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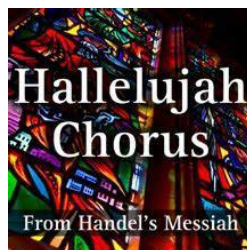
December 2021 Newsletter



BEAUTY INSPIRES HOPE

A friend of mine sent me this picture recently. It is the sun rising over Lake Michigan. As the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Beauty is its own excuse for being." And as the poet John Keats said, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

The Arts:



Since this is the holiday season, one thing I always find hopeful is a large group coming together to make joyous and hopeful music. Here is a link to such a broad and diverse group doing just that, singing the Hallelujah Chorus in a Philadelphia shopping mall. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohagajJvzhU>

Stories of Hope:

A Steger woman wanted to give her kids an opportunity ‘to fix what they see wrong in the world,’ an effort that snowballed into the bustling Community Closet

By [Carole Sharwarko](#) Daily Southtown Nov 17, 2021



Laura Hensley receives a hug at a Community Closet event. Hensley founded the organization as a way to help her children do good works and it's grown over the last decade and now operates out of a church in Lansing.

Laurie Hensley didn't know exactly what to do when two empty funeral urns got dropped off at the Community Closet of Steger and the Southlands.

Having operated the charity for nearly a decade, Hensley is a pro at processing donations of heaps of clothing, small furniture and appliances. So, however unexpected, she knew the donation of two urns presented a unique opportunity to help community members in need.

"We posted on the Facebook page: 'This is an odd one, guys, but we're looking for two specific individuals who need these,'" she said. "Maybe for a loved one they couldn't afford to put to rest nicely."

In less than two hours, the Community Closet gave one urn to a man who had been keeping his wife's remains in a cardboard box, and the other to a woman who couldn't afford a burial for her adult son.

The Community Closet, which sprung up out of Hensley's Steger home, had its origins in a desire by her then-young children to help a local family in need. The effort "snowballed," Hensley said, as she and her family continued aiding neighbors.

"This gave (my kids) the opportunity to fix what they see wrong in the world," she said. "You can't keep complaining about things if you're not willing to go out and fix it." To read more, click on this link:

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/ct-sta-community-closet-st-1117-20211117-m7zel2v74vgv5ilifdtiablkh4-story.html>

How this Racine program helps kids understand the Root River, the water itself, and living things in the water

[Lauren Henning](#), Racine Journal Times, Nov 6, 2021



21st Century Preparatory School teacher Devron Bostick, left, helps LeRon Willis identify the creatures he looked at with his magnifier.

As the program director for [WATERshed](#), Nancy Carlson and her wagon full of buckets of water and critters and magnifying tools help students understand where our drinking water comes from along with the life forms that call the Root River home.

“The watershed program uses the Root River and Lake Michigan as living laboratories to help students make personal connections to the freshwater resources in their community,” Carlson said. “They explore human relationships with our watershed, and we provide education about watersheds to help foster students who both understand and care about freshwater resources.”

The program connects with the students at the elementary level and then again during their senior year of high school. Using survey results, Carlson said that 95% of students remember their first experience, even if it was years later and the student came to the center only once. To read more, click on this link: [How this Racine program helps kids understand the Root River, the water itself, and living things in the water | Local News | journaltimes.com](#) To watch a 3 ½ minute video of students learning, click on this link: <https://watershedprogram.com/field-trips>

Hope-Filled Organizations:



[What We Do | Suicide Prevention Services of America \(spsamerica.org\)](#)



A group of sps volunteers

WHO WE ARE

Our focus is Suicide. Our mission is to open minds, save lives and restore hope through prevention, intervention and postvention, using education, advocacy and collaboration. We are one of the few agencies in the country who offer all that we do: a 24-hour phone hotline, counseling, depression screening, workshops, prevention training, intervention in schools, support groups and annual awareness events. We are a part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255.

