promote change; show leadership, and maintain staff awareness of patient safety, by identifying safety issues; implement best practices that are user-friendly and data-driven; support actionable plans; reduce and eliminate medical errors by identifying problems and implementing solutions that promote patient safety.

We ask community members to commit to attending a monthly meeting, either in person or via Microsoft Teams, and help WPH ensure alignment with the Patient Safety Committee's purpose.

Information shared at the committee meeting is confidential [and protected from disclosure, except as otherwise permitted under Pennsylvania's Peer Review Protection Act, Patient Safety Work Product, and the MCARE Act]. Committee members will be obligated to not disclose any information. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact Jacqueline Drahos (Jacqueline.Drahos@AHN.org).

ECS Principal & CEO, Jon McCann, to retire after 15 years of service

By Deana Callipare *Environmental Charter School*

Pittsburgh - On Thursday, Oct. 19, the Environmental Charter School's (ECS) founding principal and CEO, Jon McCann, announced his intention to retire at the conclusion of the 23-24 school year, after 15 years of service.

In a joint communication from McCann and the ECS Board of Trustees President, Dr. Adam Tobias, to ECS stakeholders, they detailed the organization's next steps to fill the position. Tobias appointed Lisa Elliott, ECS parent and past Board of Trustees President, and Nikole Sheaffer, ECS co-founder, former ECS Chief Innovation & Outreach Officer (CIOO) and current ECS Foundation Consultant, to co-chair the transition team that will guide the organization in the search, selection, and transition process.

"Jon's retirement marks the end of an incredible chapter of ECS's history and a remarkable career filled with passion, dedication, and advocacy in service of kids. He has taken a tiny school near Frick Park and transformed it into a flourishing K-12 program," Tobias said. "As we look to the future, the development of a transition team will help maintain mission alignment and identify an individual who will lead ECS into the years to come. With Lisa and Nikole's collective knowledge and ECS backgrounds, I am confident in their ability to provide guidance and management to the transition team to ensure an efficient and effective process."

In the coming weeks, ECS will announce details regarding the transition team member selection process and the Request for Proposal (RFP) for executive consulting services; the team will complete a national search to recruit and hire a new education-focused CEO of Schools for the District.

McCann earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Duquesne University, and a Masters in Educational Leadership from the University of Pittsburgh. His career has run the gamut from non-traditional education settings to public charter schools. McCann served as a science and language arts teacher for Pittsburgh Public Schools before moving to the public charter sphere as the Vice Principal at the Urban League of Pittsburgh's Charter School.

In 2008, McCann became the founding principal and CEO of the newly-developed Environmental Charter School. During his tenure, McCann grew the K-3 program near Frick Park into an inclusive, thought-provoking, and environmentally-focused K-12 program that now spans four campuses, supports more than 1,000 students, and holds annual waiting lists for students in kindergarten through 10th grade. Leading ECS through multiple expansions and the COVID-19 pandemic, McCann most recently helped design a sustainable high school with opportunities for students to use the building as a teaching tool; construction on this project is slated to begin in 2024.

"With ECS's 15th year of operation, I reflect on our organization's successes and believe it is the perfect time to close this book and open a new one," McCann said. "As we continue to invest in our schools and the new High School building takes shape, ECS has the opportunity to write its next exciting chapter of growth and development. In the meantime, I remain committed to the work, the people, and our most precious resource - our children - and serving the community for the remainder of the school year."

McCann will continue to work with ECS in support of the high school construction project and through advocacy efforts with the ECS Foundation. ♦

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Motion-oriented: Coach Mark Haffner helps Lawrenceville seniors stay fit

By Jack McKay *Bulletin contributor*

Lawrenceville - Every Friday, Canterbury Place (310 Fisk St.), a part of UPMC Senior Communities, offers a health & wellness class to its residents.

Mark Haffner, who coaches the class, helps participants engage in regular exercise and pursue active aging in Lawrenceville.

Carlee Rogel, a longtime employee at Canterbury Place, can testify to Haffner's impact on the facility's residents.

"Because of Mark's class, the residents get excited to exercise," she said. "It can be hard to exercise when you're older but, when you have someone encouraging like Mark, you don't see it as a chore."

As she watches the coach guide participants through various motion-oriented activities, Rogel says she feels inspired by the Canterbury residents' determination.

"They don't make excuses for themselves to not attend the exercise class, which inspires me," she explained.

