

# ORION Communities



## Orion's Star is Rising!



Kris Keller and Billy Pearson nominate neighbors who care. Learn more about Orion in less than 3 minutes with our new video... [www.OrionCommunities.org/video.mp4](http://www.OrionCommunities.org/video.mp4)

Wow – our neighbors in need continue to find Orion!

Orion's goal is to have people walk out of the office with a plan and a smile, because if you have a smile, you have hope and that's very good news for our most vulnerable neighbors.

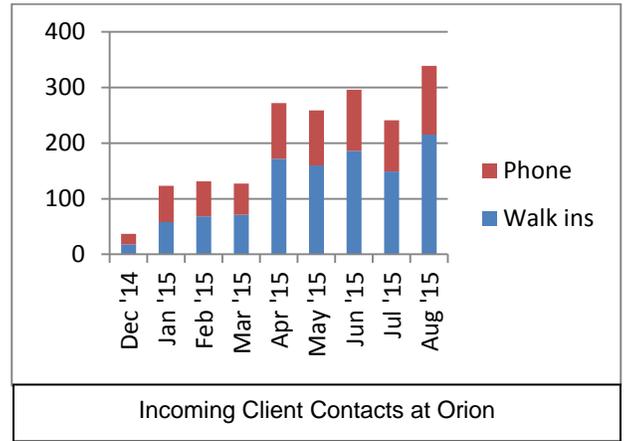
There are lots of smiles at Orion these days. One client explained that the office is so busy because "people know good things are happening here."

Orion has grown from 10 incoming client contacts per week to 80 in *just* 9 months. And that steady buzz leads to

increased confidence within our community about the positive outcomes possible at Orion. It means more people understand what Orion does,

who Orion serves and why.

Many, many thanks to our wonderful clients, volunteers, partners and donors!



## One Dollar Equals Two!! – Matching Gift Campaign

Fabulous friends have presented Orion with a matching gift challenge for \$25,000 - this is **huge**. Not only is it a lot of money to continue our work, it's also wonderful confidence that Orion should be supported!

Our team creatively works with men and women, often with dependent children, who need assistance with life's essentials.

One day this summer, Orion had 22 client contacts – one woman received a gift card to feed her children, three needed bus tokens to get to

work, one asked for \$5 for a medical co-pay and one gentleman needed \$100 to keep the electric on following a job loss.

The other 16 interactions were not for money but included using Orion's computer to write a resume, researching options to reduce a phone bill, inquiries about affordable housing, creating a plan to manage bills and more.

This challenge is a dollar for dollar match for the second \$25,000 we raise and we already raised the first \$25,000!

All gifts are now doubled by the match!!!!

Can you make a leadership gift of \$500 or more? Can you pledge \$25/month to provide food for one family right in your neighborhood? Can you help share the video link to spread the word about who Orion serves?

**Your dollar will have twice the impact!** Plus pledges for the next 12 months can be applied to this challenge.

Please see the donation form on page 4 or go to Orion's website: [www.OrionCommunities.org](http://www.OrionCommunities.org)

**Thank you!**

### Orion Communities

is a community based non-profit organization that provides interim case management, outreach and supportive services to residents who are experiencing poverty, illness or disability. Orion connects residents in the greater Phoenixville area to services that engender hope, dignity and self-reliance.

Proud member of





Julia with Cory & Matt...



and with young fans.

## Music For Everyone Concert a Big Success

This summer, Orion held a very special and unique concert right in the middle of Phoenixville! Locally raised and international phenomenon, Julia Chalfin, shared her extraordinary talents with Orion Communities and all of our neighbors.

The feedback has been – well, read this and decide for yourself...

- ✓ That was an amazing concert!
- ✓ Julia is not only a first class entertainer but she educated us on the

history of modern music.  
 ✓ Please do it again next year!

"We had three goals going into the concert," explained Kris Keller, Executive Director. "First to have a joyous event that all members of the community could enjoy. Second, to provide an opportunity for people to learn about Orion and the work we do. And third, to not lose money. We accomplished all three and made enough money to grow our emergency fund!"

