

**Thresholds**  
**in**  
**Delaware County**  
**2014 Annual Report**  
*Celebrating 40 Years*



**P.O. Box 114**  
**Thornton, PA 1937**  
**484-301-0590**

**Thresholds Board of Directors**  
**2013-2014**

**OFFICERS**

President—Robert Rieck  
Vice President—Diane Eichler  
Secretary—Doug Williamson  
Treasurer—Bill Murphy

**MEMBERS AT LARGE**

Gudrun Weinberg  
Charles Strickler

***Awards for Outstanding Service to Thresholds in 2014***

**2014 Thresholds Volunteers of the Year**  
Elek Fenyes

**Volunteer of the Year for George W. Hill**  
Fran Battista

**Volunteer of the Year for SCI-Chester**  
Laurie Truluck

**Volunteer of the Year for Juvenile Detention Ctr.**  
Sandi Hollie

**Fran Cook New Volunteer Award**  
Joanne Matteucci

**Thresholds in Delaware County Volunteers**



Teresa Albers  
Clint Amos  
Maggie Arbuckle  
Patricia Bakey  
Mary Lu Bartorillo  
Laurie Bass  
Fran Battista  
Leif Beck  
Georgia Belli  
Sharon Black  
Byrin Bratcher  
Nadine Bratcher  
Pat Cahill  
Ashley Carson  
Melissa Ciesielski  
Laura Ciporin  
Carol Colombo  
Janet Curran  
Michal Curry  
Andrea Damm  
Michael DeVacchio  
Sally DiBello  
Robyn Dooley  
Mary Dwyer  
Diane Eichler  
Elek Fenyes  
Laura Fetterman  
Melissa Finnegan  
Zexi Geng  
Bonnie George  
Charlotte Giblin  
Mary Ellen Goldfarb  
Sandi Hollie  
Linda Hylinski  
Donna M. Jackson  
Inez Jones  
Thomas Jones  
Joan Josephs

Tom Kane  
Lori Koncos  
Barbara Kosierowski  
Brenda Kucirka  
Melissa Maffettone  
Joanne Matteucci  
Eddy McCreary  
Kelly McNerny  
Richard Miller  
Bill Murphy  
Jerry Nowell  
Maureen O'Dea  
Mary Ann Pezick  
Joanne Prazenica  
Mike Prentice  
Debbie Quagliarello  
Gale Rankowski  
Gemma Rapone  
Connie Richardson  
Bob Rieck  
Heidi Scheer  
Anthony Scott  
Kristina Sladek  
Megan Rutkowski  
William Ryan  
Joshua Schrier  
Frances Schultz  
Anthony Scott  
Kristina Sladek  
Arthur Strawbridge  
Christina (Tina) Stanton  
Michael Stapf  
Anna Marie Stewart  
Fred Struckmeyer  
Robin Thomas  
Laurie Truluck  
Mark Ulau  
Doug Williamson



## **President's Report**

By Bob Rieck

The Thresholds Board of Directors is happy to report on the activities and events of 2014. Our primary focus has been on maintaining the program for male inmates, as well as adding services to female inmates at G.W. Hill, rebuilding our core group of volunteer teachers at SCI-Chester, and continuing our efforts to keep the Juvenile Detention Center at Lima advancing forward despite a recent fire that damaged much of the building. These endeavors were successful largely due to the efforts of site coordinators: Elek Fenyes at G.W. Hill Correctional Facility, Tina Stanton at SCI-Chester, and Jerry Nowell and Maggie Arbuckle at the Juvenile Detention Center. Their commitment and unwavering dedication to timely communications, diligent work and outstanding leadership are essential to the success of Thresholds in Delaware County. Year end summaries are included within these pages to update you on specific achievements and happenings at each of the sites we serve.

Elek Fenyes' report regarding G.W. Hill fully demonstrates his steadfast commitment to Thresholds as an organization, our valued volunteers and the clients we serve. There have been many exciting advances this year.

Our efforts at SCI-Chester have been challenging due to changes in the prison's administration, additional training requirements and the loss of some experienced teachers. Nonetheless, Thresholds has weathered these setbacks well. We have been successful in recruiting new Micro teachers – four of which are "lifers" at the facility and are currently being trained and are attending Macro sessions. A total of 47 clients have graduated and we have a waiting list of nearly 100 inmates waiting to participate in the Thresholds program.

