

Thresholds in Delaware County
2012 Annual Report

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



Thresholds History

Thresholds was originally developed by Milton "Mickey" Burglass while he was incarcerated in a Louisiana prison in the mid-1960s. While teaching literacy to his fellow inmates, Burglass observed that many inmates had great difficulty solving problems and making personal decisions. This inability affected all aspects of their lives and often led to arrest and incarceration. He also found that these inmates learned to read more quickly if they were taught decision-making skills. The acquired decisional skills allowed them to decide how to pronounce a word rather than be intimidated by guessing wrongly.



After Burglass' release he attended Harvard University where, for his doctorate, he formalized his decision-making process into the highly successful program known as Thresholds. He founded his own organization called Correctional Solutions, Inc. and helped to establish the first Thresholds in Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1972.

"There is no greater teacher than the jailhouse. I wouldn't want to go back for a hundred million dollars, but I wouldn't trade my years in prison for all the money in the world. If I hadn't gone to prison, I would have lived in one of my own making for the rest of my life. To remain a human being in the midst of this is the toughest task anyone ever undertakes. I feel for people who have never had the good fortune to hit bottom, as a result of their own doing, and recreate themselves from the dust.

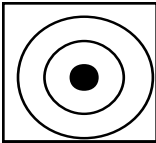
All the things I have, and all I do, came with the realization that I could decide about my life. I'm still intoxicated with the thought that I am unique, important and irreplaceable, and that I have the power to decide. The deepest level of what it means to decide, and not to react, is that you are not a bit player in someone else's movie...not just a passenger, but an active participant...hooked up to something that has no beginning and no end...part of the process..able to create the future.

Thresholds came out of my experience in the jail, but I don't want to own it. It belongs to you; not from me but through me, and through you as a teacher, so that finding life can happen to others as it did to me. The way to say 'thank you' is to pass it on." - Dr. Milton Earl Burglass.

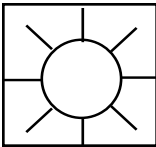
**THRESHOLDS SIX STEP
DECISION MAKING MODEL**



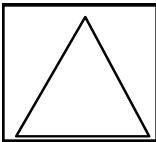
DEFINE THE SITUATION



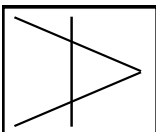
SET THE GOAL



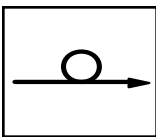
DEVELOP THE POSSIBILITIES



EVALUATE THE POSSIBILITIES



MAKE THE DECISION



IMPLEMENT THE DECISION

Thresholds in Delaware County
Volunteer Teachers for 2012

Joe Arbuckle	Peg Fraatz	Jerry Nowell
Maggie Arbuckle	Charlotte Giblin	Stacy O'Leary
Mark (Thomas) Ash	Mary Ellen Goldfarb	Sr. M George O'Reilly
Bob Ashenfelder	Lewis Gordon	Kim O'Rourke
Patricia Bakey	Richard Guariglia	Mary Ann Pezick
MaryLu Bartorillo	Barbara Hoegar	Joanne Prazenica
Anna Becker	Jim Holman	Mike Prentice
Jessie Burcat	Linda Hylinski	Gale Rankowski
Ron Burns	Stan Hyman	Bob Rieck
Pat Cahill	Zakia Islam Salam	Jen Shepper
Jen Carpenter	Linda Johnson	Richard Smyth
Carol Colombo	Tom Kane	Christina (Tina) Stanton
Fran Cook	Barbara Kosierski	Fred Struckmeyer
Cindy Cooper	Melissa Maffettone	Maureen Sullivan
Christina Crouse	Adele Malloy	Robin Thomas
Andrea Damm	Marty McCormack	Stephen Tumolo
Michael DelVacchio	Pat McKinney	Gudrun Weinberg
Joan Devine	Marian Melchiorre	Doug Williamson
Terry Doyle	Richard Miller	David Wolovitz
Diane Eichler	Alisha Moses	
Elek Fenyes	Bill Murphy	

**62 generous men and women donated their time to help
Thresholds in Delaware County
Total Teaching Hours for 2012:
5,435 hours**



