

Tenth Anniversary Issue Spring 2018

A Message from our Executive Director



Education Elevators is ten years in the making, thanks to all of you! Since the program's inception, there have been 221 Elevators who have volunteered almost 11,000 hours providing support and guidance to West Virginia's most vulnerable students. Currently we have 50 Elevators, from 5 official business partners serving at 7 schools in Kanawha and Berkeley Counties.

We wouldn't be where we are today without the endless support, passion, and commitment of Elevators, donors, corporate sponsors, school and business partners.

When my dad launched Education Elevators in 2008, the need was great, but the dramatic increase in opioid abuse and the rise in the of number of parents in incarceration has increased the need for programs like ours exponentially. Some of the greatest challenges kids are facing today are neglect, instability and the lack of a caring adult role model in their lives. Education Elevators offers a way to mitigate those issues.

It's through relationships that kids discover their worth, their purpose and their importance in the world. Because of you, these children have caring adults in their lives to help guide and support them, shape and mold their characters, and make them feel special and valuable. These relationships also lead to enhanced self-esteem, improved academic performance, better attendance, reduction in risky behavior, and increased graduation rates.

We will strive to make our program stronger by providing more training to Elevators, recruiting new Elevators, and cultivating more school, business and community partners. We hope you will join us in our mission to help every child reach his or her unique potential.

With Gratitude, Allison McJunkin

Our Team



Vinnie Feller Communications & LogisticsManager

Vinnie joined EE in August 2017. She works to keep the organization running smoothly while also supporting its outreach.



Sue Gray
Program Coordinator

Sue handles all aspects of program implementation and coordination. She also works directly with schools and Elevators to provide them with the support they need.

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EDUCATION ELEVATORS OTH ANNIVERSARY



On March 1st, we celebrated our 10th anniversary with a Gala at the Walker Theater in the Clay Center. WVU President, Dr. Gordon Gee, presented a keynote speech about the importance of mentoring. Steve Knighton and Stacey Losh spoke about the history and impact of the program. Combined with the Old Hollywood glam theme, Larry Groce as Master of Ceremonies, Bob Thompson playing period jazz, and the Performance Quartet of the WV Youth Symphony performing a feature piece, it was quite a celebration!

Education Elevator Award of Excellence Recipients

Amy Crist • Doug Crouse • Samantha Delph Missy Spangler Stotts • Sharon Suppa

Education Elevator Legacy Award

Given in memory of Jay Margolis



Mr. Bob Thompson and former Governor Gaston Caperton

Lights. Camera. Learning!



Gayle C.
Manchin
presenting a
Letter of
Proclamation
from Senator
Joe Manchin to
Allison
McJunkin



Mr. Steve Knighton served as the principal of Piedmont for 24 years and was instrumental in launching the Elevator program.

"Elevators are heroic and honored by all of us who labor to illuminate the minds of children. You reinforce our instruction and extend the boundaries of what our students can achieve with your presence, your encouragement and your purpose."

-Steve Knighton

Education Elevators is such an exemplary program because it brings citizens, schools and businesses together to produce change. -Dr. Gordon Gee





Stacey Losh is an Early Literacy Specialist with the Board of Education and served as the EE liaison for Edgewood Elementary.

Research shows that having one or more caring adults in a child's life increases the likelihood that a child will flourish, and become a productive adult themselves. Sadly, there are children who do not have that one adult... not one.

'When an Elevator comes into a child's life, even once a week matters. This is time they feel loved and safe, and they are able to play and just be a kid. Once a week they receive undivided attention from someone who tells them that they matter.'

-Stacey Losh

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Please visit our website to see videos of the award recipients and more photos of the event!

Jackson Kelly's Partnership with Piedmont Elementary

Length of Partnership: 10 years

Total Elevators: 105

Why We Partner: Jackson Kelly and Piedmont have been CASE Partners for almost 30 years. In 2008, Tom McJunkin, a partner at JK and a Read Aloud volunteer for Piedmont for more than 20 years, encouraged the firm to launch the first ever Education Elevators program. He was fond of saying, "Kids who aspire,

succeed...those who don't, won't." Tom has since passed away, but the company is proud that this program, and its immeasurable impact, continues on in his memory and honor.

