

Bridging the Community meeting was held at The Kennett Presbyterian Church, 211 S Broad St, Kennett Square, PA 19348 on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This is our 157th meeting with 30 attendees. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at the Kennett Library or Zoom if the weather is bad.

Darcie Ward, an elder, at the Presbyterian Church led us in prayer and offered information about the meeting site. They are looking for a new pastor. They have a history of providing many programs for the community--Study Buddies, The Senior Center and Boy Scout meetings started here and much more. Services are Sunday at 10:30AM. They have Bible study, a wonderful choir and adult studies. Everyone is welcome to attend. Email: darcieward44@gmail.com

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

Joan Holliday and Jeanne Searer led the meeting. Joan shared about the vision and roles. No one must be in an official role to make a difference in the community. Jeanne went over the Guiding Principles. Email: dochollisv@aol.com and jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Vision: Kennett Square: Every day a better place to grow up in and grow old in
Living Philosophy: The overall context is our living philosophy, reflected by our land & energy/spirit - peaceful, progressive, inclusivity. "Bridging" promotes this living philosophy each and every day.

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 asked the NEW people to share first and share an elevator speech/short and sweet!

New Attendees Introduced themselves and made their requests or shared their offerings:

Tyra Reeves – Founder of *Just My Reflection*, in honor of her son, Jordan Michael G Reeves Foundation. They hold a group – every third Thursday of the month. Join this Wellness Group, which deals with grief on Thursday November 21st at 6:30pm at the Galilee Union American Methodist Episcopal Church in Avondale, PA. Help and assist! Email: Tyrareeves@justmyreflection.org

Yajayra Nunez – Development – KACS – collecting toys. Drop off NEW unwrapped toys for ages 2-11 now through December 12th at KACS Food cupboard. KACS is fund raising for their new site on Cypress Street and trying to reach \$10 Million for the building. Email: Yajayra@KACSimfact.org

Lynn Brown – Intervention Specialist – Jordan Michael Reeves Foundation. Email: See Tyra Reeves.

Heather Young Kessler – Motivational Wellness Coach – Rescue and Recovery and recently joined the JMR Foundation. Here to help others. Reach out if you would like to be happier with less stress. Email: Hez55@verizon.net or heather@wakeupwyse.com

Enes and Team – Migrant Education – Provides academic support to migrant children and their families. Contact Mayra Castillo at: mayrac@cciu.org

Alondra Sanchez – Migrant Education Student Support Specialist. Email: Alondras@cciu.org

Mayra Castillo (not new to Bridging) attended the Migrant Education Program as a youth and now is an employee. Her Dad worked in the Mushroom Farms and Mom in an orchard. She is also with Casa Guanajuato, cultural spaces. Day of the Dead event held on 11/2/24 is a part of the healing process with losing someone. They will be holding a Posada (Christmas Caroling) – December 15th There is pinatas, food, a lot of kids 17-22 are here alone and they will adopt these children to get gifts for the holidays. Email: mayrac@cciu.org

Natalia Santiago – Kennett Collaborative/Square Roots - Voices Underground, Kennett Trails Alliance (just finished the trail that connects the town of Kennett to Anson B Nixon Park) and soon will be connecting the 14 miles loop. They help other nonprofits through events at the Creamery and want all cultures to be welcome. Will be holding Three Kings' Day. Email: nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com

Shawn Holmes – Father Coordinator – MCHC – helping fathers in Chester County in fatherhood and fatherhood groups. Email: shawnlogy@gmail.com

Sophia Jutzi Beris - Nursing School student, here to learn about the community's needs. She has written her thesis on the Hispanic culture in SCC. Email: sophieju@hotmail.com

Others were invited to share their needs/resources, as well as new ideas to find partners

Nick Everhart – Board Member *A Place in A Conversation*, which Nancy and Dan Nicewonger started (Dan has passed.) This process is intended to include the unheard voices in the community and to assist people talking to one another. They have podcasts so people can have a voice. They've talked to many members of Bridging. KACS, Good Neighbors, Square Roots Collective, Mighty Writers, Joan Holliday and Jim Mercante, Pastor Williams, Kacie's Cause and Kennett Community Grocer. Nick is asking for volunteers to be interviewed for the podcast. They also interviewed a Kindergartner! Email: nickeverhart@verizon.net

Susan Rzucidlo – Avondale Mayor – December 14th will have the Santa Train from Kennett all the way to Oxford. Free event! Santa will make a stop at each spot, and everyone can say, "Hi!" Email: mayorsusan@avondaleboro.net

Cierra Walker – Substance Recovery Coach – told us that she also is in recovery and shared about therapy. She facilitates a LGBTQ+ Book Club at the library, sign up and you will get the book for free. It is a safe place! They meet on Mondays for crafts. Wants to start a LGBTQ AA meeting, needs a space for the meeting. Email: Cierra89walker@gmail.com