THRESHOLDS IN DELAWARE COUNTY

Awards for outstanding service to Thresholds in 2012:

2012 Thresholds Volunteer of the Year:

Tina Stanton

Volunteer of the Year, George W. Hill:

Elek Fenyes

Volunteer of the Year, SCI-Chester:

~Marian Melchiorre

~Gudrun Weinberg

Volunteer of the Year, Juv. Det. Ctr.:

Gale Rankowski

New Volunteer of the Year:

Linda Hylinski-George Hill

Service to Thresholds Award:

~Fran Cook

~Dave Byrne, Deputy Warden, George Hill

~Mark Murray, Director, Juv. Detention Center

~Sheila Burke

Terrie McKay Award:

Mary Ellen Goldfarb

President's Report-2012



As I look back on 2012, I think of the Thresholds organization as the prime example of what a nonprofit should be. It is one thing to come up with a worthwhile, needed idea, and get it going. To sustain it for 37 years is remarkable. And what a year 2012 was. For all non-profit organizations, large and small, funding resources dried up or were lessened, yet the needs grew rather than diminished. What certainly did not diminish was the belief of our supporters in the mission of Thresholds in Delaware County or the appreciation of the correctional facilities for the Thresholds program. We have staying power!

We answered the challenge of the times with a new Strategic Plan, assisted by communications consultant Sheila Burke, who worked pro bono. Beginning with a recommitment to our mission, we used 2012 to answer the challenges and plan for 2013 and beyond. We increased publicity to heighten community awareness of our program, intensified our fundraising efforts with better explanations of the need, and partnered with the correctional facilities to get data on recidivism in order to show the benefits of our program. Plans were made to use social media and to recruit new volunteer teachers. The Youth Outreach Program, helmed by Chrissy Annechino, continued at Academy Park High School and the Crozer Library.

We used the Thresholds decision-making process to address the challenges of the times. It was rewarding to join with the board of directors and supporters to Define the Situation(s) so we wouldn't be overwhelmed, Set Goals, Examine Possibilities, Evaluate, Decide, and Implement. Just as we counsel our clients, when things got tough, we used the process to decide and not just react. Our decision-making model truly is a process that is empowering.

One of the most important things a nonprofit can do to sustain support is to show how giving can actually be receiving. And one of the joys of 2012 for me was tackling issues with the extraordinary board members, program coordinators, supporters, and teacher volunteers who not only kept us going for another year but set the course for the future. It has been rewarding for me to serve as President of the Board of Directors. I have learned so much about resiliency, formed friendships, watched clients right their course, and had the satisfaction of knowing that our mission continues, that Thresholds in Delaware County continues to reach out to incarcerated people and give them a tool to improve their lives.

We always tell our clients to look for the gift. The people of Thresholds in Delaware County, both outside and inside the prison walls, have been a gift to me.

Thank you.

Indecision becomes decision with time.

Mary Ellen Goldfarb
President, Thresholds in Delaware County

The Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center
2012 Summary

Do not plant your dreams
in the field of indecision,
where nothing ever grows
but the weeds of "what-if."

Our eleventh year at the Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center was one of our best. We taught nine weekends and served 66 young people. Our twelve volunteers contributed a total of 644 teacher hours. We are pleased to welcome Gale Rankowski as a regular, while giving Chrissy Annechino a leave to raise her beautiful new baby girl.

Our success is due, in no small part, to the cooperation of an outstanding group of young people, as well as the help of the Detention Center staff. Director Mark Murray has enthusiastically supported our program, facilitated a recidivism study by Bob Reick and agreed to speak at our annual dinner. Jim Swiggett, the Program Director, picks the kids, makes all arrangements and handles any problems. We miss Jim Phillips, who retired in 2012.

It is often difficult to know what impact we're actually having. To find out, we ask the young people to fill out a questionnaire. Although the answers may sound like the work of some PR machine, but it's not true. These are the kids exact words:

What stood out?

Everybody gets involved; we can work at our own pace; we hear other's opinions and participate without without being embarrassed; they don't tell you what to do, but they let you decide for yourself; I believe I can turn my life around.