Impact of Partnership: Education Elevators is one demonstration of JK's commitment to our community and their support of employees who wish to give back to the community through volunteering.

-Lea Perkins Jackson Kelly Liaison, EE Business Coordinator



"If the business community fails to become actively involved to help public education succeed, in less than two decades the American economy will run out of its most essential energy source—human energy."

-Tom McJunkin

A Breakthrough Moment



Da'Nija has the kindest heart. She remembers something about everyone and always makes an effort to ask you about it.



When Da'Nija was having rough time with school, we sat down to talk about the big picture and what she wanted to be when she grew up. She previously told me that she wanted to be a police officer and a doctor, but on that day, she told me that she wanted to be Special Education Teacher, plus all of the things she needed to do to accomplish that goal.

That was both a breakthrough moment for us and a proud moment for me. I finally felt like I was getting to know the girl sitting in front of me because, even though I had always told her that she can be whatever she wants to be when she grows up, to hear her say that she wants to grow up to care and help children with special needs was very heart-warming.

-Nicole Johns, JK Elevator

Suttle & Stalnaker's Partnership with Piedmont Elementary

Length of Partnership: 1 year

Total Elevators: 5

Why We Partner: Suttle & Stalnaker started their partnership with Piedmont about 16 years ago with the Thanksgiving Card Art Contest. In 2013, we met with the principal and counselor to see if there was anything additional that Suttle Stalnaker could do to help support the community. Piedmont asked if we could give time to mentor students. Suttle Stalnaker enthusiastically said YES! This is our is our first year being an official Education Elevators Partner. We love being a part of these children's lives!

Impact of Partnership: Participating in Education Elevators shows employees that their employer cares about them and the community they work in. It definitely helps with morale. All our Elevators enjoy their weekly meetings with their students and enjoy giving back to the community!

-Marie Long

Suttle Stalnaker EE Business Coordinator





"I think Elevators is one of the many things that sets Piedmont apart from other schools with similar student populations. Our mission statement is all about the power of RELATIONSHIPS!!! I think students with Elevators truly form significant relationships with these adult professionals...And that these relationships are positively impacting their lives."

-Stephanie Haden, Title I Math, Piedmont Elementary

Sometimes a Hug is all you Need

When Josiah was in the fourth grade his teacher let me know that he was having a terrible day when I arrived. She told Josiah he could have his visit with me, but he could not go outside or play games because he had to work on an assignment that he had not done. When I tried to get him focused on the assignment, he was quite agitated and he said he wasn't going to - and threw his pencil.

I told him in a quiet voice that we needed to get started on the assignment, but that first he needed to let me give him a hug, because he really needed one. Luckily, he did, and the tears just started to flow.

Once he regained his composure, we started on the assignment. It was a fairly long assignment, but he completed it, just in time to catch his bus. And he picked up the thrown pencil while we were leaving the Elevator Area.

-Horace Emery, Suttle & Stalnaker Elevator & Board President



Greylock's Partnership with Chamberlain Elementary

Length of Partnership: 4 years

Total Elevators: 13

Why We Partner: Greylock has been a partner in education with Chamberlain Elementary for decades. It is a wonderful school. When we had the opportunity to expand that partnership by incorporating Education Elevators mentoring, we jumped at the chance. Greylock has a long track record of giving back to our local communities and being involved in the areas where we operate. The EE program is unique in that it enables us to give back while also engaging and motivating employees. It's truly a 'win-win-win' for the school, our company, and especially for the students at Chamberlain!

Impact of Partnership: Our Elevators return from their visits with such wonderful stories. Sometimes they are sweet, sometimes they are funny, and at other times, they bring a tear to your eye. But always, they touch your heart. These relationships are very special to our Elevators and critically important to their students.