Julia is passionate about

turning people on to opera. With her incredible stage presence and majestic voice, Julia had an enthralled audience. She interwove Handel, Carol King, Mozart, Destiny's Child and more to help the average listener understand the creative impulse in recent music.

Julia and her friends, tenor Cory O'Neill Walker and pianist Matthew Brower, as well as attendees, were already talking about next year's concert. All of Phoenixville will be happy to have such splendid musicians grace our town again!

If you don't know Diversity In Action – Phoenixville, check them out on Facebook for some really cool posts! You can also find out about meeting dates and upcoming events!



Upcoming events – check out our website for details!

- Sept 23: 4pm - Mural dedication
- Oct 2: 6pm-9pm - First Friday
- Oct 3: 12pm-6pm - Food Festival
- Oct 7: Iron Hill - 20% to Orion**
- Oct 17: 10:30am-4pm - Pumpkin Fest
- Nov 7: 4pm-8pm - Multi-Cultural Event
- Nov 15-24: Homeless/Hunger Awareness Week

## ¡Bienvenida! Welcome to our Bilingual Staff Member

Sometimes the stars just align perfectly and so it has been for Orion this year. We had a young woman come in for assistance with a job application. In the course of things, this client, Lorraine Colon, started volunteering at Orion – she had a natural connection with Orion's clients plus, being bi-lingual, she could more clearly talk with our Spanish speaking

neighbors.

It turns out that Lorraine has a degree in Psychology and a passion for helping others. "I love Orion," Lorraine said, "working here would be my dream job!" As it happened, Orion's client contacts had increased to the point where we were considering adding another professional to the team and we knew we

wanted *and* needed someone who spoke Spanish.

Now Orion not only has the good fortune of a savvy Case Management Aide for our case managers and clients but also someone who can greet our clients in both English and Spanish.

Stop in some day and say hello or ihola! to Lorraine!

## Local Dining and You Can Support Orion!

**Dine at Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant any time on Wed, Oct 7, and 20% of your food bill will be donated to Orion. Just bring this coupon with you!**

Orion Communities

Coupons may not be distributed on Iron Hill premises. On-site solicitation will result in termination of your event. Redeem only at Iron Hill Brewery in Phoenixville, PA Offer Valid 10/07/15 ONLY

**GIVE 20%**...means dine with us on Wednesday, October 07, 2015, and we'll donate 20% of your food bill (excluding alcoholic beverages, gratuity and taxes) to the Orion Communities. Thank you for your support.

**IRON HILL BREWERY & RESTAURANT**

(reservations strongly suggested) 130 EAST BRIDGE STREET PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460 610.983.9333 WWW.IRONHILLBREWERY.COM

## Board Member – Kathy Magas Wilson

Autumn Greetings! The Orion Board, staff and volunteers are excited to welcome Fall with all the beauty of the season as well as all the wonderful events our community offers. As a Board member for Orion Communities for the past several years, I am proud to be part of Orion’s continued connection with the Phoenixville area community.

Phoenixville is blessed with a wide variety of organizations, nonprofits, churches and groups; we are so proud to continue to serve and partner with each of you.

As a Board member, my commitment is to ensure that Orion continues to meet the needs of the community and maintain our practice of serving through integrity, compassion and respect.

The members of the Board, staff and volunteers share this same commitment - to meet the individualized needs of each neighbor through collaboration, creative problem solving, and supportive services.

As a social worker for the past 35 years, it is clear that individual and family needs are

not only growing for so many, but the issues are more complex and often, very acute. To this, we welcome the partnership of our community members to join us in meeting, often times, the most basic and important needs of the people we serve, in an effort to offer dignity and hope.



Kathy Wilson with fellow Board members Ken George and Keith Burress.

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 “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”.

–Margaret Mead

## Poverty In America Is Mainstream\*

How can that be? The US is so wealthy how can we even talk about poverty as being ‘mainstream’? That seems impossible but the reality is most of us have been or will be ‘poor’ at some point.

54% of Americans will be at or near the poverty line for a year or more. That’s \$35,238 to raise a family of four. Can you imagine living like that for one year? Job losses, reduction in work hours, family breakups, illnesses or disabilities are the typical causes of people coming into

poverty or near poverty.

But people are incredibly resilient. Typically they rise out of poverty after a year or two. The devastating issues move into the background and a new normal is achieved.

