

Center of Life

*2023-2024 City of Pittsburgh STOP the
Violence Community Investment Grants*

Center of Life

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FollowUp Form

Quarter Three Activities Update

Greetings, STOP the Violence grantees!

As the City of Pittsburgh prepares to update our stakeholders on the impact of this process, we need to gather some evaluation-focused information about your programs. Please answer the following survey about your services and activities from the third quarter following receipt of your grant award.

Thank you!

Organization Name*

Please enter the name of your project/program in the box below.

Center of Life

Did you spend any of your STOP the Violence grant funds during this period?*

Yes

How did you spend the funds?*

Please check all categories that apply.

Staff Compensation (including benefits)

Program Supplies

General Operations

Subgrants to Other Organizations

If you chose "other", please describe.

Tell us how many people your organization/group served from the following age groups during this period.

Ages 0-17*

55

Ages 18-30*

35

Ages 30+*

65

Programs and Services*

Provide a brief description of any programs or services your organization or group provided in alignment with your STOP the Violence proposal.

Our Family Engagement and Community Engagement continued its year-round crisis support, wellness workshops, and referrals throughout the third quarter. One highlight is that we have incorporated Gentle Yoga and Sound Healing into the program. As the third quarter opened, COL's afterschool programs began: Fusion, COL Jazz, ALTA, and KRUNK are all now heading into the fourth quarter.

COL partnered with Steel Smiling to provide "Chill Sessions," a Black mental wellness support group. During these sessions, Black community members were invited to gather to talk about their everyday stressors and anxieties in order to de-stigmatize mental wellness. Additionally, throughout the spring and summertime, COL collaborated with Steel Smiling to provide its Beam to Bridges program, which is a Black-led and supported full mental wellness cohort. The cohort graduated during the end of the third quarter, and even included some COL employees.

Did you partner with any other organizations or groups during this period?*

Yes

Did your organization intentionally engage officers from the Pittsburgh Police during this period?*

No

Did you use STOP the Violence logos in marketing and media (social or traditional)?*

Yes

Give a brief description of your STOP the Violence during this period*

As already mentioned, COL's programs got off to a great start heading into the third quarter. COL also began attending the Learning Circles and was able to obtain some great ideas for revenue-generating streams to its organization outside the traditional philanthropic avenues. Additionally, COL was able to lend guidance to other organizations in the realms of data collection and analysis and strengthening grant arguments through data collection.

Another portion of our time was spent planning for and executing our Stop the Violence, Celebration of Life event in partnership with the Monongahela-Marsden Block Association. Leon Ford was the keynote speaker. It was a truly inspiring and uplifting event. An attached document below will provide further information.

Is your organization planning any public activities in the next few months?*

No

If "yes", please provide a brief description.

Does your organization need capacity-building support?*

Yes

On what areas of focus would you like your capacity-building support?

Marketing

Share Your Stories*

Upload a clip or provide text to share one or more specific stories (please avoid using full names of clients/participants) that illustrates the impact of your work.

STV_Celebration of Life_report.pdf

A synopsis of the Monongahela-Marsden Block Association's Celebration of Life event, in partnership with Center of Life, is attached along with testimonials and photos.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- STV_Celebration of Life_report.pdf

Synopsis of the Celebration of Life event by Juanita Godfrey and various testimonials, followed by photos:

We had 80-85 people attend the luncheon. We also had Darnell Drewery and Julia Pugar from the Center for Victims speak about the services that the Center provides. Leon Ford was our keynote speaker. During our luncheon we had a presentation and activity by Edith Abeyta & Melanie Mead from Arts Excursions, Unlimited. It was called Stringing Memories Healing Hearts. Our guests were able to create bracelets in honor of themselves or a family member that was affected by violence which was a form of therapy. We also had a Your Voice Survey which asked the question, "What do you think it would take to stop the violence in our communities?" We got several important responses, but I have just included two of them.

Comments from Edith below

Hello Juanita,

What struck me most about what Darnell spoke about was that the Center of Victims has been asking the people they serve to speak about harm for the last 50 years. Now, they are re-focusing their efforts and narratives on care, love, and the future. He also mentioned they have a public exhibition/display that people can come and visit with a guided walk through. These are not Darnell's exact words but it was what I came away with.