How were the teachers?

Energetic, fun, patient, great, friendly, related to us, compassionate and loving.

What would you do differently?

The majority said "nothing", "I don't know" or left the question blank. Others suggested: talk more about our problems, more role playing, another picture (art form), make it faster, make sessions longer, give out candy, come more often, keep on doing what you're doing. Finally, some of the kids talked about what they could do differently: think before I act, do better, don't smoke pot and make better decisions

Jerry Nowell
Program Director

**George W. Hill Correctional Facility
2012 SUMMARY**

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

This year marked my first full year as the Program Director for Thresholds at the George W. Hill Correctional Facility and I must say that it really did keep me very busy. The hardest part of my job is, without question, trying to keep up with the ever moving clients in the prison. It isn't uncommon for a client to miss a Micro appointment without notice. Maybe they were suddenly moved to the DUI building and are no longer able to meet with their teacher in the main facility. Maybe they did something wrong and were placed in the "hole" for a period of time. Maybe they had to attend court that day or were released from the facility or were sick and in the medical unit. Whatever the reason, the difficulty lies in determining why the client didn't show up and doing so quickly so as to not have the teacher come out again the following week and be inconvenienced again. Being a non-profit working in the prison, we are not provided the same access to the prisoners' data that employees are provided. Trying to find out where a client is housed in the prison or why they missed an appointment, is a surprisingly difficult task. This is why I am grateful for the patience that my volunteer teachers have given to me over the last year. They have worked with me as I climbed the learning curve and have patiently understood that volunteering in a prison sometimes means having to deal with a grumpy Guard, or having to wait as their client arrives 30 minutes late.

We at Thresholds continually try to get these types of issues resolved and do our best to limit any type of problem that may cause our volunteers' time at the prison to be less than rewarding. In 2012, I made an amazing connection at the prison in the form of Deputy Warden Dave Byrne. Dave has gone out of his way on many occasions this year to make Thresholds' work at the prison as convenient as possible for us. I can't say enough about his support this past year and for that reason, we will be presenting him with a special recognition at our annual dinner.

A special thank you goes out to Elek Fenyes, who has been so dedicated to the Thresholds mission. He has worked so hard this past year to help strengthen and improve our work at the Hill. His help with Macro has been essential to its success and I know the Thresholds clients benefit greatly from his extensive experience. I'm so pleased that he will be receiving the George Hill Volunteer of the Year award for 2012; he is most deserving of this honor.

And a great big thank you to my un-sung volunteers who quietly meet week after week with their clients, teach the steps, present the certificates and then start again with a new client when the next cycle begins. Thresholds couldn't exist without you.

I have a few goals for 2013 that I'd like to share with you. First, I'd like more female inmates at the Hill to benefit from Thresholds. I believe we now have the volunteer teacher base to be able to serve more women. Second, with the help of Joe Arbuckle, I'd like to finish our project of building a database that can easily calculate recidivism at the Hill. Third, I'd like to develop a more enriching re-entry program that really offers our clients the information they need to help them succeed when they get out. And lastly, I look forward to working with the new volunteers who attended VTW in February and are really excited about getting started as a Thresholds teacher.

Jerry Duffy
Program Director, GWHCF

SCI CHESTER—2012 SUMMARY

Don't make a permanent decision for your temporary emotion

Through 2012 new requests for the Thresholds program have continued to come in at SCI- Chester, and a team of dedicated Thresholds volunteers has continued to work with a wide variety of men in the institution. Many of these volunteers have taught Thresholds at SCI-Chester for many years, a few of them have since the institution opened 12 years ago. However, quite a few of our SCI volunteers have changed location or work hours or otherwise moved on to other things, so during 2012 we became rather short on teachers, making our classes on the small side, only seven to ten clients. This past year 49 men have started the program and 34 graduated in 2012 with another 9 starting in November 2012 and graduating in 2013.

We now have a waiting list of over 55 men, and it is too bad we cannot serve them all, but the good news is that we also have five new volunteers who trained in January who wish to teach at SCI-Chester. When they get through their clearance and orientation with the DOC we will be very glad to have with us: Debbie Quagliarello, Laurie Bass, Kristina Sladek, Bill Ryan, and Laurie Truluck. Welcome aboard!