The Juvenile Detention Center in Lima was damaged by a fire during reconstruction of part of the facility. This has impacted our work there yet we continued to have a presence teaching classes as we are able. The current number of residents is between 30-40 students which is approximately half of the population in relation to previous years. Ongoing communication with facility personnel has been productive and we are confident that we will be able to satisfy anticipated needs. We have an enthusiastic team of volunteers that are well matched to serve the students at this facility and enjoy working with young people very much.

Training of new volunteers has been terrific during the past year thanks to the skilled efforts of Maggie Arbuckle, Jerry Nowell, Elek Fenyes, Tina Stanton and several of our experienced volunteers. We are excited to share with you that 38 new teachers have graduated and many of them have received their clearances and additional security trainings and have begun to teach!

Fundraising through your generous support and several charitable organizations has provided us with a stable financial situation allowing us to continue serving our clients and to train new teachers. We are grateful for Mary Ellen Goldfarb and Bill Murphy for their hard work in the area of grant seeking and grant writing. We are most grateful to all of you who give of your time, resources and financial support. Thresholds in Delaware County remains strong and vital because of all of you!

*"We all make choices, but in the end our choices make us."*

**The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of  
Thresholds in Delaware County**  
By Jerry Nowell

Rather than attempting to chronicle all that has happened since our founding, I have elected to tell the Thresholds story through the contributions of ten remarkable women who have been an integral part of our history and are no longer with our organization.

We begin with *Pat Lasseter* and *Nancy Hirsig*. They heard a former inmate speak at a local Unitarian church about conditions at the Delaware County Prison (later renamed the G. W. Hill Correctional Facility.) They were so moved by what they heard that they took it upon themselves to form a carpool to transport family members from Chester to visit inmates. Later, inspired by Micky Burglass, they founded our organization in early 1975.

*Jacqui McDonald* served as our Director throughout the 1980s. She had an office at the prison and developed a strong relationship with the staff. Jacqui guided us through financial difficulties and a major rift amongst the Board of Directors. She not only ran our operations at the prison, but also was instrumental in helping us obtain United Way funding, edited the newsletter, and directed our Volunteer Training Workshops.

*Mable McMaster* taught more than 200 clients and was beloved by “her boys”. She was a “white-haired, diminutive dynamo” who enlivened our training weekends and social events. She was named Volunteer of The Century in 1999. Mable retired at the age of 88 due to a stroke she suffered while teaching.

*Terri McKay* was an inspirational teacher, adored by clients and other teachers alike. She improved our Macro teaching schedule at the Hill, served as President of the Board, and provided instruction at our Volunteer Training Workshops. Terry led by example. Her untimely death in 2001 left a hole in our organization and in our hearts. The Terrie McKay award, established in 2002 is given in her honor only in years where truly outstanding service has been exhibited by a volunteer.

*Betty Green* served Thresholds for three decades. She steered us through a financial crisis and was elected President of the Board in 1993. When we could no longer afford paid staff, she made certain that all important tasks were performed by volunteers. Betty kept our organization together until sufficient funds were raised to hire a Director. Betty was a driving force in revising our Guide & Teacher’s Manual, writing our by-laws, and getting our materials copyrighted. While retired, Betty continues as an Honorary Member of our Board of Directors.

*Michelle Rief* joined Thresholds in 1999 as the coordinator at SCI Chester, shortly after the prison opened. She became our Executive Director two years later. Charismatic, industrious, and very smart, she received her PhD from Temple in 2002. Michelle ran operations at the Hill, and helped begin our program at the Juvenile Detention Center. She also oversaw all aspects of our organization, and witnessed the launch of our website. Today she is raising her three young children and volunteering in their schools!

**The 40th Anniversary  
of  
Thresholds in Delaware County**  
*(continued)*

*Chrissy Annechino* started teaching Macro classes at SCI Chester shortly after she graduated from college. She became an outstanding teacher at the Juvenile Detention Center, and Secretary of the Board. She made important revisions to the Guide for Young People and wrote several insightful articles for our newsletters. She now teaches teenagers at the Hill for the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and is raising four children (including triplets!)

*Connie Roggio* became a volunteer in 2002 and seven years later became Program Manager at the Hill. Never at a loss for words, she was both energetic and well organized. Connie not only assured things ran smoothly at the prison, she also produced our Annual Report, edited the newsletter, ran our Annual Dinner, and organized the Volunteer Training Workshops. Her efforts were truly a labor of love. Connie is now retired out-of-state yet she continues to return to teach at our Volunteer Training Workshops.

