



Volume 5, Issue 4

## NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

DECEMBER 2011

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Esperanza (Hope)

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### UPCOMING DATES

**Holiday Toy and Food  
Distribution, December  
17, 2011** – 9:00am-  
12:00pm

**After School Christmas  
Party, December 22,  
2011:** 6:00-7:00pm

**Adult Education Classes,  
January 2012:** 6:00-  
8:30pm, Tuesday and  
Thursday

**Out of School Program,  
January 3, 2012:** 3:00-  
6:00pm, Monday-  
Thursdays

**Board Meeting Every 2nd  
1st Tuesday:** 7:00-9:00

### A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“As I look around the Oxford Circle community this advent, I find many hopeful, many *esperanza* surprises.”

I had the privilege of attending the recent Esperanza Health Center opening in Hunting Park. It was amazing and surprising to see a beautiful health clinic in the heart of North Philadelphia. Which reminded me of my “*esperanza*” (Spanish for hope) surprise this past year as my husband and I had unexpected joy of receiving the ultimate surprise in the birth and adoption of our daughter.

As I look around Oxford Circle community this advent, I find many hopeful, many *esperanza* surprises. I see the new friends from our annual community festival finding fellowship in Oxford Circle Mennonite’s services on Sundays. In our tough economy, it can be

hard for families but, in spite of that, I find hope in the adults attending our classes for their GED or English language to help improve their job opportunities. And of course, it’s impossible to miss hope in the children in our out of school program.

Where I personally am constantly surprised by hope, is our staff and volunteers as we continue to grow to meet the changing needs in our neighborhood. There is Yushan who came all the way from China through Mennonite Central Committee and is giving all her energy to caring for the children in our out of school program. There is Bridget who left a full-time, stable job to move from Reno, NV and take an AmeriCorps position working with our youth on conflict resolution. Of course we can’t



forget Bill who was volunteering with us and wanted to contribute more so he submitted an application to his employer, Kenexa, who awarded him three months of paid leave to help us with adult education and accounting! And Chantelle, Brooke, Natalya, Lenee, Joe, Melissa, Rebecca, Vicki, Pete....

So in spite of my bent towards “reality”, I am surprisingly full of hope, of *esperanza*, this Advent as I wait in expectation to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



## NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

### YuShan JIANG – International Volunteer (MCC) from China

The past three months with OCCCDA have gone by quickly and have been full of new experiences. To me it feels like the Community Festival (September) was just last Saturday and now it is already the third month of the Out-of-School program. At the same time, it feels as though I have been in the US for a long time when I think about how much I have done and learned.

During my time serving with OCCCDA, I learn every day about language, work, people and myself. I have sent many emails and made many phone calls, all in English. I'm learning to plan for the Out-of-school program and trying my best to connect with the children. Some of the new things that are big challenges to me may not seem challenging for other people. With the support and help of

my OCCCDA/OCMC friends, I'm learning and growing in many ways through the process. God has used these experiences to grow me because He knows my weaknesses. God assures me that the burden is never more than I can handle and that He is always with me.

The most important and valuable part of my work here in

## THE MEANING OF SERVICE

OCCCDA is building relationships with the people around me. Through my colleagues and volunteers, I know better the meaning of community, what a nonprofit organization can do for people and society and how to serve God with love and faith in my daily life. I'm enjoying my community here, which is filled with enthusiasm and hope. I really appreciate that God led me here to serve for my IVEP year. I can see that our community is growing and every effort counts to make a difference.

### Bill Lauzus—Time to Care Volunteer

First I want to express my thanks to my employer, Kenexa, for allowing me 3 months paid leave as part of their new "Time to Care" program. I am also grateful for the talented staff and volunteers who have helped me to grow. Working at OCCCDA has been an incredible experience and quite a change of pace from the normal corporate accounting world that I am used to. I have

enjoyed the diversity of responsibilities that a small community development association provides.

Some of my areas of involvement used my current skills, such as:

- evaluating the current bookkeeping/accounting activities and looking for ways to improve efficiencies and automating
- helping prepare for the audit and developing written policies and procedures
- working with the donor database and developing summary reports in Microsoft Excel for the capital campaign

Other areas have stretched me and helped me to grow, including:

- ♦ assisting with a growing GED program, including special needs tutoring
- ♦ organizing the general adult education program and teaching
- ♦ computer training and homework assistance for the Out of School program

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, it's back to my normal full-time job, but I look forward to continue my involvement in this wonderful outreach to the community.





# ANNUAL COMMUNITY



**OXFORD CIRCLE CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION**

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*To extend  
healing and hope in the  
Oxford Circle community,  
believing that God's  
purpose of reconciling  
all people to Jesus  
leads us to minister  
on spiritual, physical,  
social & economic  
levels.*



**NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY**

**MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES**

**We have the following ministry and resource opportunity opportunities and welcome your participation!**

Prayer needs: Contact Anita Lyndaker-Studer @ [occcda@verizon.net](mailto:occcda@verizon.net) or (267) 265-1709 for more information.

Please join us in praying for our out of school programs that the participating children would know the peace and joy of Jesus both at OCCCDA and in their families. We are excited to have been awarded two AmeriCorps slots for our children/youth programs. Please pray for these new employees and that we find the needed volunteers and funding to support these programs. Please contact us if you would like to be a prayer partner or sponsor for a child/family.

Please pray for strength as our adult programs have continued to grow this fall, especially our GED/ESL classes. Also please pray for wisdom as we look to start a Bridge of Hope program (1 year intensive support program for homeless women and children) in 2012. We need prayer both that we reach the families in need of these ministries and that they would know the love of Jesus through participating. We also need your prayers to find the staff, volunteers, and funding needed to support these programs. Additionally we are looking for donations of 10 wireless capable laptop computers and a media storage unit on rollers to hold them.

Funding to begin to pay down our loan debt so we can divert more funds from the property into our growing ministries and community programs.

Human resources:

PT – AmeriCorps Youth Worker—Contact Chantelle Todman-Moore @ [chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com](mailto:chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com) or (215) 288-8504 for more information

After School volunteers—Contact Chantelle Todman-Moore @ [chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com](mailto:chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com) or (215) 288-8504

Adult Education Tutors and instructors – Contact Joe Beech @ [ajataylor1@yahoo.com](mailto:ajataylor1@yahoo.com)

**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

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