-Jennifer Vieweg Greylock Business Coordinator

Education Elevators has been a wonderful program at our school. It helps students feel happier about coming to school by giving them something to look forward to. If every student had an Elevator, that needed one at Chamberlain, all students would have someone there to support them, and be there for them."

-Amanda Ross, Chamberlain School Counselor



MyJaron has SO much potential and he is so smart! He even read books TO ME when he was in Kindergarten!



My first student was MyJaron. I saw a lot of changes in him during our time together.

I was with him since he was in kindergarten so we had several years together. I was also beside him through several school and family changes. In fact, the first time I visited him after he transferred schools, he kept saying, 'You found me!' He's had some real challenges, so it was nice to be a consistent presence for him. I was even able to see him during my maternity leave and he told everyone that my new little guy was his baby brother!

Sadly the last time he transferred schools, it was out of state.

I was just matched with Ka'laiah. I love my time with her and can't wait to see where the relationship takes us.

-Missy Spangler, Greylock Elevator

TransCanada's Partnership with Edgewood Elementary

Length of Partnership: 3 years

Total Elevators: 18

Why We Partner: TransCanada supports and encourages employees to give back to their communities in ways that resonate with them personally by:

- o Matching volunteer time with financial contributions to support the causes they care about
- o Matching employee charitable donations
- o Providing opportunities for employees to volunteer in their communities
- o Providing support for team volunteering and fundraising

Impact of Partnership: Through our involvement in Education Elevators, we have been able to introduce a positive adult figure in these children's lives and let them know that there is someone who cares. By showing up each week, we are letting them know that there is a person who can be counted on to give them some stability in their lives.





"It's heartbreaking to see these kids in the same clothes week after week and hear about the hardships they face. It's also very rewarding to see the big smiles on their faces and see how excited they are to see us."

Edgewood students can't wait for their Elevators to visit. Sometimes they eat lunch together. At other times, they do art projects, play games, or read books. Elevators provide their students with an extra ear, smile, and heart. The Elevators give them a reason to feel special. Elevators are a gift to our school!

-Leah Skrypek, School Counselor & EE School Coordinator



"My wish would be that there were more individuals that would participate in the program so that each kid could have an Elevator or friend as Shimyra calls me." My proudest moment, I think, was watching Shimyra hug her teacher and telling her she was sorry. Shimyra said some mean things and we had a long talk about it. I told her that she should apologize and she did.

The moment that most touched my heart was a card she had made for me saying she loved me. I know I was grinning ear to ear and I showed off my card at work when I got back.

Even though this is my first year I have really enjoyed spending time with Shimyra. I have seen the struggles that some of these children are going through. This program can bring these kids someone that cares and spend a little quality time with them. But there are so many more kids that need this also.

-Jeanine Hamilton, TransCanada Elevator

Air National Guard's Partnership with Berkley County Schools

Length of Partnership: 5 years

Total Elevators: 32

Why We Partner: The 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg, WV has always been committed to community outreach, especially when it comes to local youth. Prior to Education Elevators, we partnered with just one school to provide mentorship and role model opportunities. Now we work with multiple schools in 2 counties to provide community support.

Impact of Partnership: Our partnership with local schools through Education Elevators has allowed Guard Members to connect one-on-one with youth that benefit from personalized mentorships and guidance. This not only allows the members to build interpersonal skills, but more importantly, has a positive and long lasting impact on the youth. The opportunities also allow the community at large to see Military members as more than just war-fighters - it highlights the deep rooted core value of Service Before Self that Airmen subscribe to.

-David Groom, Capt, WVANG 167th Airlift Wing Acting Buisness Coordinator

The Education Elevators Program, or as we call it our Base Buddy Program, is an excellent program that we absolutely love having as part of our school. Some of our students grow up without having someone at home to look up to. This program provides students a positive role model that otherwise they may not have in their life. Our Base Buddies come to the school weekly to meet with their students. They talk to the students, play games, read books, do crafts and sometimes provide a little academic support. This interaction provides encouragement on all levels and stresses the importance of education in their lives. As a result, these students are given hope for a successful life and positive future. The students truly look forward each week to meeting with their Base Buddy. Seeing the smiles on their faces is enough to melt your heart. The Education Elevators Program, or "Base Buddy Program," is an asset to our school and we hope to have a continuing partnership for years to -Jamie Laidlow, School Coordinator, Bunker Hill Elementary



Elevator MSgt Jason Cliber and his student, Warren

I really enjoy the Base Buddy program. I think it is important for us as service members to show a positive influence and interaction within the community.