*Fran Cook* was a beloved member of Thresholds in Delaware County for more than 25 years. She was the only person ever to serve as our Director and President of the Board. She was also President of Mid-Atlantic Thresholds and Lead Teacher for the Volunteer Training Workshops. She was part of the team that brought Thresholds to other states up and down the East Coast. Fran was an outstanding Macro teacher at SCI Chester and was named Volunteer of the Year in 2013. The Outstanding New Volunteer award is now named in her honor. Thresholds' ritual, "I am unique, important, and irreplaceable" should have Fran's picture attached. She passed away this year and is truly missed!

**THRESHOLDS SIX STEP DECISION MAKING MODEL**



DEFINE THE SITUATION



SET THE GOAL



DEVELOP THE POSSIBILITIES



EVALUATE THE POSSIBILITIES



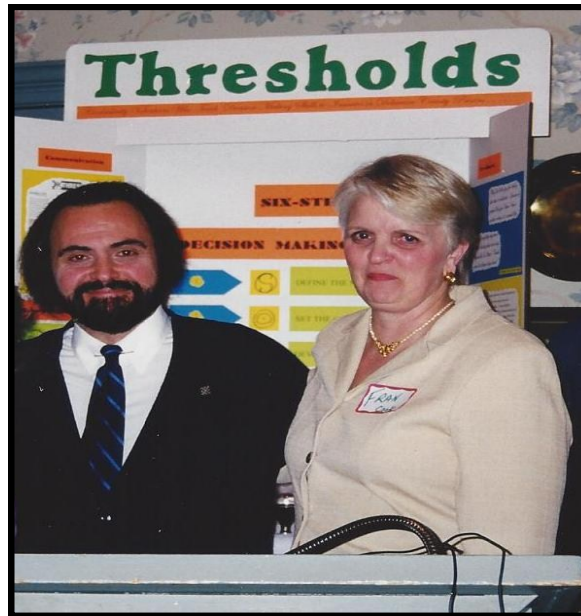
MAKE THE DECISION



IMPLEMENT THE DECISION

## A NEW AWARD HONORS FRAN COOK

By Jerry Nowell



*Fran Cook pictured with Mickey Burglass*

At our Annual Dinner on March 30, 2015, Joanne Matteucci was awarded the **Fran Cook Outstanding New Volunteer** award. This award will be given annually in honor of Fran who passed away March 16, 2015. Fran had been a mainstay of Thresholds in Delaware County for more than 25 years. She taught at SCI Chester for many years and was truly beloved by the men who attended her Macro classes. She is the only person to have served both as Executive Director and President of the Board. She was also an enthusiastic and experienced leader of our Volunteer Training workshops and even traveled to other states to train volunteers. Fran was not only a friend and dedicated leader to so many of us throughout the years, she also served as a mentor and inspiration for countless new volunteers.

It is, therefore most fitting that the first award in Fran's name goes to Joanne Matteucci. After joining Thresholds in February 2013, Jo's first question was, "What can I do to help?" and help she has! After having a very rewarding experience with her first client at the George Hill Correctional Facility, she asked if she could help teach Macro classes and has been successfully doing so ever since. Joanne was elected to our Board of Directors last October and was a presenter and a one-on-one teacher at our most recent Volunteer Training Workshop. She says, "I have witnessed firsthand the transforming power of Thresholds and therefore, I am a lifer!" Jo has accomplished so much in such a short time! Fran would say, "Right on! Keep up the good work!"

Fran is surely missed yet we are happy to share that her legacy lives on in those who were blessed to have know her personally and through the foundational work she so lovingly poured into Thresholds throughout her many years of dedicated service!

**Treasurer’s Report 2014**  
By Bill Murphy

During 2014 we were effective in cultivating a revenue stream that would allow us to continue operating our program. This past year we were once again without the support that the United Way had provided, and the funding that we had received from CEDA (Chester Economic Development Authority.)

We continued to “tighten” our belts on the expense side, and we were also proactive in pursuing funding opportunities. The Funding Committee did a remarkable job and our individual members excelled in getting funding from individual churches, banking institutions and their corporate workplace. Once again, the appeal to each Threshold associated member, resulted in a significant level of contributions.

The facilities coordinators did an excellent job in managing their expenses in addition to being very efficient in their endeavors to facilitate their programs.

