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A Message from the Chair of the Board



Greetings from the Education Elevators Foundation!

Education Elevators has been running strong for 9 years! As a token of our gratitude, we'd like to share our progress with the numerous individuals who have given their time, money, skills, and support to this program over the years. Our work is a direct result of a community of Elevators, teachers, volunteers, and donors. Since the loss of our founder, Tom McJunkin, we have continued to move his legacy forward by building confidence, inspiring curiosity, and cultivating character of West Virginia's young people.

We are proud to announce that the program is now established as a recognized non-profit! We also created and expanded our Board of Directors and have expanded to new schools and businesses. They include: TransCanada's partnership with Edgewood Elementary; Energy Corporation of America's partnership with Chamberlain Elementary; and the 167th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard's partnership with Tuscarora and Bunker Hill Elementary. We also have additional partnerships with several organizations, including the Education Alliance, West Virginia University Extension and Generation Charleston.

We hope this newsletter will continue to make our growing Education Elevators community proud, and hopefully inspire new folks to join this dynamic community that is committed to ensuring that West Virginia children get the support and mentorship they deserve. As the new school year begins, we all look forward to another exciting year of Elevating!

Sincerely,
Matthew S. Tyree

Education Elevators Partnerships



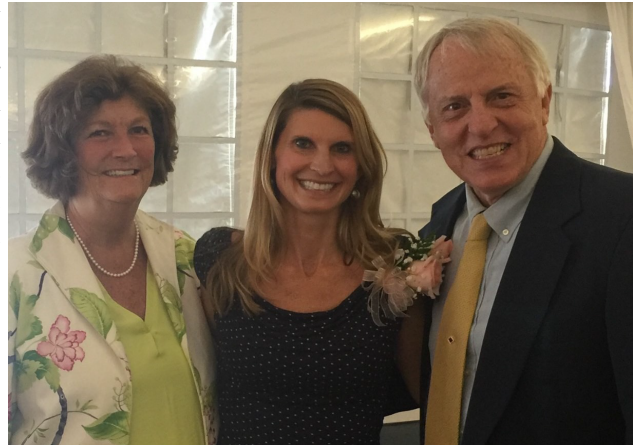
Transforming the Study of Poverty in the U.S.

Emerging Leaders. Change that Matters.

EE Executive Director, Allison McJunkin Named 'Woman on a Mission'

Union Mission Ministries of West Virginia named Allison McJunkin, Education Elevator (EE) Executive Director, as a 2016 "Woman on a Mission" honoree. This is the first year Union Mission selected recipients for the award. Union Mission created the awards to recognize and celebrate local community members who consistently dedicate their time, resources, talents and hearts to help others. Allison was one of six women honored at a reception at the Marriott in April.

Allison stepped into her role with EE in the fall of 2011, following the death of her father, Tom McJunkin who was also the program's founder. While initially only intending to steady the program in his absence, Allison soon found herself so passionate about Education Elevators that she plunged into the new position a few months later working full time, despite the fact that she was living in Colorado and was pregnant with her first child, McKenzie. In order to focus solely on EE, she hung up her cleats as the founding member of McJunkin Law LLC, a law firm specializing in race, gender and disability discrimination.



Nancy Pfister, former Chamberlain Elementary Principal,
Allison McJunkin and Steve Knighton,
former Piedmont Elementary Principal

Non-profit management wasn't something Allison considered until EE fell into her lap. "I never could have predicted it, but seems like all of my life experiences were meant to lead me exactly where I am in my role with EE," she says. Ironically, it's something that her father knew well before she did. "When I was contemplating attending law school in 2000, my Dad sent me a letter saying 'I think that law school is a good choice for you. A law degree, together with your experience, passion and ability to organize and motivate people, will give you many options, including management of a non-profit organization.'"

Ever since then, Allison has taken on the role as executive director with full stride because she believes in the foundation of the program. "I am incredibly passionate about EE because I've seen the extraordinary impact the program has had on the lives of kids in the community" she says. "Education Elevators is a win for schools, businesses, communities, and most importantly, students."

"I am on a mission to carry out my dad's vision - and to make school-business partnerships the rule rather than the exception."

-Allison McJunkin

Meet the Team



Vinnie Feller
Communications &
Logistics Manager

Vinnie has been working as a Virtual Assistant for over 2 years. She has been with EE since August and is working to keep the organization running smoothly, while supporting the organization's outreach.



Sue Gray
Program Coordinator

Sue worked as a Speech Pathologist in the Kanawha County School District for over 25 years. We're blessed to have Sue as our "boots on the ground" Program Coordinator working closely with our schools and Elevators.

Jackson Kelly's Partnership with Piedmont Elementary

Jackson Kelly (JK) has been the CASE Corporate Partner for Piedmont for more than 25 years. The firm donated money and resources to Piedmont, provided backpacks full of supplies for kids who needed them, gave scholarships to children who couldn't afford field trips, and participated in the schools "Read Aloud" program. However, we knew that there was still more the firm could do.