WHAT WE DO

- Counseling
- Support Groups
- Volunteer Workshops
- Outreach in Schools
- Depression Screening
- Prevention Training
- 24-Hour Phone Outline

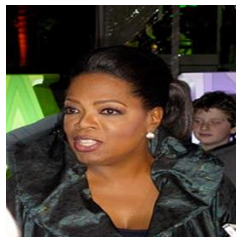
U. S. Department of Education - Federal TRIO Programs



[TRIO Home Page \(ed.gov\)](#)

The Federal TRIO Programs are federal outreach and student services programs in the United States designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are administered, funded, and implemented by the United States Department of Education. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs. TRIO also includes a training program for

directors and staff of TRIO projects. Their existence is owed to the passing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Two well-known students who benefitted from TRIO educational support programs are Oprah Winfrey and Jose Hernandez. To read more, click on the link above.



Oprah Winfrey



Jose Hernandez – Astronaut



LET US DREAM is a locally rooted and globally established Not-for-Profit Organization. It was conceived with the idea to create holistically developed communities world over. It has strived for this since its inception.

We, at LET US DREAM, firmly vouch in the idea of a global family, where each individual and each society works interdependently to create a sustainable world. The program is composed of likeminded people from all ethnic groups around the world to support, guide, and lead this vision of holistic development in the growth of individuals and the society.

LET US DREAM operates using an impactful and effective community-based working model that join people together while also bridging community organizations together. LET US DREAM aids, nurtures, and hones the untapped potentials of individuals in the psycho-social leadership aspects of life. LET US DREAM, through rigorous research and continuous evaluation, strives to accomplish this vision through its four unique projects:

[DREAMS Program](#), [DREAMS Band](#), [DREAMS Pro Club](#), [LET US DREAM Conferences](#)

To read more go to [About Us | LET US DREAM](#) To view a 4 minute video go to: https://youtu.be/ojd_qrni2Zc

The Future:

In response to the article [SURVEY PRIORITY #7: BIG DATA, Part Two: Possible Counter Measures](#) which was added to the website at the beginning of November, one reader, Geraldine Bodi, sent the following response.

Share Your Thoughts

In regard to Big Data, truthfulness and presenting selective data to support a view in Network news is more dangerous than FB. The media is supposed to be unbiased, but because it is ultimately owned by those with partisan and money driven interests, it is not.

My response to Geraldine is that I agree with her that most of the public media (newspapers, radio, and television stations), are owned by companies with partisan and money driven interests. I keep that in mind when reading/listening/viewing them. My concern with much that is on social media of a political and ideological nature is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to tell who is behind the information they are spreading and how are they held accountable as individuals and groups.

Sharing Ideas:

Why Do We Hope?

All of us hope for many things during our lives.

Sometimes we hope for good things for ourselves: good health, loving relationships, a good job, a livable home in a safe neighborhood or community.

Sometimes we hope for good things for others: our families, our friends, our neighbors, our community, our country, and our world.

Sometimes we wish for big things like world peace, the end to discrimination against any and all human beings, the end to poverty for so many people in our world, etc., etc. The list can go on and on.

Sometimes we hope for more frivolous and fun things. (As a Chicago baseball fan, I hoped for the Cubs to win the World Series once in my lifetime. After a gap of 108 years, they finally won it all in 2016).

Sometimes we wish for smaller things like a beautiful day, a good meal, a car that starts in the morning when we need to get to work. Again, the list can go on and on.

We Hope Because We Love.

I think we hope for a number of reasons.

But I think one of the most important reasons for why we hope is that we hope because we love.

To read more click on this link <https://hopefromthebottomup.com/news/why-do-we-hope>

And after you read the full article, please share your thoughts on the following two questions:

Why do you hope?

What moves you to hope for something for yourself, for others, for the world as a whole?

Share this Newsletter!

If you find this Newsletter to be a positive contribution to promote Hope and positive changes for now and in the future, please consider forwarding this Newsletter to people you think would enjoy it and who may want to share their hopeful stories and programs for future Newsletters.

Thank You