I think overall the luncheon, which is more than a luncheon, is a gathering of care and love. A supportive, safe space that you and your team create anywhere you go whether it is at the Spartan Center or outdoors or on the streets. It is clear that everyone is welcome. They are able to share with others their loss, grief, love, and support. It is an emotionally intense and inspiring support network that brings people closer together.

I feel much gratitude to be in that space with everyone uplifting each other.

Comments from Darnell

Hello Juanita, I thoroughly enjoyed the time we had at the annual luncheon that you hold in Hazelwood. Thank you providing space in your program for Center for Victims to speak of our services to victims and witnesses of crime. I enjoyed the fellowship and kindness of the neighbors and community. The program seems to be just what Hazelwood needed. Keep up the great work and we plan to continue our support in your future events.

Andrea Betts summed up Leon's presentation below

I am of the Age 70 and in my community, I have seen my fair or unfair victims and family living with this reality for many years. Sometimes I have even seen Victims become Villains due to their angers and hurts or pains. Secondly, every victim doesn't end in death

physically, but mentally suffer a lifelong mental illness such as Post Traumatic Syndrome Disorder (PTSD).

In any sense of being the guest speaker Leon Ford brought the audience of the community of Hazelwood and Neighbors to his self-full filled perspective of Hope and Forgiveness to heal and keep living. He talked about providing this Forgiveness of the would-be enemies and not retaliate, but deliberately and intentionally partnering up with society to provide safety for his son and give again Hope for the Future.

He did not let him now learning to live as a paraplegic become a barrier in his mission of being the example of courage and transparency to the shift and change in the community of Hazelwood and to the World.

“What an inspiration” and something I brought home with Me in my own actions and activist work in social justice. I recommend his Book in Hope to be a tool used in training and discussion about the Stop the Violence movement. Five out of Five it sold me and for Free...

Good Food, Great Hospitality, Good Mission accomplished.

Andrea Coleman-Betts, M.Ed.

Garden of Different Abilities, Founder (2017)

www.gardenofdifferentabilities.com

From: Minister Diane Murray

It was one of the Prominent Events of the Year for our Community of Hazelwood! What an amazing turnout and full participation from several communities of Pittsburgh. Several families came forward expressing concern and love for their lost loved ones. The speaker of the hour took center stage and did not disappoint. The motivating words of his beginning position with the Police and where he is with them today were riveting. Young Men and young women from the community can surely look up to and emulate him for future aspects of life. And let us not forget that the food was Awesome! This Event was everything I expected it to be this year. I cannot wait until 2025!

From: Theresa Tullis

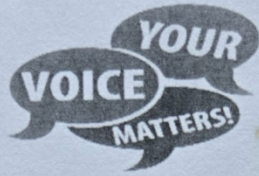
The Victims of Crime luncheon was a huge success. The guest speaker provided a good insight into who is a victim and how they deal with the stress. For those who decided to stand up and give their story or the story of a loved one, it was sad but good for them to speak of it. The luncheon brought so many together, which made them think; I am not alone. The environment in which it was held was warm and inviting. The food was terrific and enjoyed by all, and it was displayed as you interacted from table to table.

I look forward to next year's event.

From: Rhonda Young

I thought the luncheon was very positive and focused on encouraging us to celebrate life. And the speaker demonstrated how to keep a positive outlook after life changing events happen in life.

Survey



Please complete the question below. Your name is not required.

Q: What do you think it would take to stop the violence in our communities?

