

Bridging the Community was held as a Zoom meeting on Wednesday January 10, 2024, from 7:00pm to 8:20pm. This is our 152nd meeting with 22 interactive attendees. This meeting was one day after a serious rain storm and a good number of community members were without electricity, so could not attend the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm featuring the Good Samaritan located at 342 Birch St, Kennett Square, PA 19348. Thank you for volunteering to be host for Bridging, Rebecca Villanueva.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the web site: www.bridgingthecommunity.com and there will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library. *Bridging the Community* meetings are held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Joan Holliday welcomed everyone and led us in a moment of silence to heal, and for peace from the ongoing wars. Joan then shared Bridging's Framework and shared the Guiding Principles. Email: dochollisv@aol.com.

Joan Holliday asked people to share stories that reflect our guiding principles. **Joan Holliday** shared a story about community residents sharing vegetables and helping low-income families receive fresh produce.

Jeanne Searer shared about Liliana Guzman getting more involved in the community and how great it is to see.

Janet Zeis shared seeing all the positive help with the fires on Union Street, Kennett; the holiday celebrations and how we all try in the community to unite.

Jeanne Searer talked about how people care and everyone plays a part in making the community a better place to: "Grow up in and grow old in."

Kevin Beck talked about the schools helping with the fires and the great work done on housing the families affected by the fires. Email: dochollisv@aol.com, jeannecrew491@hotmail.com, janet@kacsimpact.org, KBeck@chesco.org

The overall context is our living philosophy, reflected by our land's energy/spirit - peaceful, progressive, inclusivity. "Bridging" promotes this living philosophy for each and every day.

Vision: Kennett Square: Every day a better place to grow up in and grow old in

Guiding Principles:

We will come from the heart----not an obligation

We will work for community---not personal agendas

We will focus on the potential side----not the issue side

We will keep it a process---not a program with infrastructure

We will value each person's contribution; each has a role to play--not focused on hierarchy

Joan Holliday turned it over to **Kate Wickersham**, our new Bridging the Community facilitator. She asked people that have previously participated in bridging meetings to

share about why they are here and any bridges they hope to make (Kate explained we would ask for people to “bridge” right after they have spoken because of being on Zoom. Email: dochollisv@aol.com, kwickersham@lchservices.org

The Following persons offered their resources, needs and new ideas:

Liliana Guzman (The Garage Community and Youth Center) – join The Garage Community and Youth Center on Wednesday 1/17/2024 at the Kennett Library for Family Fishing Night (looking for volunteers) 6-8pm. Join the Garage Community and Youth Center Thursday 1/18/2024 at the center from 5:30pm to learn how to navigate the school system Skyward. This is an opportunity to practice your Spanish and English as you are working together.
Email: liliana.guzman@garageyouthcenter.org

Natalie Santiago (Kennett Trails Alliance) - introduced their newest employee, **Kymm Bontrager**. All are working towards fishing night at the library. Just had a very successful event, Three Kings Day, over 700 people attended, and the community was represented well. They are finalizing the yearly calendar. They support Casa Guanajuato who will be having a community day and giving back to the community, plus much more.

Kymm Bontrager is starting week two at her job and learning fast, she feels so fortunate to be here.

BRIDGES – Joan Holliday asked **Crystal Crampton** could Juneteenth committee connect with Square Roots ; she will get back to them. **Rebecca Villanueva** invited **Kymm Bontrager** to come see their space and they would love to partner. **Mayra R. Castillo** would like to connect about migrant families.

Emails: Nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com, kbontrager@ksqroots.com, dochollisv@aol.com, crampton.crystal@yahoo.com, rebeccav@goodsamservices.org and Mayrac@cciu.org

Sofia Soto (Bilingual Program Coordinator/CHW Maternal and Child Health Consortium)

- West Chester office is moving to 1475 Phoenixville Pike. Sofia shared that their Family Benefits program is co-locating at the Kennett Library every other Wednesday, helping the community apply for SNAP and Medical Assistance benefits. The second flyer is sharing the days that Lupton Law will be at our different offices offering free immigration consultations. This flyer is both in Spanish and English.

BRIDGES - Natalie Santiago asked about services open to the public or not, they are open you just need to make an appointment. She would like to connect.