A capsule look at our financial activity for 2014 follows:

Revenue	
Foundations	\$ 14,000
Churches	\$ 4,382
Corporations	\$ 2,072
Individuals	\$ 8,309
Other	\$ 5,520
	<hr/>
Total Revenue	\$ 34,283
Expenses	
Salaries	\$ 21,500
Office Supplies, Printing	\$ 2,535
Volunteer Trainings	\$ 758
Accounting, Insurance	\$ 969
Other	\$ 1,295
	<hr/>
Total Expenses	\$ 27,057
	<hr/>
Net Surplus	\$ 7,226
Assets as of 12/31/2014	
Capital One	\$ 10,805
Bryn Mawr Trust	\$ 35,423
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 46,228





**George W Hill Correctional Facility**

By Elek Fenyes

**The Men's Program**

We administer six cycles per year for men at the Hill. Classroom capacity is 20 inmates per cycle, therefore, we can potentially have 120 graduates per year. In order to meet this goal, we do allow more than 20 inmates to register per cycle because it is difficult to predict how many will attend once the cycle begins. We do, however, need to manage that number because we never want to turn anybody away due to space limitations. On the other hand, we don't want classroom seats to be vacant. In 2014 I started to solicit inmates to sign up whenever interest was not high. I was able to register 158 inmates but only 82 enrolled. By my projections, we need about 200 registrations per year for complete classes to be full at the start of a cycle. After enrollment, the average attrition rate has been approximately 50%. The largest majority of the people who do not graduate are discharged or transferred before the cycle is complete. Very few clients quit. This year's average showed improvement— 82 registered male inmates, 64 graduates. We are hopeful that the upward trend will continue in the months and years to come.

**The Women's Program**

The women's program presents a challenge for many reasons. Women are not permitted outside their housing unit without an escort, not allowed to travel to the Visitation Room independently and are not able to go to the classrooms outside their housing units. Only female volunteers are approved to work with them. The one classroom within their unit is perpetually busy. Women do not receive classroom (MACRO) instruction due to these limitations. In spite of all the obstacles or perhaps because of them, there is a high level of interest for Thresholds among women. The women's program was restarted earlier this year and they have completed one cycle. Of the approximately 280 total female population, 44 registered for that one cycle. Again, we are hopeful that interest will continue and that we will someday be able to offer both Micro and Macro sessions to the female population.

**The Volunteer Corps**

During 2014, we had 41 active volunteers. We are very fortunate to have a loyal group of volunteers. These individuals are treated with respect by the prison staff and feel volunteering with Thresholds is a positive and rewarding experience. Although, we do have a very reliable cohort of volunteers, we still need more! We understand that life's responsibilities and demands make it impossible in some cases for all of our volunteers to take a client every cycle. Often we just don't have enough volunteers available when a new cycle begins. Recruiting a friend, co-worker, or relative to check out our training sessions is always appreciated!



**George W Hill Correctional Facility**

*(continued)*

**Pathway Forward**

We started an exciting new program this year. We were contacted during the summer by Delaware County Community College. They expressed interest in working with Thresholds to identify inmates with potential to succeed in, and who are motivated to attend college. College personnel visit these inmates while they are still in prison and obtain preliminary information. Upon release, inmates are enrolled in a special “returning citizen” program that handles financial aid as well as integration into college life. When prison administrators were presented with the program it was received with enthusiastic support. We were pleasantly surprised to find that there was and continues to be a great deal of interest on the part of our clients. In fact, the majority of inmates enrolled in our last two teaching cycles have signed up! There are 22 current and former G.W. Hill inmates in the program at the time.

**George W. Hill’s 2014 Numbers**

Male inmates enrolled	82
Male inmates graduated	64
Female inmates enrolled	31
Female inmates graduated:	16
Total active volunteers	41
Total inmates enrolled	113
Total volunteer time hours with inmates	1522
Inmates enrolled in Pathway Forward program	22

**Plans for the Future**

- A. Train some volunteers to assist in the administration and operation of Thresholds at The Hill. Please contact me if you are interested in learning more about this opportunity.
- B. Improve the Women’s Program. I am working to implement better lines of communication with the women’s unit and find a way to offer MACRO classes for women.
- C. See the Pathway Forward Program Succeed. Assure that the Pathway Forward program succeeds. Some of our clients have extraordinary potential. By furthering their education, former inmates can have a better life and avoid returning to prison. This not only benefits the individual, but also their families and society as a whole.



**SCI CHESTER**

By Tina Stanton

2014 for Thresholds at SCI-Chester had its usual joys and satisfactions but seemed to have an unusual number of frustrations. Getting new volunteers approved and cleared to enter and teach in the institution, getting an officer to escort us inside, and having rooms available for us to use have all been unpredictable and often very slow to happen. But we have done what we can and tried to be compliant guests. There are many folks at SCI-Chester, inmates and staff, who know our program and fully appreciate Thresholds and its volunteers.

