



KenCrest

Your Dreams. Our Mission.



Summer 2021

Summer days have been in full swing at KenCrest. Whether we're basking out at the beach, growing our gardens that we planted in the spring, dabbling in some DIY renovations, or exploring new places with new friends, we're embracing all that this sunny season has to offer!



Leading with Compassion in the Community

Throughout the KenCrest family, there are many amazing advocates and self-advocates, including Program Manager Jennifer Hirschfield and a young woman named Esther. In late May, both ladies were recognized by Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services with Hermann Roether Awards for their generosity and kindness to other people.

For several years, Jenn has supported Esther, sharing her greatest accomplishments, as well as her hardest moments. Esther is autistic and has a few behavioral challenges that require a more specialized environment and home to support her. Despite her challenges, Esther is active and engaged in her community in the way she loves most—volunteering with Meals on Wheels and delivering food to neighbors several days per week. Jenn does all she can to empower Esther and to help her use her voice and explore the opportunities that are the most meaningful to her.

A couple years ago Esther, became extremely ill and spent several weeks in the hospital. She was scared, experienced temporary vision loss, started losing weight rapidly, and was unable to vocalize her needs. During that time Jenn became her voice. Jenn decorated Esther's room with photos of her swimming, walking, and delivering her meals to neighbors. She'd proudly point to the photos and talk about her friend to every nurse and doctor who entered the room, prompting more kindness and understanding from the hospital personnel. Jenn helped ensure that each of them saw that Esther's life had great value and meaning. She stayed by Esther's side in the hospital for weeks, fiercely advocating for the care and attention Esther deserved, which ensured her safety and full recovery.

In so many ways, both women have advocated for others in their community. Thank you, Esther and Jenn, for always leading the way with compassion and generosity!



Become a Member of the Good Neighbors Time Bank!

Everyone has a talent or skill that they can share with others—from baking a cake and planting a garden to changing a car’s oil and driving someone to an appointment—the possibilities are endless! Did you know that you can trade your special skill for one that someone else can offer you? It’s a great way to meet new people in your community while exchanging goods or services, and it’s called the Good Neighbors Time Bank!



If you live in Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania, you can take part in this great exchange program. For every hour of service you provide to another Time Bank member, you earn one Time Bank “dollar” that you can redeem for a service that someone else has to offer.

KenCrest encourages people of all abilities to join the Good Neighbors Time Bank!
For more information, contact Allison Smale at asmale@kencrest.org or visit our website: <https://kencrest.co/3raYPA3>

Teachers Make an Impact Beyond the Classroom



KenCrest has long recognized the vital role that families play in children’s academic achievement. Never has this been more valued than during the pandemic when remote learning became the new normal. Without their willingness to provide supervision and encouragement at home, this past year of virtual learning might have been severely compromised.

Teachers also recognized the value of supporting families with equal encouragement. As COVID’s impact piled on hardships, family members also took on active roles as remote-learning teaching assistants.

The necessity of participating in her daughter’s virtual schooling turned out to be a silver lining for one mom, who unbeknownst to teachers at the Kensington Early Learning Center, was experiencing depression. Although there were multiple factors, the fear of getting COVID and being new to the school exacerbated the isolation the mother was feeling.

It wasn’t until she and her daughter attended a classroom meet ‘n’ greet at a local farm arranged by Ms. Sonia, the classroom’s lead teacher, that she began feeling more hopeful. As the weeks passed, she became more engaged in her daughter’s learning and also started to make her own KenCrest friends. Learning about this mom’s experience also made a meaningful difference in Ms. Sonia’s ability to provide support, not just to this family, but to all of the families in her classroom.

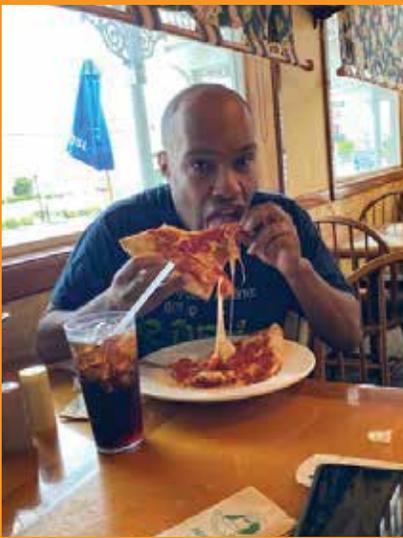
Businesses and *now individuals*, can support KenCrest families by providing Pre-K Scholarships through the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.

Visit our website for more information at: <https://kencrest.co/3tjdDFC>

A Beach Trip to Remember



Once the summer arrived, it didn't take long for Andrew and Tariq to pack their bags and start the season off right with a trip to Ocean City, Maryland! With bright sunshine, sand, and blue ocean waves, Andrew and Tariq enjoyed eventful days by the seashore. Despite a few rain showers, the weather was unable to ruin their moods or plans, and the gentlemen took turns running on the beach, putting their feet into the water, cooling off in the waves, and walking on a nearby trail where they took in the shade and greenery. Their trip also included pizza dinners, ice cream breaks at King Kone, playing games in the arcade, walking around a carnival, and shopping for souvenirs. Although there's nothing like home sweet home, Andrew and Tariq loved their beach getaway, and they are both asking for another beach trip to be scheduled. We hope Andrew and Tariq can make it back to Ocean City soon!



Daniel Tiger Visits Early Learning Center

You may remember him from Mr. Rogers and have seen him on television. Perhaps you have heard some of his empowering messages that children enjoy. Daniel Tiger, which airs on PBS KIDS', paid a visit before summer break, to the students at one of our Early Learning Centers in Philadelphia. An event sponsored by WHYY and PNC, Daniel Tiger often travels the states to visit various schools, and the boys and girls at Adam's Avenue were excited to see Daniel arrive on his trolley and spend quality time with them outside on the playground.



During Daniel Tiger's visit, he and the students socially distanced themselves and wore masks to keep each other safe. Making the most of their time together, Daniel Tiger hosted a few rounds of Simon Says, sang songs, and danced. Thank you, Daniel and the WHYY team!



Make a Difference, Join Our Team



Go home every night knowing you made a positive impact on a person's life. KenCrest is actively hiring in several programs and departments. For more information about our open positions and our culture, please visit www.KenCrest.org/careers



KENCREST'S MISSION IS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BY:

exploring possibilities, mobilizing resources, and empowering dreams.

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