

THE CAROL J. GREER COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

St. Stephen's Community Church, UCC

P.O. Box 841 - East Lansing, MI - 48826

Phone: 517-706-1905

Serving Lansing Area Families and the Development of At-Risk Youth

November, 2021

Back in Business

After a short break, the Greer Center returned to servicing Lansing area youth in October facing continuing challenges of COVID and major remodeling construction at Hildebrandt. With our MSU Biochemistry colleagues, we are moving ahead with a hybrid program that focuses on field trips to spacious, instructive and fun indoor sites, with outside experiences as weather permits and virtual sessions as a last resort.

A Day in the Country with Cider and Donuts

The almost perfect V shape of geese flying overhead—a new leader taking over when the fatigued one in front started to slow down, the changing colors of the trees, the large gliding hawk against the blue sky, the shapes in the big fluffy white clouds ---there were many sights to enjoy on the half hour ride to St. Johns, MI. The very popular Cider Mill there offered much more than cider and donuts. The Gemstone Mining (complete with a colorful card for each “miner” to help them identify the gems they found), the Wagon Ride through the apple orchards, the Corn Maze, and even the wooden red pumpkin man that was marked to indicate the height of each



child, were all fun and instructive. However, the most popular activity by far was the Jumping Pillow that challenged not only how high each child could jump but also their ability to stay on it without sliding off the slippery slope into the sand at the bottom--a perfect activity to follow a



sweet treat of cider and donuts. It was intriguing also to see how the cider was made, watching the apples go up the conveyor and into the grinder coming out mush. The day was perfect for enjoying the fresh air and wide open spaces as well as the activities. Many thanks to St. Stephen's for the lunch they provided the group.

An introduction to the Wonders of the Universe



A multiple-racial group of teens from Milwaukee schools made a unique video on the origins of the universe which our youth were able to view on a visit to the MSU Planetarium. Laying back in the comfortable seats, they viewed a wide range of topics including the origins and fate of the universe, star cycles--sun, earth origins and history, the origins--chemistry--importance of water, and what is known so far about black holes. After the video, the group was treated to a presentation on the darkened dome ceiling that was lite with the stars and planets of the night sky --the constellations currently visible from our location on the earth. The Planetarium provided Sky Maps for the youth to take home to view the sky which, this time of year, is dark around 8pm. Following this visit, the youth enjoyed ice cream from the MSU Dairy Store, which has now reopened, and is just a block from the Planetarium.



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Greer Center **STARS** acknowledged by Uplift Our Youth Foundation

Marian Brooks Bryant, Uplift Our Youth Foundation 2021 Youth Advocate, is a member of St. Stephen's Community Church, humanitarian and philanthropist with a passion for helping children and families. At St. Stephen's she is a Trustee and Treasurer for the church and its outreach arm, The Carol J. Greer Community Learning Center.



Mrs. Bryant is the volunteer Executive Director of BCFI (Building Child and Family Initiatives), a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and a member of the Lansing/East Lansing Links, Incorporated coordinating their Young Women for Change (YWFC) program. In honor of her late husband, she established the Dr. William C. Bryant Jr. Achiever Scholarship for graduating high school students planning to study for medical science careers. She serves in the United Church of Christ Covenant Association and on the Sparrow Women's Board of Managers as Board treasurer as well as many other community Boards. Her contributions have improved the lives of countless children and their families in the Greater Lansing area.

Formerly, Mrs. Bryant was Chief Financial Officer of the Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority which manages the Lansing Center, Cooley Law School Stadium, Lansing City Market and was on the team that created the Common Ground Festival. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Howard University and her Master of Arts from George Washington University. Mrs. Bryant has three adult children and five grandchildren who are the love and joy of her life. **OUR HARDY CONGRATULATIONS TO MARIAN BROOKS BRYANT WHO'S SKILL AND DELIGENCE MAKE A CRITICAL CONTRIBUTION TO GREER CENTER SUCCESS.**

James McCurtis III, Uplift Our Youth Foundation 2021 Spotlight On Excellence Awardee, and Greer Center graduate, was one of two students recognized for their work. James "Jay" McCurtis, a senior at Okemos High School, is a member of the Black Student Union and the Okemos Outreach group. With Okemos Outreach, he volunteered at Roseland Community Daycare Center in Chicago, IL. In Lansing, Jay is a member of the Lansing Branch of the NAACP, serving as the NAACP's local Youth Council President. Last year, he spoke at the Juneteenth celebration on behalf of youth during a presentation from the Lansing Black Leaders Coalition. He was selected to serve this year, on the Youth Advisory Council for the City of Lansing led by State Representative Sarah Anthony. Jay is also an active member of Turning Point of Lansing (TPOL). In January 2021, Jay was recognized for his community engagement, awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Citizenship Award by the Men of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



with proud parents Cynthia and James L. McCurtis II

Jay wrote: *"I always look back at my time at the Greer Center with such fond memories and it has always been the highlight of my summers. I have no doubt I learned the most those summers from you and the wonderful people you work with. You taught me the importance of never being wasteful, showed me how much I loved sewing and singing, and broke down societal gender roles such as cooking, cleaning, and sewing only being "for women". Come to find out, some of my favorite moments were sewing and cooking (I'm still working on the cleaning part)! I was exposed to so much during those weeks like coding, tennis, golf, filming, and a whole myriad of other amazing activities and I really can't thank you enough for that because without you I never would've learned about my love for filming! And now look at me, I film for Okemos High School football games, pep rallies, plays, and concerts. On top of that, you always fostered my interests outside of iTec as well. I still have the astrophysics books you gave me and enjoyed every last one of them. Lastly, and I mentioned this earlier, but the people that help you through every step of the process are the best of the best too. I still remember Mr. Bennie and how much of a role model he was for me and the other kids there; always helping us out, playing basketball with us, and even being an occasional actor in our films. I'll never forget all the great memories I have from your wonderful program, and I know so many more kids have the same thought."* **SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS TO JAY MCCURTIS FOR HIS COMMITMENT TO THE HARD WORK AND SERVICE HE NURTURED SUMMERS AT THE GREER CENTER.**

The Greer Center, a nonprofit organization, serves the community through the generosity of people like you. Please help us with a donation today.

By check: Mail to St. Stephen's Community Church with Greer Center on the memo line, 1007 Kimberly Dr, Lansing, MI 48912

On-line via our website: Goggle--St. Stephen's Community Church Lansing. Click on Donate, then Community Outreach Greer Center

Or directly into our Endowment (See Oct. Newsletter): Google on Capital Region Community Foundation, click DONATE NOW, in the "Search All Funds" box type Carol J. Greer, then click DONATE in the yellow box to add your information..

Thank you for your interest, encouragement and support.