That’s why social service agencies are so important to help individuals and families get back on their feet. In dire times, everyone needs to know what services are available and how to secure life’s essentials of food,

shelter, and clothing. That’s what Orion does. Orion helps make the connections so people can transition towards increased self-reliance.

“So many people are paying it forward for us”, said one recent Orion family. “When we get back on our feet then we’ll pay it forward for others.” And that’s what really is mainstream... neighbors taking care of neighbors.

\*NY Times, Mark R. Rank, Nov. 2, 2013

Welcome to the new Healthy Pregnancy and Happy Baby Program at Phoenixville Hospital for uninsured women!  
 For more info call  
 610-983-1071



## Read To a Child Today For a Better Tomorrow

Orion now has free books for children! It’s part of the national Read Aloud program. All parents are encouraged to take some books home and READ ALOUD.

One of the challenges for families with low income is that

they cannot always afford to buy books. [Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent or caregiver can do to improve a child’s readiness to read and learn.](#) – this is from the [Read Aloud 15 Minutes](#) website.

A family that reads together everyday increases the reading ability for the child, improves the bond with parents, and increases the child’s ability to focus.

Help spread the word about the free children’s books at Orion and don’t forget to read aloud!

**Read Aloud**  
**15 MINUTES.**  
 Every child.  
 Every parent.  
 Every day.



**247 Bridge Street  
Phoenixville, PA  
19460**

Phone  
**610.415.1140**

E-Mail  
**info@Orion  
Communities.org**

*We're on the Web!*

**www.Orion  
Communities.org**



**www.facebook.com  
/orion247**

## Orion también habla español

La Comunidad Orion es una organización sin fines lucro que ayuda a personas en situaciones de pobreza, enfermedad o discapacidad. Ayudamos a familias y a otras personas en el área de Phoenixville con las cosas esenciales de la vida como: alimentos, vivienda, ropa y transportación.

Orion se ocupa de las necesidades de personas que han sido ignorado por otras

organizaciones que prestan servicios de ayuda. Orion tiene la flexibilidad de generar soluciones favorables, debido al hecho que no recibe financiación del gobierno.

Orion no tiene ningún tipo de límite en cuanto a las fronteras geográficas. Podemos ayudar a gente que ya ha solicitado servicio de ayuda anteriormente, pero que todavía no se lo han

concedido.

Orion ahora tiene profesionales en la oficina cinco días a la semana que hablan inglés y español. Si usted o alguien quien usted conoce está sufriendo en una situación crítica, por favor venga a vernos o llame a este número de teléfono 610.415.1140. ¡Deseamos conocerle!



## A Volunteer's Story...

A young couple had run out of money. They had nowhere to sleep and hadn't eaten in several days. He was starting a new job in 5 days, she had resumes out everywhere with some promising leads.

The couple impressed us with their initiative and determination. Having recently moved here, they didn't know about St. Peter's Hot Lunches or

PACS, Phoenixville's local food pantry. We suggested they go to St. Peter's and see PACS for some food while we made a couple of calls on their behalf.

They returned having enjoyed a good meal and with a couple bags of food. They were obviously relieved. We then shared that we were able to secure temporary housing for them.

Plus Orion had 2 gift tickets for the Colonial Theater.

That's when the tears really started to flow and not just for this young couple but the Orion staff too.

Since then, they have stopped in a couple of times. He started his job and she also began working, they've found a place to live and they think Phoenixville is terrific!

Join Orion in our Matching Gift Campaign!

**Your \$ = \$\$ for Orion Communities and your neighbors in need!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

- A leadership donation of \$500 or more. Please specify amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- A supporting donation in the amount of \$ 30 \_\_\_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 \_\_\_\_\_ other \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- A repeating donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ once every month/quarter, amount to a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*You can also go to our website to make a donation by credit card or paypal*

[www.OrionCommunities.org](http://www.OrionCommunities.org)

**~Dollar for dollar match for \$25,000 Orion raises this Fall~**

***Your pledge today helps Orion help our neighbors!***

This pledge form or your gift can be mailed to Orion Communities, 247 Bridge St., Phoenixville, PA 19460

*Thank you!*