



PROJECT RENEWAL KIDS HAD A BLAST DURING SEVERAL FIELD TRIPS THIS YEAR

Presence



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2018 REPORT

A summer @ the Treat House

By Mary Gorski
University of Notre Dame

It's hard to put the value of my summer experience with Project Renewal into words. In the eight weeks that I was there, I became an entirely new person with a greater capacity for empathy, patience, and love than I ever thought I could have.

Each child at Project Renewal has a family within the community at PR, and it is something that is truly palpable and incredible to witness. Each day had its own unique challenges, but there was always a smile, a story, or a laugh to melt away whatever frustration you were occupied with earlier. The kids are curious, kind, and endlessly interesting, just like my own cousins that are around their age. Because of this, it is especially heartbreaking to see the extremity of many of their situations.

Things as simple as fitting, weather-appropriate clothes are not always a given for the children at PR. Many of them are smart and curious, but don't receive much educational support at home, including books for fun or parent involvement with homework. Sometimes it is difficult to know

whether or not they will receive three meals that day. All of these things are something I took for granted at the beginning of the summer. I knew that people didn't always have everything they needed, but without encountering it frequently, it was hard to imagine that as the perpetual reality it is for many American children and families.

The environment at Project Renewal is amazing to be a part of and the effects of it are completely clear to see in the kids. At PR, they can play together in a safe environment, enjoy a craft activity, eat lunch together, or do schoolwork. In short, they can just be kids. I've never witnessed a program run so well by someone so passionate about doing good in this world as I have at Project Renewal.

At the Treat House, as it is lovingly called, the kids know they are safe and that someone is always there to help them, whether they need help with homework, a band-aid, or someone else to play tag with. A summer at the Treat House changed my life, and I can only imagine what it does for the kids who grow up there.

Project Renewal's goals

Be a positive presence for the children and families in our low-income neighborhood of Davenport.

Affect change in a community by being part of that community. Since 1974 Project Renewal staff have lived and worked at 5th and Warren Streets, providing a safe & supportive place for kids.

Use our funding wisely - 97% of grants and donations go to program operations.

How else can you be a part?

Attend the annual board meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 6:30 p.m., at 510 Warren Street, Davenport.

Become a liaison for your church.

Volunteer during the afterschool or summer youth program.

Mentor a high school student to be career and/or college ready.

There are many possibilities!

Call 563-324-0800 or email
projectrenewal@revealed.net

Respect and encouragement

By a PROJECT RENEWAL donor

A dear friend introduced us to Project Renewal several years ago. Our involvement began with a group of friends, donating necessities and making financial contributions annually at Christmas.

Project Renewal has become the primary local charity we support. We believe in its mission to build the self-esteem of impoverished children through respect and encouragement. We have witnessed firsthand the impact Ann and her staff of volunteers have in fulfilling this mission.

We contribute a few times every year, with each donation matched 100% by my employer. But, there are other ways to encourage donation.

We have a Christmas Eve tradition each year...a group of friends meets to celebrate, and we collect money for a local charity. Project Renewal was the recipient two years ago.

I turned 50 this year and asked for donations to Project Renewal. We also hosted an open house at our home so that individuals could learn more about Project Renewal. It was well attended. Ann and Amy provided the group with an overview of services and positive outcomes.



We will continue to support Project Renewal, a very worthy organization working to end the cycle of generational poverty and lack of educational opportunity.

FIT FEST 2018

Project Renewal's Fit Fest is an obstacle course consisting of 10 challenges to perform and complete with a partner. The obstacles are a physical activity or sport drill with options for people of all abilities to participate. Examples included disc golf, cross-fit, Tae Kwon Do, volleyball, and soccer. Additional fun activities in Sr. Concetta Park for everyone were: Zumba, basketball, bags, and golf putting. Medals were awarded in each category for first and second place.

Mark your calendars! Next year's Fit Fest will be Saturday, April 13, 2019!

2018 Fit Fest Sponsors: ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY; GOLD COAST - HAMBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT; PALMER COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC; WHBF, KGCW; GROUP O; REDSTONE CONTENT SOLUTIONS; ASTRA FURNITURE CLEARANCE CENTER; EDWARD JONES; ROCK VALLEY PHYSICAL THERAPY; RUSSELL; CITY OF DAVENPORT; MISSISSIPPI VALLEY SURGERY CENTER; LUJACK'S, ANDERSON, LOWER, WHITLOW, P.C.; GREATEST GRAINS; ADVANTAGE ADVERTISING; SODEXO; OAK HELM PARTNERS; ELLIOTT AVIATION; NORTHWEST MECHANICAL; STATE FARM – Matthew Casillas Agency; CIRCLE TAP; HALE PRINTING & VINYL GRAPHICS; RIVER CITIES SOUND; MOLYNEAUX INSURANCE; MEDIC-EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Door prize donations: Helium Trampoline Park, Michael's Fun World, Sippi's American Grill, Whitey's Ice Cream, Tommy's Café, Chocolate Manor, Colman Flower Shoppe, Waterfront Deli, Tappa's Steak House, Oh So Sweet by Tiphonie, Running Wild, Felicia's Boutique

Special thanks: St. Ambrose University athletic department, campus recreation, campus ministry, several SAU students, athletes and club members for planning each of the obstacles and timing participants | Davenport Police Department members who volunteered to be a partner | Our Neighbors - passing out refreshments | Project Renewal youth & family members – including some of our grown up kids who come back to help out | Energetic volunteer Zumba Instructors and DJ.