On a sadder note, Key Murray, who long taught Thresholds at SCI-Chester with dignity, humor, and skill to clients who much appreciated him, died in December of 2012. He had taught Thresholds at SCI until just about a year ago, and passed peacefully in hospice care in Wilmington DE.

Tina Stanton
SCI-Chester

Francis Key Murray

Key Murray taught Thresholds at SCI-Chester since near the time the prison opened, taught Thresholds before that at the Delaware County prison and some at the Chester County prison. He also spent some time helping out a Thresholds chapter in Lancaster County. He worked in the prisons with a good humor, kindness, dignity and wisdom that his clients openly appreciated and responded well to.

Key first learned about Thresholds in 1992 from a church notice board in West Chester when he lived in the Chadds Ford area and took his training over thirty years ago. In addition to teaching countless micro classes he served as president of Mid-Atlantic Thresholds, served on the board of Thresholds in Delaware County, and helped at Volunteer training weekends. He also brought the Thresholds teachings, under a different name, to a women's shelter in Wilmington, DE. Key once said, "I do (this work) because I know it is a good thing to help others who need our help so they can move forward in life." In 2007 Key was named Volunteer of the Year by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

Key had a law degree from McGillian and was a member of the Maryland Bar Association, although he never practiced law, choosing instead a career in finance. In addition to Thresholds Key was a Big Brother, taught with the Reading Assist program in Wilmington, working with children with dyslexia, and through various types of volunteering helped many people in many ways. Key died peacefully in hospice care in Wilmington DE in December of 2012.



The Terrie McKay Award

The Terrie McKay Award is presented to a Thresholds volunteer who has: taught both micros and macros, uses the decisional model in his/her own life, is an inspiration to other teachers, and embodies the “spirit and attributes of Terrie McKay.”

So who is Terrie McKay? Terrie was a member of Delaware County Thresholds in most of the 1990s. She taught both micro and macro classes at the Hill, and was an important part of our Volunteer Training Workshops. She re-organized the macro schedule and was President of the Board. She died of cancer 11 years ago: March 14, 2001.

As a young person Terrie lived a wild and eventful life. She then found her soul mate (her husband Matthew), raised three children, was a school bus driver, and operated the family’s painting business.

Terrie was truly one of a kind. Her clothing was unique and her hair styles ranged from shoulder length to bald. She had strong opinions: despised the death penalty and believed fervently in the goodness of every person. She used the decisional model in her daily life and was devoted to meditation.

Terrie is remembered for her free spirit, her loving nature, originality and devotion to Thresholds. She often said, “Thresholds changed my life.” She was unquestionably unique, important and irreplaceable.



Since 2002 the Terrie McKay award has been given to nine Thresholds volunteers. They are: Betty Green, Gerry Young, Jerry Nowell, Alan Stapleton, Fran Cook, Maggie Arbuckle, Terry Reed, Bill Murphy, Chrissy Annechino and Bob Rieck. We are pleased to present this year’s award to Mary Ellen Goldfarb for her commitment to Thresholds.

Thresholds in Delaware County
2012 In-Kind Contributions

- The County of Delaware — Office space
- CEC—Technology and Supplies
- Neumann University — Training facilities
- Media Fellowship House— Meeting space
- Sheila Burke— Communications Consultant

Gifts from Foundations, Churches and Associations in 2012

MA Brunner Fund (Sisters of the Precious Blood)
Boeing Foundation
Sun Federal Credit Union
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
City of Chester Economic Development Authority
Chester Monthly Meeting of Friends
Delaware County Community Foundation
Delaware County Medical Society
The Douty Foundation
Ethel Sergeant Clark Foundation
Grove Methodist Church
HBE Foundation
The Patricia Kind Foundation
The William King Charitable Trust
The Brooke Lenfest Foundation
The Thayer Corporation
United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania

We would also like to thank all individual contributors for their donations.

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

2012-2013 Thresholds Board of Directors

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Vice President—Bob Rieck
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