



# Dignity & Respect

A publication of South Hills Interfaith Ministries

Spring 2011

## Save the Dates

### Sun., April 3

Faith Community Open House  
At SHIM, from 12:30–3 pm

### Sun., April 10

32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holocaust Observance  
“Words and Music: Saving the Voices”  
Begins at 7:30 pm, at Our Lady of Grace  
Catholic Church

### Wed.–Fri., April 13–15

Volunteer Appreciation Receptions  
See page 4 for details

### Wed., April 27

Budgeting Seminar  
In collaboration with NeighborWorks of  
Western Pennsylvania, held at SHIM from  
6–8 pm

### Sat., April 30

Feinstein Challenge—Contribution  
Deadline is Tues., May 24 at SHIM

### Thurs., May 5

Wellness Expo and Health Screenings  
at SHIM, in collaboration with St. Clair  
Hospital

### Tues., May 24

Annual All Volunteer Meeting  
At SHIM, from 9:30–11:30 a.m.

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania **1.800.732.0999**. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## HOLOCAUST OBSERVANCE

*Service set for Sun., April 10*

Words & Music: Saving The Voices will be the theme of South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) Holocaust Observance Service.

**When:** Sun., April 10

**Where:** Our Lady of Grace Church, 310 Kane Blvd., Scott Township

**Time:** 7:30 pm

Bring your family and neighbors to this one-of-a kind observance, one of the oldest interfaith programs of its kind in the country! This year is the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Observance!

Over 20 churches and synagogues are expected to participate, and the Observance will include readings, music pieces written during the Holocaust, and the attendance of many local survivors.

According to SHIM's Executive Director, James Guffey, “This service is very inclusive, and people throughout the region come together to remember the Jewish people whose lives were lost.”

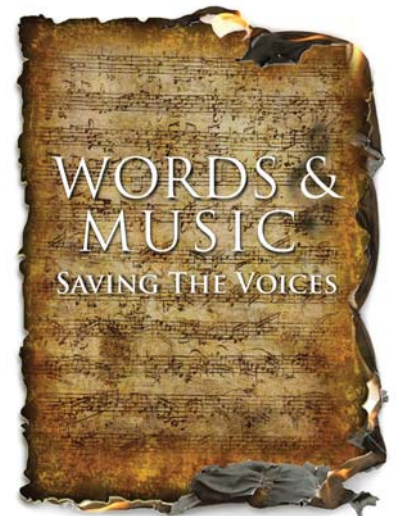
“We want people to come away with a different piece of history and understand that we can't lose the voices of the Holocaust,” added volunteer committee chairwoman, Amy Spiegel Katz. “This is our opportunity to honor the triumph of the human spirit.”

Musical directors are violist Paul Silver of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Rich Pinkerton, Director of Music at Southminster Presbyterian Church.

“Music was one of the few things that came out of the camps that allowed the prisoners to express themselves,” said Rich Pinkerton. “Music connects all of us in some way; it can bring out emotions that can't be explained in ordinary terms.”

Paul Silver has been a volunteer musician playing in the Observance for over 10 years. “This service is genuine and natural,” he said. “This year, the music is the interlocking lace that will hold all the pieces of the service together. These songs were performed with whatever instruments the people had with them at the time, and their message was conveyed in formats they enjoyed, such as a cabaret tune, a fight song or a ballad,” Silver added.

*Continued on page 7*



## Mission

South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) is an interfaith organization actively extending God's love with dignity and respect to the people of the South Hills of Pittsburgh.

## Staff

Jim Guffey  
*Executive Director*

Doris Nagel  
*Program Director*

Jeanna-Mar Simmons  
*Community Relations Manager*

Christina Miles  
*Family Services Coordinator*

Carol Cowser  
*Financial Administrator*

Natalie Klimas  
*Administrative Assistant*

### Prospect Park Family Center

Courtney Bahr Macurak  
*Site Director*

Lori Haller  
*Family Development Specialist*

Lori Sellar  
*Family Development Specialist*

Jinan Hissan  
*Community Liaison*

### Early Childhood Program

Jennifer Smith  
*Lead Teacher*

Bishnu Timsina  
*Assistant Teacher*

## United Way Contributor Choice

If your work place conducts a United Way campaign, you can support SHIM through donor option. Should you choose to designate all or part of your gift, please remember SHIM and our contributor choice number, 383. The United Way offers an easy and painless way to support SHIM through payroll deduction.