Most of these kids that we are assigned to have had some pretty traumatic events in their lives and I think it means a lot to them to just have someone spend time with them. I do not pry, but I try to take feedback from the teachers when it is given to me and apply it to the kids I am assigned to.

I have three children of my own and I know how important it can be to just show interest in them and what they like to do. If nothing else, I hope that we can get them out of class for a small block of time and let them just have fun with an adult/role model that is paying attention to them and only them. I think that means much more to them than we realize.

-MSgt Jason Cliber, Elevator

Yoga at Piedmont

"As the instructor, I observed an improved ability to focus during the more challenging poses and during times of distractions. It was apparent that the relaxation time at the end wa the favorite! Overall, the students showed excellent recall of previous sessions and they verbalized benefitting from the sessions."

-Debra Mattingly, yoga instructor

Last summer, Education Elevators sponsored a Youth Yoga Program at Piedmont Elementary. All students, from K-5, were scheduled for 4 classes lasting 45 minutes. It took a village to arrange the schedule, but thanks to many helping hands it was a success!

Yoga has been proven to help build student confidence, improve concentration and focus, help kids manage stress, improve flexibility and increase blood flow. The yoga sessions focused on a brief mindfulness lesson, centering and conscious breathing, yoga poses and relaxation. The sessions also focused on concentration, building confidence and patience, and dealing with emotions. The instructor provided the students with tools for "responding" versus "reacting" to various situations.

Kids benefited from the positive mindset and left the yoga sessions feeling aligned, focused and happy. Education Elevators plans to sponsor the program again this summer.

Heroes for Higher Spring 2017



"Hope is a super power that we pass on to someone else."

Education Elevators Foundation teamed up with Heroes for Higher to inspire kids to be their best selves. All Piedmont students, pre-K through fifth grade attended. West Virginia's very own "Batman" spoke to the students as part of the "Be the Hero Against Drugs and Bullying" School Tour. He touched on four main, empowering points that Education Elevators wholeheartedly stands behind:

Never Give Up
Always Do the Right Thing
Help Other People
Never Be a Bully or Touch Drugs.

Batman talked about the traits that make you a hero, and gave the students real world examples of what they can do to be heroes in their lives. He even spoke about why someone might bully, and how to show compassion to others. He called upon each grade to look after the younger, to lead them by their example. Our hope is that the students left inspired to find ways to follow the right path in their lives.

Thank you to all of our many generous donors throughout the years



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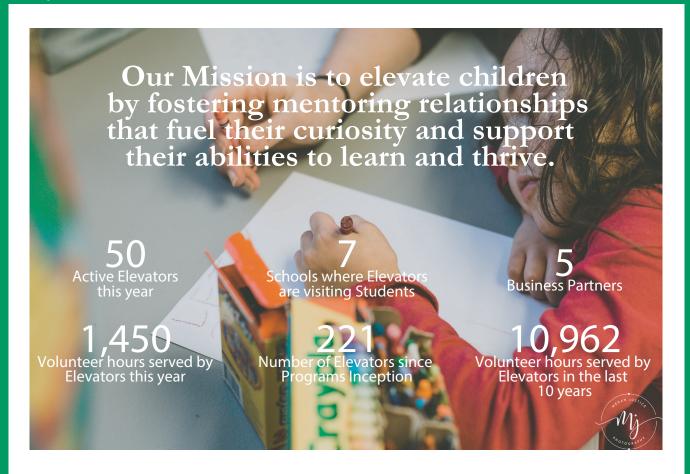
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