In 2007, Tom McJunkin, a partner at JK and long time-advocate of education, attended a Local School Improvement Council meeting to ask what else Jackson Kelly could do to support Piedmont. The response was simple: more adults spending one-on-one time with students to show them that their community cares about their success.

Tom was inspired and encouraged the firm to take our existing partnership to a new level by implementing an innovative new program that would allow attorneys and staff from the firm to mentor students at Piedmont. He believed that the key to a student's success was focusing on "elevating abilities and aspirations" through a relationship with a caring adult. Tom realized that JK (and all businesses) had the "human capital" to support, inspire and "elevate" students.

How has the program impacted your business? Company morale has increased- knowing the positive impact you are having on a child is mutually beneficial to the Elevator and the student.

What is your favorite thing about the Education Elevators program? Seeing the smiling faces. Students light up when they see their Elevator- that truly brings joy.

What has surprised you the most during your EE partnership experience? The creativity and innovation of Elevators - and their dedication to their students.

Erin Stankewicz
Jackson Kelly, Partner

"The EE program is a valuable asset for students, staff and families.
Elevators make a difference —one student at a time."

-Beth Sturgill, Piedmont Elementary Principal

A Little Time Goes a Long Way

For 3 straight years, I mentored the same student in the Elevator Program: Zavian. I mentored Zavian weekly for grades 3 through 5 up until his graduation from Piedmont. While attending his graduation ceremony I learned that we Elevators can be more impactful to our students than I originally thought. My time with Zavian wasn't anything remarkable. Some days we worked on reading, some days we played games, and some days we just caught up on life. Mostly, I tried to be a friend who could offer guidance and encouragement.

After Zavian's graduation, we had a conversation about leaving Piedmont and the many teachers and friends he had made over the years. I asked him what he would miss most about Piedmont. Zavian responded by stating that he would miss me the most. This surprised me. Out of all of his teachers and all of his friends that would be attending other middle schools, he would miss his time with me in the Elevator Program the most. I didn't expect this answer, but I think it's just one example of the positive impact that this program can have on students. While you may not always know it, your weekly time with your student can make a large impact on their life.

- Matt Tyree, Elevator and Board Chair



Energy Corporation of America's Partnership with Chamberlain Elementary

How long have you been partnered with the school? Beginning our fourth year

Why did your business choose to become a partner with Education Elevators?

ECA is a long-standing partner in education with Chamberlain Elementary, which is a great school with a tremendous faculty – our employees love supporting it. In the past, ECA has underwritten scholastic programs for the school; conducted wellness activities for students, faculty, and staff; installed new playground equipment; tutored students, and much more. When we learned about the Education Elevators program, its unique model, and the impact it can have on students... it only made sense to bring this great program to Chamberlain as well!

How has the program impacted your business?

Our employees are able to give back to the community in a direct and personal way and the flexible nature of the program is fantastic for our volunteers as school visits can be tailored to the Elevators' changing schedules.

What is your favorite thing about the Education Elevators program?

The direct impact of the relationships between Elevators and their students. Our Elevators know they are making a difference because they see positive changes exhibited by their students. They become role models because they quickly discover that their students may have no other positive role models. And, they open the students' eyes to their own potential – what they can be, what they should be, and what they want to be. These are exciting and rewarding relationships.

What has surprised you the most during your EE partnership experience?

Our employees who are Elevators love the program and they get tremendously excited about their students! When our Elevators return from their school visits, they cannot wait to share the sweet sentiments, cute pictures, teacher feedback, or funny stories they have brought back with them.

-Jennifer Vieweg

ECA Corporate Affairs

"Elevators are the angels of the school."

Amanda Ross,
Guidance Counselor



"I'm not sure who truly benefits from this program more, Shaidyn or me! It has been amazing to watch her transformation throughout the year. Shaidyn is smart, bright and so much fun. Her reading is absolutely fantastic and she is very artistic – I look forward to seeing those talents grow. Her excitement when I arrive at the school melts my heart and reminds me exactly why I love being a part of this program. One thing I know, *Education Elevators* makes a difference and helps these children in more ways than we realize."

– Tammy Selbe, ECA Elevator

TransCanada's Partnership with Edgewood Elementary

How long have you been partnered with the school? Beginning our third year

Why did your business choose to become a partner with Education Elevators?

Our inclusion and diversity council wanted to offer employees a way to get involved in the community. We looked into partnering with Edgewood because of our previous relationship with Watts Elementary, where employees tutored students and we assisted with various events for the school. The inclusion and diversity council leaders met with Edgewood to find out what the school needed help with the most. The leaders at Edgewood said they needed mentors, and that's where Education Elevators came in. We evaluated the program and thought it would work best for our employees – offering them the chance to make a difference while not taking up a significant amount of their work week.