## Contact Us

Learn more about how you can help support our mission, please call us at **412.854.9120** or visit us online at **[www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org)**.

## Executive Director's Message

*Balancing the Budget: Impact to be felt by SHIM*

States across the country are facing significant deficits. Most governors are putting forth state budgets with significant spending cuts and no new taxes. As I write this, Pennsylvania is projecting a \$4–5 billion deficit. Newly-elected governor, Tom Corbett, is expected to follow many of his fellow governors and propose a budget with significant cuts, particularly in health and human services/programs and education.

The impact of budget cuts on SHIM may be two-fold. First, food programs that are funded by the state through the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank are in jeopardy of being reduced thus potentially limiting the amount of food available to assist SHIM. Funding for SHIM's Prospect Park Family Center in Whitehall, which is funded through Allegheny County-Department of Human Services, may be reduced. This will limit some of our programs and services that are provided to the refugee families.



The greater impact on SHIM potentially will be more and more people needing our services as programs are eliminated or reduced.

- In February, 40,000 adult Allegheny County residents became ineligible for the adultBasic health insurance. These low-income individuals are now faced with either no insurance coverage or having to pay market pricing for insurance which may deplete their financial resources for food, utilities or rent/mortgage payments.
- Families that received assistance with daycare that allowed mom and dad to seek employment may now be faced with having no daycare. Either mom or dad may now have to quit their job to provide for their children. **In many, many cases families are going to be turning to agencies like SHIM for help.**

SHIM has been able to meet the growing demand over the recent years only through the support of our donors. **It may seem cliché; however, it is true—your support is more critical today than at any other time.** SHIM has been blessed that we have not had to reduce or limit our service; however, SHIM must live within our means. Your support will not only allow us to meet our existing needs but will prepare us for the demand ahead. As always, we greatly appreciate your investment in us and the South Hills community.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jim Guffey.

James Guffey  
Executive Director

# Back-to-School Initiative will Help Learners of All Ages

*College students now eligible*

SHIM's Back-to-School initiative of providing new backpacks and school supplies to our certified families is a valuable resource in offsetting the financial impact of the back to school process. Currently, 48 percent of the individuals we serve are school children under the age of 18.

<b>General:</b>	
• Backpacks	• Pocket folders
• Pencils	• Pens
• Pencil Boxes	• Pencil Sharpeners
• Erasers	• Calculators
• Scissors	• Glue
• Notebooks	• Notebook Paper
• Crayons/Markers/Colored Pencils	
<b>Higher Ed:</b>	
• Thumb drives	• Highlighters
• Calculators	• Page tabs/Post-its
• Index cards	• 3-ring Binders (1–3")

This fall, the initiative will expand to assist learners of all ages, including college students and non-traditional students who are certified clients. If SHIM is meant to be a bridge to better economic self-sufficiency, attaining higher levels of education correlates with an increase in earning potential. All certified college-age and non-traditional students will need to show proof of current enrollment in an approved higher education setting and come in person to select supplies at our school supplies distribution in August.

In order to meet the anticipated increase in requests for school supplies that this program amendment warrants, a targeted campaign of gathering school supplies begins now and will continue through the summer months. Requested items are detailed on the left.



clip and return

## Reaching OUT to You!

We've updated our newsletter to provide a new level of communication. We hope to create a SHIM community resource for people to come and share experiences and learn something new about SHIM. We also need to update our database records, so we can work smarter. You can help us by completing this **short reader survey**.

We thank you for your feedback!

Return the completed form by one of the following options:

**Mail:** South Hills Interfaith Ministries  
5301 Park Ave.  
Bethel Park, PA 15102

**Email:** jsimmons@shim-center.org

**Phone:** 412.854.9120

**Fax:** 412.854.9123

We hope you enjoy the newsletter! Please let us know if you have any comments. We promise we'll listen carefully!

