

Fall 2022

STANDINGSTRONG

Blackburn Center News

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

The work that we do at Blackburn Center can be incredibly challenging. We provide services to thousands of people each year through victim services and community education and training. At the same time, we strive to address the root causes of gender-based violence, with a goal of stopping it entirely.

We are fortunate to have incredible staff, who work tirelessly to run our emergency shelter, provide therapy and counseling, run education and training programs, and take care of all of the financial and administrative details that make our work possible. Our team is further supported by volunteers, who make it possible to provide such a high level of service to people throughout Westmoreland County.

Our volunteers give selflessly of their own time to answer calls on the 24-hour hotline, hand out literature at health fairs, staff events like Walk a Mile, serve on committees and our Board of Directors, and more. They undergo extensive training to develop

active listening and empowerment counseling skills, and to better understand the issues commonly faced by victims and survivors of violence.

Blackburn Center was founded by volunteers, and they remain a core part of our mission. Without their countless hours of service each year, we would not be able to reach so many people in Westmoreland County through education and training programs, and direct victim services.

To all who volunteer for Blackburn Center: thank you. Your decision to give back to the community strengthens our organization and ensures that we can keep striving to fulfill our mission. We could not do the work that we do without your active, ongoing support. Because of you, we have been able to help and reach many more people than we could have on our own. We truly appreciate all that YOU do for our agency and people throughout Westmoreland County.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING? **Here's What You Can Do to Help**

Volunteers are a vital part of our work at Blackburn Center. We offer a variety of opportunities for individuals to volunteer, from answering hotline calls to handing out literature at fairs.

You don't have to have particular experience or education to volunteer for our agency. Instead, you just have to care about making a difference in our community. Over the past 40 years, we have had volunteers from all walks of life, including teachers, business professionals, nurses, students, stay-at-home parents, and retirees.

We encourage everyone to volunteer for Blackburn Center — including men. By taking an active part in our organization, you can demonstrate a commitment to supporting victims and survivors and ending gender-based violence.

All volunteers must submit an application, which is accessible via our website (www.blackburncenter.org/volunteer). We can also provide you with a physical copy of our application form if needed. Once we have received your application, we will schedule an interview with our Education/Outreach Program Manager. If you will volunteer

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in a position with direct client contact, you will be required to complete Crisis Intervention Counselor Training.

We have many potential roles that volunteers can fulfill, including:

- **24-Hour Hotline:** counselors take shifts answering our hotline, talking callers through difficult situations and empowering them using crisis-counseling techniques. Crisis Intervention Counselor Training is required.
- **Shelter Support:** our emergency shelter provides temporary housing for victims of intimate partner violence and their children. Volunteers may help organize donations, assist with children's activities during support group meetings, or take on other tasks. Crisis Intervention Counselor Training is required.
- **Legal Accompaniment:** legal advocates meet victims and their loved ones in courts throughout Westmoreland County. They may assist with filing for protective orders, provide support through legal proceedings, and offer information about available resources. Crisis Intervention Counselor Training and additional training are required.
- **Medical Accompaniment:** medical advocates offer support to victims of domestic and sexual violence during medical examinations at hospitals.

They also provide information and resources on options. Crisis Intervention Counselor Training and additional training are required.

- **Education and Training Programs:** volunteers assist with education and training programs across Westmoreland County to deepen community understanding of the dynamics of gender-based violence and the availability of services. This may include anything from distributing literature to giving brief talks as part of our Speaker's Bureau. Additional training may be required.
- **Other Roles:** individuals who are not ready to commit to a formal volunteer assignment can still support Blackburn Center's mission. They may host a fundraiser drive, donate to Blackburn Center, volunteer at special events like our annual Walk a Mile, or join a committee or program like Fearless Advocates for Men's Engagement (FAME).

We strive to offer volunteer opportunities that meet the abilities of each individual. If you have questions or would like to learn more about volunteering for Blackburn Center, scan the QR Code to visit our website or call 724-837-9540, x114.



Please join us in thanking these sponsors for their generous support of our 2022 Walk a Mile in *Their HER His Our Shoes* event. For a full list of sponsors, visit our website at www.blackburncenter.org.

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Are you ready to #WalkBlackburn? Save the date — April 15, 2023 — for an important (and fun!) day in the community. Our annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event will return to St. Clair Park in Greensburg for 2023.

For registration information and details about sponsorship opportunities, call us at 724.837.9540 x144, or visit our website.



**Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @blackburncenter
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/blackburncenterpa**

2022 ALL OCCASION CARDS

For more than 20 years, Blackburn Center has offered a meaningful way to mark important occasions and celebrate special people in your life through our Special Occasion Cards. For each \$25 donation to Blackburn Center, a card is sent to the person specified with a personal message. Donations this year include:



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Please consider this way to touch the lives of thousands of people in our community requiring our services, as you touch the lives of those you honor and remember. Visit our website at www.blackburncenter.org/greetingcards to make your choice from several delightful options.

Look at Our List, and Check It Twice

As the holiday season approaches please make our Needs List, located on our website, part of your gift giving. Making a gift of items from the Needs List, or donating the financial resources to purchase those items, helps us provide for the basic needs of our clients. Your donations throughout the year enhance Blackburn Center's services and make the stay more comfortable for shelter residents. They can also provide a victim of domestic violence with basic household items and groceries as they establish a safe home for themselves and their children. A donation is also a unique and wonderful way to honor someone special on your holiday list. You make your donation in their honor; we will send a card acknowledging your gift on their behalf.

Please put the items listed in **BOLD** at the top of your shopping list, and help Blackburn Center manage donations by bringing only **new items — no clothing, please**. If you have used items to donate, the agency can provide a list of thrift shops in the area that make goods available to Blackburn Center shelter residents at no cost to them.

**For more information about donation opportunities, contact Blackburn Center
P.O. Box 398, Greensburg, PA 15601
724.837.9540 • www.blackburncenter.org
For Blackburn Center's services, call the 24/7 Hotline:
724.836.1122 or 1.888.832.2272**





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ANNUAL REPORT:
Fiscal Year 2021-2022
To reduce costs and environmental impact, we will be posting Blackburn Center's 2021-2022 Annual Report on our website:
www.blackburncenter.org.
Please let us know if you would like a hard copy sent to you; call 724.837.9540, x144.

REMINDERS
United Way Campaign All Southwestern PA United Way agencies need your help, now more than ever. The stronger they are, the stronger we are. Please consider directing your contribution to the Community Impact Fund or to Blackburn Center. Blackburn Center's donor designation number is 382.

Volunteer Opportunities
Blackburn Center has volunteer positions available. To learn about these opportunities, call our office: 724-837-9540, x114.



United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania

Blackburn Center Mission Statement

Blackburn Center advocates for the rights of all individuals to live free from domestic and sexual violence and other forms of violence by eliminating root causes and providing for the well-being and safety of survivors/victims.

Blackburn Center
is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides 24-hour hotline services, counseling, advocacy and support groups to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, incest, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and other forms of violence; and emergency shelter available to survivors of domestic violence and their dependent children. Blackburn Center also provides community education, school student awareness programs, and in-service professional trainings throughout Westmoreland County.

Blackburn Center is funded in part by United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, PA Department of Public Welfare funds, including Title XX and Act 44 funds, foundations and local contributions. A copy of official registration and financial information for Blackburn Center may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling within Pennsylvania 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.