Emails - ssoto@ccmchc.org, Nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com

Kevin Beck (Chester County Department of Emergency Services, Community Outreach

Coordinator) - Emergency Services of Chester County - highlighted all that helped with the Oxford fire and then talked about the past weather challenges and upcoming weather challenges. Kevin encouraged all to check out preparedness tips on their

website. They want to expand their services on how to be prepared and would like to attend more public events. Please reach out if you would like the ESCC to visit your organization.

BRIDGES - Kate Wickersham would like to get the bilingual cards and set up an emergency preparedness presentation (the presentation would need a translator but Kevin said they're more than welcome to do that, they do have slides too). Wanted to know if this is good for staff to do too? He said yes, he wants everyone to be prepared.

Natalie Santiago wanted to know about helmets, car seats, etc. but that is Lauren. Would like to host an emergency preparedness and get the info out to everyone.

Emails - kbeck@chesco.org, kwickersham@lchservices.org,
Nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com

Joan Holliday – Thursday 1/11/2024 the Kennett Community Grpcer will host a new member orientation from 5:00-7:00pm at Victory Brewing. She shared they are one of the best organizations in the community that will add value and benefit. Will anyone accept the invitation to attend with her? **Esther Rochester** and **Janet Zeis** will attend. Emails - dochollisv@aol.com, erochester@gmail.com and janet@kacsimpact.org

Janet Zeis (KACS) - doing a poverty simulation on Saturday, 1/13/24 - they need participants (last call). They set it up like a board game and set it up as you're assigned to a family group, which is broken up in four 15 minute blocks and it gives you the experience what it's like to live in Chester County - you go over all the things that you might need to do and then you feel the stress and then regroup and try another week and continue through that process. Gives you great insight into poverty. KACS will have their Annual meeting on 2/1 from 3-5. Contact Janet if you would like to attend.

BRIDGES - Asked **Kevin Beck** about using the fire as a springboard, he would love to connect. **Tatiana Florez, Chad Thomas and Joan Holliday** did the previous poverty simulation and found it very helpful.

Email - janet@kacsimpact.org and kbeck@chesco.org

Chad Thomas (Community Health Education Coordinator) – shared about the following (flyers attached) January 2024 Diabetes Virtual Programs in Spanish, 01/18 Revirtiendo la Prediabetes, 01/25 Prevenir La Diabetes Tipo 2, 01/31 Grupo de Apoyo para los Diabéticos, January-February Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Events, February 9th Mental Health First Aid at Chester County Hospital, February 21st QPR Suicide Prevention Training at Kennett Library and February 12th Heart Tracks Health Screenings at Chester County Hospital.

Email - Chad.Thomas@penmedicine.upenn.edu

Joan Holiday - recognized **Vicki Gehrt** (VP of the school board). She wanted to listen in and see if anyone had any questions.

Emails - dochollisv@aol.com, vgehrt@verizon.net

Alberta Landis- Outreach within the community for CVIM. She managed the dental clinic for many years and there still is a bus coming once a week to Kennett schools to bring students to CVIM in West Chester for dental care. She is listening and wants to

see what is available to help. She could do dental presentations. Giving free medical and dental treatment to those that qualify. Her passion is being out in the community. Please reach out any time.

BRIDGES - Chad Thomas would love to have a virtual presentation. **Tom Hoehle** invited Alberta to come see a live performance of Bridging the Community on 3/13. **Crystal Crampton** needs toothbrushes and dental floss. **Mayra R. Castillo** talked about dental health month and connecting. Call to ask for Alberta's contact number: (610) 836-5990 Ext. 122

Emails - Chad.Thomas@penmedicine.upenn.edu, tomhoehle@yahoo.com, crampton.crystal@yahoo.com and Mayrac@cciu.org

Rebecca Villanueva (Good Samaritan) - talked about single men in Kennett, Phoenixville and single individuals they were able to help them stay in the current housing or new housing.

Email - rebeccav@goodsamservices.org

Kate Wickersham (LCH Director of Development) - Esther Rochester is being highlighted in the annual report of LCH, please go to their website and view. They do a good news report. Highlighted that there is a challenge right now on digital literacy and so they are doing a bilingual presentation on 1/22 with the Avon Grove library at 5pm and how to navigate technology. They are open to anyone in the PA area.

Emails - kwickersham@lchservices.org, erochester@gmail.com