

ADVANCING THE COMMON GOOD... INCOME for Families

United Way works to advance the common good by targeting its strategies at those critical passages in life that can present opportunities for individuals and families to dramatically increase their chances for long term success. This approach maximizes United Way's effectiveness, because it allows us to improve lives and communities not just in the short term, and not just on the surface, but in a lasting and meaningful way.

Community Level Goal

Building Financial Stability and Independence for Families

Priority Area

A Path to Success for Out of School Youth

Valley Youth House

Our Investment:

In southeastern Pennsylvania, more than 70,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are neither in school nor employed. This population is susceptible to crime, drug abuse, and homelessness. It is United Way's goal to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. That's why United Way is investing in Valley Youth House. Their commitment to fostering positive growth enabling at risk youth and their families to become healthy, productive, responsible members of the community strengthens our entire region.



“When you have to spend all of your time finding money for rent and bills, you can’t even begin to think about building a future. Valley Youth House showed me the path. Now I don’t have to live day by day. I know how to budget my time and money so I can achieve my goals. This fall I’ll be starting at Drexel where I’m studying to become a social worker so I can help more young people like me.”

—Victoria Scretching

Results for Our Community:

Sam had everything working against him. A foster kid since the age of five, Sam never had a living situation that lasted longer than six months. By the time Sam graduated from high school he knew the system well enough to know that he wanted to live independently from it. However, without resources, guidance or support, Sam soon found himself living in a homeless shelter.

“Living in the shelter made everything harder. Harder to hold down a job, harder to stay out of trouble, and harder to move forward. It’s like being in a maze. Your life is out of your control.”

That’s when Sam got in touch with Valley Youth House. He entered into the Independent Living Program and recognizing his high level of motivation, they soon set him up in his own apartment.

Counselors at Valley Youth House helped Sam develop an individual plan for independence. Right now, Sam is focused on working that plan. He’s got a great job with an airline that allows him to travel all over the world, he’s able to budget his money for rent and bills, and Sam is enrolled in college where he’s working towards a degree in sports medicine.

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United Way
of Southeastern Pennsylvania