**How would you like to read this newsletter?**

- Hard copy only
- Online only
- Both

**How do you prefer we contact you about special events and services? (Please provide your information.)**

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other story ideas or comments you'd like to share:** \_\_\_\_\_

# AmeriCorps Member Shares Heart at PPFC

AmeriCorps member, Emily Ludwig shares her time and talents to support SHIM's Prospect Park Family Center (PPFC). Along with directly supporting the staff, she has designed a newsletter, created art projects for Family Fun Nights and organized and spruced up areas around the Center to make it a more welcoming environment.

The State AmeriCorps grant, which allowed Compass AmeriCorps to be created, is designated to help connect refugees and immigrants to social services in Pittsburgh.



Emily Ludwig, an AmeriCorps volunteer, poses at PPFC Food Pantry.

## What drew you to becoming an AmeriCorps member?

After a stint in retail management, I was looking for something on the opposite end of the work spectrum. I wanted to work in a non-profit organization to see if it would be a good fit for me. The AmeriCorps program gave me a way to test it out. There are lots of perks: it's an 11-month contract, you receive a modest living stipend, and when you finish your contract, you earn an educational stipend to use for college expenses.

## Would you recommend the AmeriCorps program to others?

Absolutely! If you are willing to put in the effort, dedicate yourself to the program and take advantages of the opportunities available during your service year, you gain personal and professional growth.

## Tell me about your work at PPFC

I support the staff and handle client overflow so they can focus on providing the best possible care for the families. I really enjoy using my artistic skills whenever possible.

One of our challenges is fitting all of the programs and the people who use the Center's services into the limited amount of space we have. Equally tough, is navigating the ever-changing government and social service paperwork.

## What would the public find most surprising about your work with our families?

Many people are surprised to learn what AmeriCorps is! But I think the idea of working with an English as a second language (ESL) population can be intimidating. Once people spend time at Prospect Park, they are excited by how friendly, open and appreciative the families are for the services the PPFC provides and the people working there.

## What are your professional aspirations?

I hope to direct a national (then an international) non-profit organization. Being in AmeriCorps has allowed me to sample different non profits so I can hone my interests.

## Post a Review of SHIM on GreatNonprofits.com

GreatNonprofits is the leading developer of tools that allow people to find, review, and share information about great—and perhaps not yet great—nonprofits.

In this era of social media, millions of people have discovered that a review by someone who has gone to a restaurant or tried out a doctor is a useful way to evaluate the suitability of those services for themselves.

Similarly, if a person has direct experience with a charitable organization, GreatNonprofits makes it easy to share that knowledge.



Ask yourself, when was the last time you took a risk and tried a new restaurant, saw a movie, or bought a camcorder without checking out reviews by other consumers online? GreatNonprofits is bringing the same kind of "word-on-the-street" recommendations to help donors and volunteers find good nonprofits.

Reviews are written by people who have had a direct experience with the nonprofit they are writing about. They are typically written by volunteers, board members, clients, donors, community partners or other stakeholders of the nonprofit. Paid staff members should not post reviews for their own organization.

GreatNonprofits provides "on-the-ground" perspectives of a nonprofit. Reviews are a vivid, emotionally engaging, and authentic

way to tell the story of a nonprofit's work. GreatNonprofits invites you to tell your story through the SHIM profile by adding information about programs through pictures, text and videos.

### How to Post a Review:

1. Go to [www.greatnonprofits.com](http://www.greatnonprofits.com).
2. Type South Hills Interfaith Ministries into the Nonprofit Finder
3. Click the "Write A Review" button
4. Follow the directions on the review page and press submit.

Thank you for helping to tell our story!

# Recipe for a Quality After-School Program

With the financial support of Heinz Endowments and Allegheny County Department of Human Services, SHIM began an after-school program for children of the Prospect Park neighborhood in the Baldwin Whitehall School District. The program kicked off January 18, at Whitehall Presbyterian Church and runs five days a week. All the elements of a strong program—homework assistance, academic activities, enrichment opportunities and a nutritional component have been incorporated into this program that serves 55 children daily in grades K–5.