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS
MORE POLICE OFFICERS







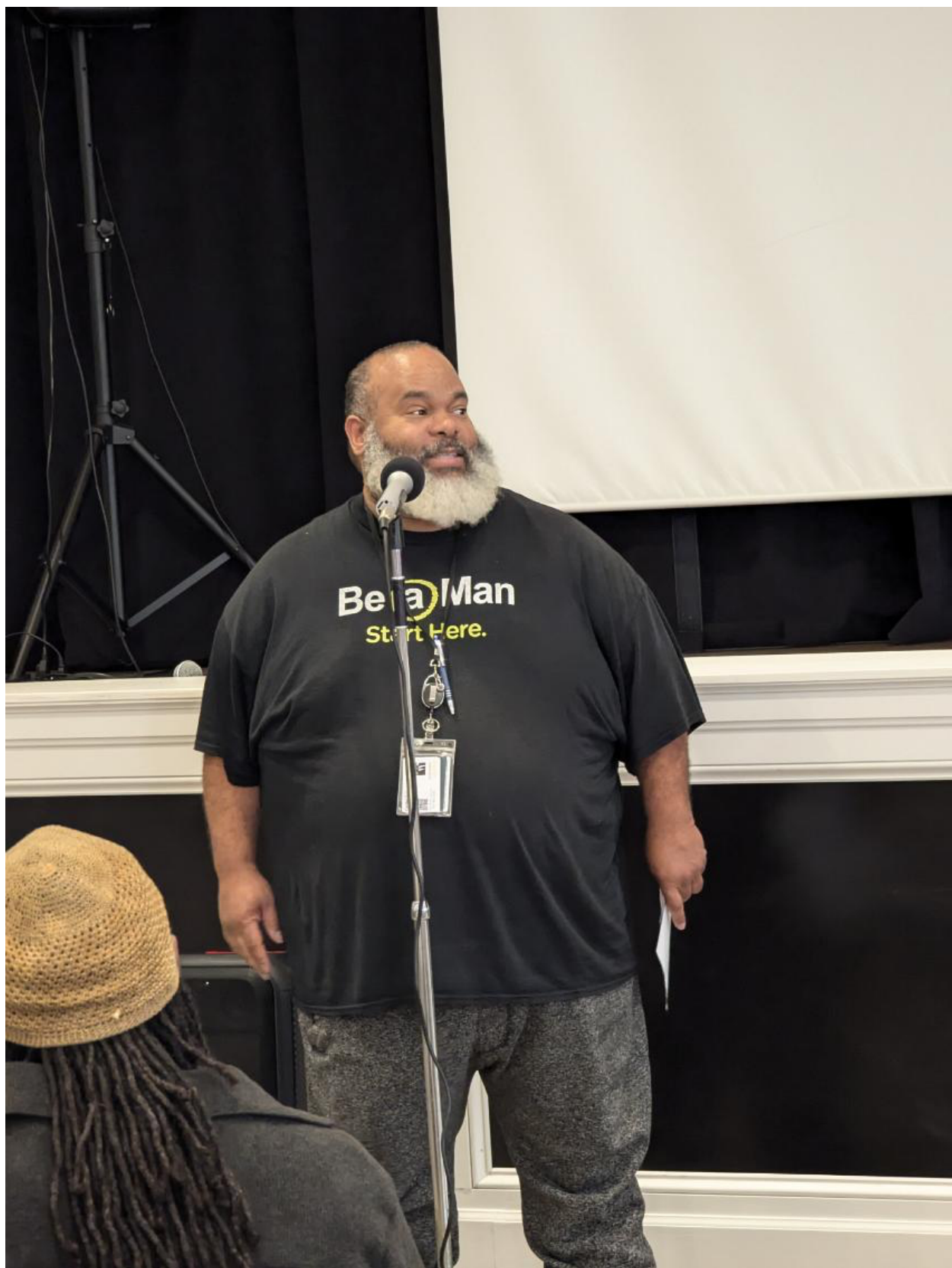




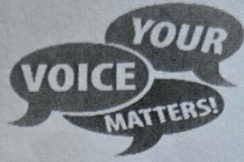








Survey



Please complete the question below. Your name is not required.

Q: What do you think it would take to stop the violence in our communities?

Certainly more opportunity and exposure to community residents gathering and relationship building. This relationship and awareness can increase awareness when nonmembers of the community are looking about the community. Additionally, the faith-based community being encouraged and empowered to lead much of these community engagements and encounters. Therefore, most of all I believe this would ensure GOD'S Hand is on and over everything.