Even though the residents show tenacity, there are still certain movements that can be difficult for them to execute.

According to Rogel, "the part that is most challenging for residents is moving their

feet. It can take some of them a lot of effort, but they are always willing to try their best!"

Christa Maggnes, the activities coordinator for Canterbury Place, agrees. "Sometimes the number of repetitions is a challenge," she said, "but Coach Mark makes it fun."

One of the ways Haffner makes the class meaningful for every participant is by remembering each of their names. "Mark knows the residents by name," Maggnes noted, "and this engages them further."

She believes the coach's positivity has not only helped participants improve their levels of fitness, but also built camaraderie in the process. "Their range of motion and engagement in the program has really improved," Maggnes said. "The residents encourage one another, and they look forward to the class."

Haffner is a certified group fitness instructor, as well as licensed massage therapist.

Despite the fact that he has been teaching

for 20 years, he still works hard to ensure that his students look forward every one of his class sessions.

"I want to give them a better quality of life, as well as something to look forward to," Haffner explained.

The coach has learned to make sure that he constructs a class curriculum in which everyone can participate. "There's a wide variety of differences in terms of their abilities," he said, "so I had to put together a program that pretty much everybody could do."

Haffner also aims to create a program that is safe for all the participants. "I always tell them that they shouldn't do something if it hurts. If there is pain, then don't do it."

The coach, who grew up in the city's Squirrel Hill neighborhood, believes Pittsburgh's health & fitness scene is trending in the right direction. "I would say it's definitely on par with anywhere else," he noted.

Haffner describes himself as a coach who

"does not think they know everything." Instead, he takes it upon himself to never stop learning. "Any opportunity I get to take a class and advance my knowledge," Haffner said, "I do it."

During the COVID pandemic, the class had to be put on pause, stalling its potential for a time. But Haffner is very pleased with how the class has grown since resuming regular sessions at Canterbury Place. "We're back," he said. ♦



ABOVE: Mark Haffner coaches the senior residents of Canterbury Place through weekly exercises. Photo courtesy of Jack McKay.



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LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

- Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty, Lawrenceville, & Stanton Heights -

Real Estate Sales for the month of August 2023

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, Residential Realtor

Bloomfield

Alex Trilivas to Costello Properties LLC at 139 S. Fairmount St. for \$300,000.

Carl D & Lindsay S Koch to Morgan & Kevin Cottingham at 108 S. Fairmount St. for \$615,000.

Christopher Juran to Ha Na Ko at 334 S. Winebiddle St. for \$425,050.

Darlene M Hanlon to Michael A Centore at 345 Pearl St. for \$260,000.

James D & Darlene K Walsh to Daniel Brennan at 4123 Main St. for \$130,000.

Julie R Sokolow to Swathi Sangli at 423 Pearl St. for \$375,000.

Justin A Avi to Ryan D Zeh at 4784 Sciota St. for \$279,900.

Rose Mancine to Justin Michael Casey at 4642 Friendship Ave. for \$230,000.

Thong T Nguyen to Zachary M Leya at 519 Aspen St. for \$375,000.

Umberto & Michelinea Deluca to Sean Kelly Scott Mckillop at 224 Gross St. for \$401,000.

Friendship

No sales to report.

Garfield

Cynthia Ruth Adams to Allison Greene at 5006 Dearborn St. for \$449,900.

Lan Huong & Wing Dao to Feng Lian Chen at 5153 Penn Ave. for \$165,000.

Leon W & Gloria H Henderson to Latitude E 123 LLC at 5332 Waterford St. for \$90,000.

Michael Bond to Janina Kuper at 5205 Dearborn St. for \$233,400.

NCRC Housing Rehab Fund LLC to Monarchs Properties LLC at 413 N. Graham St. for \$1.

Trerell Property Group LLC to 44 Kincaid St. Trust at 5344 Kincaid St. for \$300,000.

East Liberty

Costello Real Estate Development LLC to Lanting Li at 320 N. Saint Clair St. for \$775,000.

Crossroads United Methodist Church to Redeemer Community Church Of Pittsburgh at 325 N. Highland Ave. for \$975,000.

Diversified Residential Homes 2 LLC to Ba2 Real Estate LLC at 376 Enright Ct. for \$110,000.

Jaffe Family Limited Partnership to Sesan Ojelade at 5715 Rural St. for \$295,000.