During the first quarter, the children participated in themed activities that included the topics of getting to know each other, friendships vs. bullying, good hygiene habits, and reading for pleasure. After-school hours have been filled with games, songs, puzzles, tutoring assistance, projects, and physical activities that develop a variety of skills and promote learning. Each day holds something new and different to encourage the children to explore their full potential.

This program is still adding volunteers who can offer the children one-on-one assistance with homework and projects. If you would like to be part of this wonderful program and share your time and talents with a child, please contact Doris Nagel, SHIM Program Director, at **412.854.9120 x20** or **dnagel@shim-center.org**.

## Recipe

### Ingredients:

- Fun-loving children
- Enthusiastic staff
- Eager volunteers
- A safe, well-maintained facility
- Engaging activities
- Collaboration between the school, community, and program
- Opportunities for caring relationships

Mix even amounts of all ingredients until a quality after-school program forms. Be sure that an appropriate number of staff is engaged to allow caring relationships to grow. Vary the activities to include academic, recreational, and cultural elements equally. Use sound fiscal management and written policies and procedures to insure a program that promotes learning and positive youth development. Serve this program to children who will benefit from such a quality opportunity.

## Kamp Kaleidoscope

Sunshine, camps, and family visits. Cool breezes, long play-filled days, and trips. For children, summer usually holds a variety of activities that seem far removed from the school-year classrooms. Yet for some children, engaging activities that include field trips, healthy meals, and chances to strengthen their academic achievement are out of reach. "Summer presents a unique and essential opportunity to provide children with fun, engaging learning experiences—something every child deserves," states Ron Fairchild, Executive Director of the Center for Summer Learning. SHIM's youth programs provide the children of Prospect Park in the Baldwin Whitehall School District the chance to do these things and more.

Kamp Kaleidoscope—SHIM's 6-week summer program for school-aged children—**begins on June 13 and runs until July 22**. Kaleidoscope Kids—our pre-school summer program—runs concurrently and is offered to children ages 3–5. Each day is filled with physical, academic, and enrichment activities that develop new skills and talents. The program also provides healthy snacks and lunches. Camp counselors work diligently to meet the needs of each child, helping to bolster self-esteem, self-confidence and improve social and behavioral skills.

A day at Kamp might include a game of four square or double dutch jump rope as the children arrive, a trip to Whitehall Pool for swim lessons, and then a lunch of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, fruit, cookie, and juice box. Then a game of reading bingo, followed by a soccer or dodge ball match before it's time to go home. Each day is filled with activities that keep the children engaged and eager for what comes next!

If you are interested in helping with these programs, Doris Nagel, SHIM's Program Director, would be happy to discuss them with you. She can be reached at **412.854.9120 x20** or by email at **dnagel@shim-center.org**.



Children pose for photos at a previous Kamp.

Top: Ba Blu Moo (left) and Chong Nin Way Oo (right)  
Bottom: Oluwatomiwa (left) and Oluwatomisin Ojo (right)



# Your Support Makes A Difference

At each new volunteer orientation, participants are given a stone to hold. Some volunteers ask questions, others put it in their pocket or purse—curious but not quizzical. At the end of the training, Jeanna-Mar Simmons, SHIM's Community Relations Manager, explains the significance, "Many of you are familiar with the ripple effect of a small stone being thrown into a pond making concentric circles that ripple to the shore line. We at SHIM believe that sharing your time, talents and financial resources goes a long way to improving the lives of families that are struggling in the South Hills."

Each small gesture has more of an impact than you think. Volunteers share a smile or a joke with families as they select their food or load groceries into their cars, breaking the tension in what can be a stress-filled day. A volunteer calls into the office to say, "I have a few extra hours open in today, is there anything you need help with?" just as the staff is trying to figure out how they get inventory moved or a mailing completed. An unexpected financial gift arrives just as additional funding is needed.

We are indebted to those of you who choose to make a difference and are grateful for the splash your stone makes.