Trevor Pruitt – Landenberg – Clinical Herbalist – Mental Health and Chronic Pain – dreaming up expanding and starting an employee-based business. Email: trevorpruitt@gmail.com

Kathy Hrenko– Art Therapist and member of Longwood Rotary Club – always looking for ways to help with art therapy for non-profits or groups. Email: khrenko@comcast.net

Bob George – Member of Kennett High School Alumni Association – 60 years ago attended Boy Scout. Meetings in this same room. He is a member of the Alumni Association in Kennett. We have a new Kennett Superintendent, Kimberly Rizzo Saunders. Kennett cares about the kids and the rest of the town want to take care of the kids. He reports that we have an amazing Superintendent whose vision is that Kennett will have 80-90% of kids graduating will be bilingual. Email – georgert@gmail.com

Esther Rochester– New Garden Memorial U.A.M. E. Church – need people to help get food to people that can't get out to get food. They have five turkeys just need the sides and such. Email: erochester024@gmail.com

Crystal Ayala – ELRC of Chester County – sharing a flyer with QR codes to apply and share a flyer about financial support for day care for low-income. Email: CrystalA@cciu.org

Joan Holliday – 11/24 at 4pm at First Baptist they will have a service on gratitude. Reverend Williams is a part of the Thanksgiving Services. Will be in English and Spanish. Very inclusive. Will be caroling on 12/14 at 6pm. Meet in front of Letty' restaurant, corner of Broad and State Street, Kennett and carol at the stores and restaurants. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Jim Mercante – Co founder of the Chester County Digital Alliance (internet for all). So many have no internet and are missing out. If you know anyone that needs help with their phones, they also need help with finding trainers, they have a whole program. Working closely with education, health and work force development. Email: vjmercante@gmail.com

Derrick Watkins – Funder Consultant – Works on helping non-profits manage their month-to-month funding. He worked with "Rise United" that started with homelessness. They realized they could apply what they learned to non-profits. Email – dwatkins1926@gmail.com

Karen D'Agusto – Over 500 Girls, a program for each month. They are looking for community service projects from 1st grade to 12th grade. Please think of them, as needs arise in the community. Email: Kdagusto@aol.com

Tom Hoehle – served as a facilitator of Bridging and has been attending for many years and wanted to say "Hi." Traveled from Lansdowne to attend the meeting. Email: tomhoehle@yahoo.com

Susan Long from the community is a retired nurse and received help at the last meeting from Jim Mercante, who contacted RSVP Volunteers, who assigned a digital navigator volunteer, who helped her with problems she was having with her computer. Email: susandlong15@gmail.com

The group then mingled and "bridged" and made the following bridges:

- **Jim Mercante and Darcie Ward** “bridged” to talk about using the Kennett Presbyterian Church site for digital literacy classes.
- **Crystal Ayala** “bridged” with **Sophia Jutzi Beris** to use the church site for Migrant Ed parenting classes.
- **Esther Rochester** “bridged” with **Susan Rzucidlo** who will bring food to New Garden UAME Church on E. Linden Street, Kennett Square. **Tyra Reeves** also offered a food donation and **Darcie Ward**.
- **Mayra Castillo** “bridged” with **Kathy Hrenko** about art therapy and with the youth
- **Tyra Reeves** “bridged” with **Derrick Watkins** about a consultation around fundraising.
- **Molly Hampson** “bridged” **Tyra Reeves** about attending her Wellness Group.
- **Susan Rzucidlo** “bridged” with **Cierra Walker** and offered her keys to an empty room that Cierra could conduct AA meetings for LGBTQ+ community.
- **Susan Rzucidlo and Joan Holliday** “bridged” with **Trevor** about a free group score and **Mayra** and **Trevor Pruitt** about SCORE, which are retired business persons, who can serve as mentors for his desire to start a new business and about his gardening project.
- **Kathy Hrenko** “bridged” **Tyra Reeves**, who would like to explore the possibility of art therapy for her Wellness Group.
- **Joan Holliday** “bridged” with **Mayra Castillo** about having her high school students fill out the Workforce Development survey that Kennett Library is conducting.
- **Bob George** “bridged” with **Joan Holliday** to provide a frozen turkey to Second Baptist Church.
- **Nick Everhart** “bridged” with **Tyra Reeves, Crystal Ayala and Kathy Hrenko** about interviewing them for “A Place in the Conversation” podcast.
- **Crystal Ayala** “bridged” with **Alondra Sanchez** and **Enes** from Migrant Ed about funding for childcare for low-income families.
- **Natalia Santiago** “bridged” **with Joan Holiday** about meeting with Kennett Collaborative about community projects next year.

The group closed at 8:30pm with Esther Rochester saying, “God is good!”