NCRC Housing Rehab Fund LLC to Monarchs Properties LLC at 538 N. Negley Ave. for \$1.

Reema K Padia to Pooja Mahadeshwar & Suraj Bhatt at 714 N. Beatty St. for \$725,000.

Lawrenceville

106 Western LLC to Housing Authority City Of Pittsburgh at 330 46th St. for \$4,000,000.

Akk Holdings LLC to Zachary Sundo at 611 Kendall St. for \$189,625.

Anna Pawlak to Peter Frank III & Susan Toma at 313 44th St. for \$150,000.

Bach-Cuc Truong to Corinthian Development LLC at 5217 Lotus Way for \$90,000.

Brian J & Samantha L Finamore to Yinghua LLC at 3618 Mintwood St. for \$389,250.

Daniel Yurovsky to Jason Harenski at 175 44th St. for \$661,450.

Don A & Lisa M Dunkers to Daniel Eller at 196 36th St. Unit 3H for \$395,000.

Elizabeth K Wiese to Stephen R Perrot at 343

42nd St. for \$345,000.

Industrial Commons Ltd to Felix Jonathan at 3809 Liberty Ave. Unit 204 for \$301,900.

Is-East LLC to Ding Dong Tea LLC at 3509 Butler St. for \$623,070.

James L & Amie N Dutey to Robert Huestis Reid at 4518 Plummer St. for \$590,000.

Jared R Schau to Weichert Workforce Mobility Inc. at 5230 Harrison St. for \$420,000.

John C & Gloria P Austin to William Schneider at 5422 Keystone St. for \$67,000.

John F & Mary Yvette Devine to Justin Paluch at 5233 Holmes St. for \$348,000.

Katherine Buchanan to Beth L Vermillion at 5214 Carnegie St. for \$225,000.

Lakewood Management Group LLC to Kris Kitani at 4405 Davison St. for \$180,000.

Lakewood Management Group LLC to Richard J Patti at 4216 Bruce St. for \$150,000.

Lakewood Management Group LLC to Traci Darin at 341 44th St. for \$70,000.

Lawrenceville Corporation to Ater Way LLC at 0 Ater Way for \$15,000.

Michael E & Patricia A Law to Figure 8 Ventures LLC at 3920 Cabinet Way for \$155,000.

Michael Perez to Saurabh Jaiswal at 413 40th St. for \$161,000.

Monica L Conner to MLC 184 36th Street LLC at 184 36th St. for \$50,000.

Natrona 5233 LLC to Jonathan T Roberts Jr at 5233 Natrona Way for \$125,000.

Patricia M Molongowski to Catherine Zuraw at 4015 Arsenal Pl for \$268,000.

Rachel P Tindall to Joshua Cyktor at 36 48th St. for \$625,000.

Robert Galasso to Hoosac Realty LLC at 345 46th St. for \$182,500.

Sarah R Hengel to Jason Bruce at 403 40th St. for \$245,000.

Sean Chua to Dirk Schild at 5531 Berlin Way for \$630,000.

V P Management LLC to Marie-Stephanie Madeleine Delamaire at 246 46th St. for \$355,000.

Weichert Workforce Mobility Inc. to William Baumher at 5230 Harrison St. for \$398,999.

William J Carter to Leo Quigley at 240 39th St. for \$475,000.

YYNY LLC + Ayla Management LLC to Quality Home Investments LLC at 342 42nd St. for \$220,000.

Stanton Heights

Ian D Hughes to Jonathan A Dehart at 1524 Trinity St. for \$310,000.

Joseph J & Brenda A Risher to Reed Commerce LLC at 7 Fairfield Ct. for \$190,000.

Julia D Papale to Kenneth L Haney at 1517 Hawthorne St. for \$269,150.

Leander & Shirley Young to Westbound Ventures LLC at 1047 McCabe St. for \$102,700.

RP Homes 2 LLC to Farah Suddle at 965 Oranmore St. for \$205,000.

This column, which uses County data, contains occasional errors. If something looks off, let us know.