Program Highlights 2018

Forty-five youth participated daily at Project Renewal this summer. Davenport Community School District's summer meal program provided lunch for participants and other neighborhood youth Monday – Thursday for eight weeks. PR provided breakfast M-F for program participants – one day a week a volunteer brought a homemade, warm breakfast for the kids. Lunches on Fridays, during the week of the Fourth of July and at the end of the summer for all day field trips, were either made at PR or purchased from restaurants (Papa Johns, Hungry Hobo, La Finca, Hot Dog Guy, Pizza Hut, Sippi's). All the restaurants offered discounts. **Sippi's completely donated all the lunches when we ate there after a field trip.** Thursday night cookouts took place in Sr. Concetta Park hosted by YouthWorks.

Each day youth read a book for 25 minutes and completed 25 minutes of math or language arts. A couple weeks of swimming lessons took place, 34 kids participated in these lessons. The remainder of the kids either passed out of all the levels or didn't have adequate attendance. PR youth volunteered at the Bix@6 practice runs. Sixteen PR youth attended the Track & Field program sponsored by the Cornbelt Running Club and Parks & Recreation Dept. Many craft projects/science experiments, computer games, video games, card games, board games, guest speakers, and field trips took place: Living Lands & Waters, Family Museum, bowling, River Bandits baseball, Quad City Botanical Center, Mini Golf, Scott County Park, Michael's Fun World, White Water Junction, Altitude Trampoline Park.

We enrolled kids in camps, most hosted by Eastern Iowa Community College – College Connections, Race Car Pit Crew, Roblox Makers-Coders-Entrepreneur, American Sign Language, Creative Designs & Robotics, and basketball camp.

Double your donation to Project Renewal

In July, Project Renewal was chosen as a recipient for a Challenge Grant offered by the Community Foundation of the Great River Bend (CFGRB). If we raise \$15,000 between August 1 and December 31, 2018, the challenge grant will be awarded to Project Renewal. The CFGRB will then match with another \$15,000, giving us a total of \$30,000!

Raising the funds is only part of the challenge. Contributions must be from a completely new donation, or an increase from a current donor – and the increase will qualify for the match.

What does your donation support?

- Treat House - open after school and summer, offering kids a safe & nurturing environment.
- Educational, recreational, & social opportunities kids would not otherwise experience.
- Maintenance on two homes and a park.
- Support for one full-time, one part-time, and five summer staff, and many volunteers.

If you are interested in this opportunity to support Project Renewal and want to double your contribution you must act now. Donations must be committed or paid by December 31, 2018. Or, if you know anyone else who might be motivated by this incentive, please let them know, or let Project Renewal know who to contact at 563-324-0800 or projectrenewal@revealed.net.

New Marv Mottet Memorial Patio Completed

Project Renewal provides stability in our fragile neighborhood in part with two houses that are part of a hub of activity and positive presence.

Many of Project Renewal's youth activities take place outdoors, especially in the summer, but also afterschool when our kids are happily spending their energy with outdoor play and socialization after being indoors all day at school and then doing their homework with us.

Between the two houses are picnic tables that are often used for craft activities, lessons, meals, snacks, community gatherings & presentations, socialization, etc. Previously, the picnic tables were in the grass/dirt with no shade opportunity.

The previous brick walkway and patio area served their purpose well. However, after years of tree root decay and ground settling,



it made uneven surfaces and sinkholes that created trip hazards, water build-up, and icy spots in the winter. We were in need of an upgrade!

The picnic tables received new weatherized wood and were then set on new patio pavers, covered by a pergola to provide shade. Existing brick was reused when a previous brick area was leveled and expanded to accommodate Project Renewal youth participants, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

The Project Renewal Board of Directors recently voted to name the patio after Marvin Mottet, a priest who was instrumental in founding Project Renewal and a lifelong board member until his death in 2016. Monsignor Mottet pursued peace and justice throughout his life, believing that direct action and societal change are important. He recruited Sr. Concetta Bendicente, our foundress, to Davenport to provide outreach and services that began Project Renewal.

The border pavers around the new patio area will allow us to honor those who have been significant leaders of Project Renewal's mission with name engraving.

This project was made possible by individual donors, Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, Davenport Lend-A-Hand, Scott County Regional Authority, and Aunt Rhodies Landscaping & Design Studio.



THANK YOU!

FUNDERS

Amy Helpenstell Foundation
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