## Gift of Time

SHIM volunteers have a passion for showing compassion. While there is work to be done—sorting and shelving food, cleaning freezers, answering phones, and taking donations—it is the spirit in which the service is done that is so special. The reasons people choose to serve at SHIM vary: retirement, loss of a spouse or partner leaving a hole in their activity schedule, concern about hunger in America, a profession of faith through service, unexpected unemployment leaving too much time to worry, or belief that all individuals should have access to the basic resources of food and clothing. Regardless of the reason, volunteers step up to the job with humor, commitment, and pride.

**SHIM will host three volunteer luncheons** at our Bethel Park location. For more information on volunteering, call **412.854.9120 x24**.

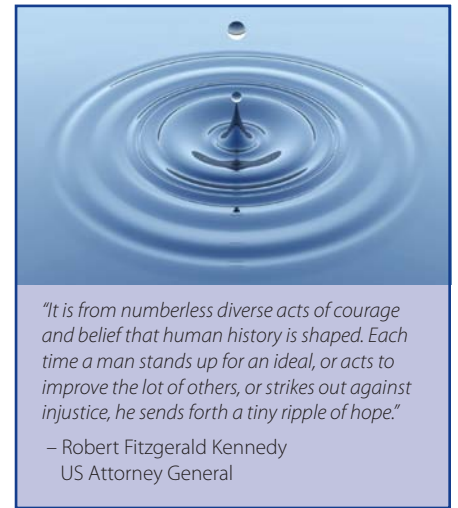
- **Wed., April 13**, from 11:30 am–1 pm
- **Thurs., April 14**, from 12–1:30 pm
- **Fri., April 15**, from 12–1:30 pm

## Gift of Money

What your financial contribution does in the lives of the families we serve:

- **\$20** Provides enough food to make three evening meals for a family of four
- **\$30** Supplies winter hats and mittens/gloves for five children
- **\$55** Buys a winter coat for one child or adult
- **\$70** Supplies an emergency food box for a family in crisis
- **\$75** Purchase snacks for the early childhood program for a month
- **\$120** Supplies a household with food pantry visits for a month
- **\$225** Provides transportation for a field trip for the early childhood program
- **\$300** Enables a child to participate in a summer enrichment program for 6 weeks

**Donations made in March and April will be multiplied as part of the Feinstein Challenge.**



## "Celebrate with SHIM" a Night to Remember



Event chairs Kathleen and Tony Zimmer with Rick Sebak

T'was the midst of the holiday season, when over 200 guests joined SHIM at the second annual "Celebrate with SHIM—Building Bridges for our Neighbors in Need" fund raising event at LeMont Restaurant on Dec. 15. The tables were adorned with the greatest of care in hopes that laughter would soon fill the air. By all accounts, the view, food, special presentation by local WQED and PBS Producer Rick Sebak and the variety of Silent and Chinese auction items were just in perfect proportion to make the evening a delight.

The event was generously underwritten by Anna and Ed Dunlap, LeMont Restaurant and supported by several key sponsors, Bethel Park Printing; KDKA TV2; Home Instead Senior Care (South Hills and Washington County); Riley Hewitt Witte and Romano, Rycon Construction, Inc.; and St. Clair Hospital.

Our thanks goes out to Kathleen and Tony Zimmer of Bethel Park Printing for their leadership as chairs of the event. Under their direction, the event committee worked tirelessly to pull all the resources together. **We exceeded our \$25,000 goal!**

## NeighborWorks of Western PA

This spring marks the one year anniversary of our exciting partnership with NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania. NeighborWorks is a Pittsburgh based non-profit with the mission of "financial empowerment that promotes homeownership and stable communities". NeighborWorks actively pursues this mission by providing free educational and counseling opportunities that help families build the foundation they need to achieve financial security.



where clients have the opportunity to view and discuss their current credit report and financial situation. Tammy then works with individuals to create tailored budget plans, which include saving and debt repayment, as a step towards financial independence and sustainability.