Feel free to call with questions, or just to chat about real estate in your neighborhood. Contact Lillian at lillian@agent-lillian.com or 412-335-6068. ♦

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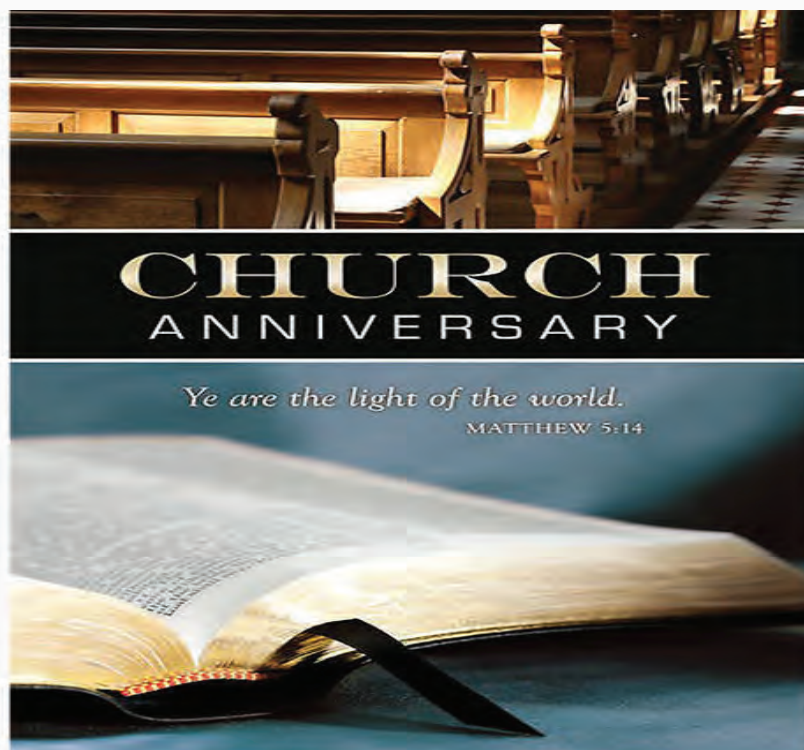
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City’s tree canopy receives federal support

A Message from the City of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh - The City of Pittsburgh and its environmental nonprofit partners understand the impact that green spaces and trees can have on a neighborhood. Their hard work is being recognized through two Urban & Community Forestry Grants awarded by the United States Dept. of Agriculture’s Forest Service.

The Forest Service is making historic investments in boosting the nation’s tree cover in urban, suburban, and rural communities nationwide. The department selected 385 grant proposals from across the nation, two U.S. territories, three U.S.-affiliated Pacific Island groups, and several tribal communities working to increase equitable access to trees and green spaces, and the benefits they provide.

The city’s vacant lot, tree-planting project - designed to mitigate urban heat effects across City neighborhoods - received \$1 million. Focusing on underserved communities, this program works to identify and remove hazardous trees while also replacing them with new trees, creating or revitalizing natural areas in the neighborhood.

The Pittsburgh Canopy Alliance is receiving \$8 million to increase tree canopy and support a more resilient urban forest. This grant will help fund community planning and workforce development efforts to plant and maintain trees along streets, in parks and public greenspaces, and on residential and institutional property within the Biden Administration’s “Justice 40” zones.

“These federally funded grants will make maintaining and creating green spaces for Pittsburgh residents easier. Due to climate change, we all can appreciate the shade of a healthy tree and the cool breezes they generate,” said Mayor Ed Gainey.

The Pittsburgh Canopy Alliance is a working group of more than 20 nonprofit organizations and government agencies across Allegheny County. Alliance partners are committed to increasing equitable access to urban tree canopy and its related health, environmental, and economic benefits.

Between 2015 and 2020, Allegheny County experienced a net loss of 4,000 acres of tree canopy. In order to combat this alarming trend, the Pittsburgh Canopy Alliance has researched and developed shared goals to increase urban tree canopy across the County, with a focus on equity.

Studies have shown that vibrant green spaces and trees can help improve the overall health of residents, help reduce crime, and aid in lowering the average temperature in areas like the designated Justice 40 zones.

To view the full US Forest Service announcement, visit: fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf/2023-grant-funding.

Tree Pittsburgh led the application process for the Alliance, joining organizations including the Western PA Conservancy, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Landforce, Allegheny Land Trust, Allegheny County Conservation District, Goatscape, UrbanKind Institute, and Friends of the Riverfront.

This collaboration aims to increase community involvement in planning, leading to healthier trees and increased canopy cover in local neighborhoods. To learn more about the participating organizations and agencies, visit pittsburghcanopyalliance.org. ♦

BELOW: A Red-Tailed Hawk perches atop an Allegheny Cemetery monument on a late September evening. Photo by John Napolitano.