New requests from potential Thresholds clients keep coming in, and our waiting list is always near 100, yet we were only able to have 47 clients graduate this past year. Two of our five classes had 7 clients and other cycles had more because some volunteers took two clients at a time. Our one-on-one teaching makes us special and is often what our clients say they appreciate the most. Unfortunately, we can only serve as many clients as the number of approved and available volunteers on our roster. We lost a number of faithful volunteers the last couple of years due to life changes such as moving or health concerns. Department of Corrections (DOC) regulations have made it difficult to get new volunteer started and keep our old volunteers meeting all the security requirements. On a positive note, with these limits comes the gift of a shared understanding of what our clients must contend with on a daily basis.

The really good news is that at the last couple of VTWs more volunteers than ever have wished to be teachers at SCI-Chester. As of early 2015, four of these new volunteers are already fully cleared to teach and working with clients, while several others are well on their way to meeting DOC requirements. Also, we have four more lifers at SCI-Chester who wish to be Thresholds teachers and are beginning their volunteer training by being Thresholds clients for a cycle. So our class sizes in 2015 should be near 15 participants per cycle which is the goal we always aim for.

For many months we have missed Fran Cook's thoughtful, dedicated, and cheerful presence leading our Macro classes. Fran was very disappointed, even heartbroken, that dealing with her illness kept her from SCI-Chester and working with the men there she so appreciated and who so valued and gained from her good humor, skilled teaching, and knowledge of life and decision-making. Others have stepped up to help teach Macro, but Fran will never be replaced. Then at the end of the year Jerry Nowell, decided to retire from teaching Macro at SCI-Chester, a role he has filled in consistent, friendly partnership with Fran for many years, so leaving another irreplaceable gap in the Thresholds program. Bill Murphy and Mary Lu Bartorillo have taken over teaching the Macro classes. They do so well continuing with the skill, dedication and good humor established by Fran and Jerry. We have many fine volunteers, new and old, and there are many possibilities of a bright future for Thresholds at SCI-Chester.

**LIFE IS THE SUM OF ALL YOUR CHOICES**

**Juvenile Detention Center**

By Jerry Nowell

Teaching at the Juvenile Detention Center in 2014 was a most rewarding experience. We were there nine weekends, and twelve different teachers participated. We taught a total of 64 young people (42 boys and 22 girls) and all but 9 graduated.

Three women, teaching for the first time, not only enjoyed the experience but did a great job. They were: Janet Curran, Sandi Hollie and Kelly McNerney.

When asked what stood out about the weekends, the comments by the kids were very positive: *“Everyone participated,” “I learned a lot about myself,” “They made me think,” “Someone took time to help me,” “I could express my ideas,” and “I had a good time.”*

As usual Jim Swiggett, the Program Director, did a good job selecting the young people, and assuring that the weekend ran smoothly.

Maggie Arbuckle has agreed to be our program Coordinator going forward, for which I am very grateful. I also want to thank the outstanding volunteers who have taught with us over the year. Special recognition should go to individuals who teach regularly at the Juvenile Detention Center. They are Sandi Hollie, Gale Rankowski, Kristina Sladek, and Doug Williamson, and four who have done so for a decade: Maggie Arbuckle, Mary Lu Bartorillo, Bill Murphy and Bob Rieck.



*Never lose hope.*



**With great appreciation to the following:  
Foundations, Churches & Associations**

Boeing Volunteer Gift Match  
Maria Anna Brunner Fund (Sisters of the Precious Blood)  
Chester Monthly Meeting of Friends  
Delaware County Medical Society  
Ethel Sergeant Clark Smith Foundation  
Patricia Kind Family Foundation  
Rose Tree Media Optimists Club  
St. Christopher's Church, Gladwyne  
Sun East Credit Union  
The Brook J. Lenfest Foundation  
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County  
Wells Fargo Community Support  
Rainer and Antoinette Westphal Foundation

**Thresholds in Delaware County  
2014 In-Kind Contributions  
The County of Delaware — Office space  
CEC—Technology and Supplies  
Jerry Duffy—Website Maintenance  
Media Fellowship House—Board Meeting &  
Event Space**

We wish to sincerely thank each and every individual contributors for their donations as well!

***Working together we have made and continue to make changes in the lives of our students and our community!***