In addition to having a representative on-site monthly, SHIM will be hosting a Financial Literacy workshop, a basic class offered by NeighborWorks that teaches goal planning, budgeting, and general knowledge regarding predatory lending and identity theft. The first workshop will be held on **Wed., April 27**, from 6–8 pm, at our 5301 Park Ave. location in Bethel Park. Light refreshments will be served.

Education is key in helping our clients achieve self-sufficiency and we will look to provide financial education opportunities quarterly. All services provided by NeighborWorks are at no charge and are open to the community.

Currently, NeighborWorks is utilizing SHIM space to meet face-to-face with our clients during monthly food distributions. Over 50 SHIM individual households have consulted with Tammy Grzelka, our NeighborWorks representative, in confidential sessions,

## VisionLink

*Software product enhances service delivery*

SHIM is currently in the process of implementing a new data management software program called VisionLink. This program will allow SHIM to more accurately track client pantry and program usage rates, as well as provide the staff with a concise way to keep track of case management progress. By tracking program usage by our clients, we will be able to determine next steps for educational opportunities, as well as pin-point and address the most common issues that affect those we serve.

We also will have up-to-date demographic data on our clients, which is important in pursuing grants and other funding to sustain the mission of SHIM.

Information Technology has made life easier for businesses and organizations alike. Activities and processes that may have taken days to complete, now only take minutes. Time is now reallocated to more valuable activities that can benefit the organization and those we serve.



## Wellness Day and Health Screenings

*In Collaboration with St. Clair Hospital*

Like SHIM, St. Clair Hospital has a long history of serving the communities of the South Hills. The Hospital has made monetary and food donations to SHIM and is now expanding its role with the organization. To help identify and address the health care priorities of community members in need, St. Clair Hospital will be hosting a wellness day at the SHIM facility on **Thurs., May 5**. The event will feature medical screenings along with educational and interactive activities, designed to provide basic preventative medicine.



SHIM Executive Director Jim Guffey shares his thoughts, "Over the past year, we have been appreciative of the support given from St. Clair Hospital. As one of the largest employers and community leaders in the South Hills, St. Clair Hospital understands the importance of a strong community and the vital role non profits play. We look forward to additional opportunities to collaborate as we strive to meet the needs of families in our community."

## HOLOCAUST OBSERVANCE

*Continued from page 1*

"We will be sharing the personal story of the writer, so it will broaden everyone's horizon about the experiences they endured. If the service helps one more person understand the Holocaust, it will be worthwhile."

Everyone is welcome to join a period of reflection with participants following the service. A free-will offering supports SHIM.

Please plan on attending this very special Observance!



## South Hills Interfaith Ministries

5301 Park Avenue  
Bethel Park, PA 15102  
www.shim-center.org  
Address Service Requested

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PITTSBURGH, PA  
Permit No. 1235

## Souper Bowl Win

While the Pittsburgh Steelers were not victorious in their quest for the ultimate win at Super Bowl XLV, SHIM came out a winner in the Souper Bowl Challenge. Prior to the Super Bowl, schools in the Allegheny Intermediate Unit faced off against the schools in Green Bay's Cooperative Educational Service Agency in their own Souper Bowl Challenge. The contest was to determine which home town could collect the most cans of soup for donation to local food pantries. The final results:

**Allegheny Intermediate Unit**  
**86,093 cans**

**Green Bay's CESA**  
**8,718 cans**



South Park Elementary collected over 1,700 cans for SHIM!

SHIM received the bounty of this wager from several area school districts and congregations, including South Park Elementary, South Park High School, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Whitehall Church, Harrison Middle School in Baldwin Whitehall and Boyce Middle School in the Upper St. Clair School district.

## Multiply Your Blessings Feinstein Challenge

*Make your dollars go further*

During the months of March and April, all designated monetary and food donations made to SHIM count as part of the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Feinstein Challenge.

Rhode Island businessman and philanthropist Alan Feinstein challenges hunger relief agencies to rally their supporters in an effort to fight hunger in our country. His one million dollar challenge is divided proportionately among participating agencies.

Help us to get a significant piece of the funding pie. Appeal letters will be in your mailbox soon.