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ULEAD *continued from page 4*

istrator, and a current art commissioner for the city. She has owned her own antique store. She's been in the game for lots of years. When it comes to these types of projects, I can't do them without her..."

ELDI: *You're reaching out to small arts groups to gauge their support for the Sts. Peter & Paul arts and events center. What does the outreach process look like?*

Brigitte: "First, I'll talk about our process before, because I think that lends itself to how we're doing things now...The way we approached that was pretty grassroots. We did door-to-door surveying and asked questions. We visited local community and housing group meetings. We also did a series of what we called 'Space Walk and Talks,' where those residents and community members had a chance to walk the space, learn about it, and give feedback. Additionally, we hosted an 'Arts Town Hall' in the church with a couple of small performances from musicians, live painting, and more so that people could see the space lit up and activated..."

"That whole process yielded data that showed that the community wanted a multi-use space for events, shows, family gatherings and activities, etc. The community also wanted to maintain the space. They liked the graffiti and its general look and feel. They wanted to be able to use it as a community asset."

"Fast forward to today: when we're thinking about the process and how we're approaching it, it'll be similar, but different in the sense that ELDI is really interested in reaching out to small- to mid-size arts and cultural groups. They are specifically interested in BIPOC and underrepresented arts and cultural groups and understanding what their needs might be. At this point, they have a better idea of what the church may look like moving forward, but they still want to get a sense of, operationally, how it could be used and be useful. Now we've gone from, 'Hey, this is what the community wants' to 'The community wants this, but who could actually do it? Who could actually fill the space? What does that look like?'"

ELDI: *Is there anything else you'd like to share?*

Christine: "We're just happy to be working on something that's going to bring East Liberty one step closer to its previous greatness. The potential is there, the people are there, all the creatives are there. It should be a really great experience once it's completed, putting that whole vibe together for the new East Liberty." ♦

Crosstown Coverage: PGH neighborhoods in frame

Here's a Shadyside snapshot for good measure.



ABOVE: The fast, flat surface of Walnut Street beckons 'Run Shadyside' participants to cross the finish line at the 5K run/walk on Saturday, Oct. 7. Photo by Jack McKay.



Give Thanks

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The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation will award \$50 Aldi gift cards to volunteers who complete 3 Snow Angel assignments between 12/1 & 3/31 in Garfield or Friendship neighborhoods

County executive, prosecutor among key races to be decided Nov. 7

By Alan Guenther *Bulletin contributor, BGC Board Member*

Allegheny County - Democrat Sara Innamorato, 37, and Republican Joe Rockey, 59, could not be more different. Both are running for the powerful Allegheny County Executive job in the Tuesday, Nov. 7 election.

A resident of Lawrenceville and a former state representative, Innamorato says, “I have a track record of putting working people over corporate profit and fighting for those on the margins.”

She pledges to fight for cleaner air and water while continuing to work to protect women’s reproductive rights.

A retired PNC senior vice president who points to his working-class upbringing, Rockey says that he is “One of Us. For a Change.” Rockey has said he will work hard to bring jobs to the region.

He says he will oppose a countywide property tax re-assessment because he believes it could end up raising taxes on many older, middle-class homeowners.

In the race for Allegheny County Prosecutor, Democrat Matt Dugan is running against the incumbent, Steve Zappala. After Dugan defeated Zappala in the Democratic primary election in May, Zappala switched parties and is now on the ballot as a Republican.

Dugan has served as the chief public defender for the County, and he advocates for reforms that will keep people with mental health issues out of the Allegheny County Jail.

Zappala, who has been the county district attorney for the past 12 years, says he will fight crime in the city’s Downtown area.

Dozens of local races for County Controller, Treasurer, and County Council are also on the ballot. For more information, see WESA-FM’s voter guide: wesa.fm/pa-election-guide-2023.

The Bulletin previously published stories on the County Executive race; these stories are available online at bloomfield-garfield.org/the-bulletin/archives.

For a profile of Innamorato, look to the April edition; for Rockey, check out the July edition. We also illustrated a view of the election from Lawrenceville residents in the October edition.

Finally, a wealth of information can be found on the League of Women Voters website (lwvpg.org).

Reach Alan Guenther at guenthera30@gmail.com. ♦

December Bulletin Deadline: **Friday, Nov. 17**

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