How has the program impacted your business?

We had eight Elevators in our first year (last school year) and we formed a tight-knit group. We all came from different departments and through our work with Edgewood, we got to know each other. This helped us collaborate on business projects and deliver better results for our company. We had a career day where we brought our students to our office and took them all around the building. Everyone loved it! I think our employees really enjoyed seeing the students and their interest in our company and industry.

What is your favorite thing about the Education Elevators program?

My favorite thing about the program is how it focuses on developing a healthy relationship with a child. Many programs are centered on tutoring, which is important, but many children need to develop trust, confidence, compassion and competence before they can focus on learning.

What has surprised you the most during your EE partnership experience?

It surprised me how much I could connect with my student by seeing them just once a week for 30 minutes. It seems like such a small amount of time, but there is plenty of opportunity to connect. Thirty minutes really does make a huge difference in a child's life, and it also makes it easy to fit into your schedule!

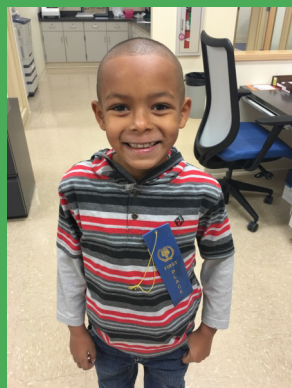
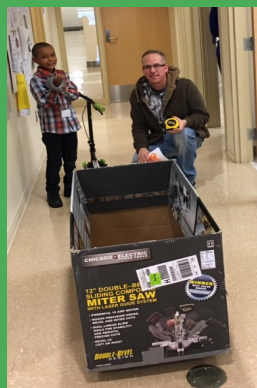
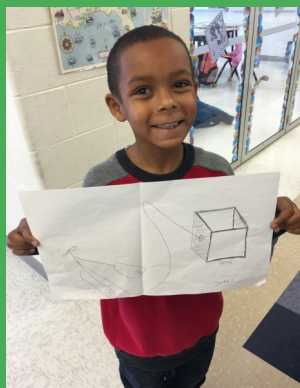
-Kelly Weikle

TransCanada, Senior Communication Specialist

"I have been overwhelmed by the love and attention the Elevators have shown their kids. Who knew that forty -five minutes a week could mean so much?"

-Stacey Losh, Curriculum Specialist
Edgewood Elementary

Jamar and John's Invention Wins First Place!



Jamar, a student at Edgewood, had an invention project. His Elevator, John, helped him design and build his idea. Jamar won first place so his Elevator bought him a frosty (with his photo on the cup) to congratulate him!

EE Teams up with The Education Alliance to Launch Programs in Berkley County

Education Elevators teamed up with The Education Alliance in order to reach more students. In 2013, The Education Alliance launched two Education Elevator programs in Berkley County between Tuscarora and Bunker Hill Elementary and Members of the 167th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard. Those programs have been met with great enthusiasm from the schools, students and the 167th Airlift Wing. The Education Alliance hopes to eventually launch more programs in Berkley County. Education Elevators and the Education Alliance are also working together to create more resources and training materials to better equip Elevators to give their elevatees the tools they need to take flight!



EE, WVU Extension & Shepherd Higher Education Consortium Partner Up For Internship Program

Since 2012, Education Elevators, in partnership with WVU (West Virginia University) Extension, The Education Alliance and The Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty (SHECP), has arranged for Shepherd summer interns to mentor low-resource, at-risk youth. As part of a community learning agreement, the interns have assisted with creating youth development activities, written articles on best practices surrounding youth mentorship and provided positive educational experiences for youth. The resources created by the SHECP interns help hone Elevator skills and enhance the confidence and social-emotional skills of students. Sherry Swint, assistant professor and 4-H extension agent with WVU writes, “This partnership between our youth-serving organizations makes sense. WVU has the connections and space to provide a quality experiential learning experience for interns interested in child development.”

The Shepherd Consortium, which emerged from the Shepherd Program at Washington and Lee University, seeks to “prepare college students for a lifetime of civic and political activity that seeks to diminish poverty through an interactive and a comprehensive interdisciplinary program on poverty”. Tom McJunkin, who had a long-standing interest in childhood education and the impact poverty plays, joined Shepherd Poverty Program Advisory Committee shortly after it was created. While Tom did not live to see the Shepherd Program bloom into the Consortium, which now boasts 22 member schools, he was a partner in developing and supporting its mission.

Harlan Beckley, executive and founding director of SHECP, is a great supporter of our work. “I can think of nothing more fitting than Education Elevators to honor Tom’s memory, he says. “It is a fitting tribute that his family has advanced this effort in Charleston, and the Shepherd Consortium is proud to have had summer interns with the Education Elevator program in recent years.”

“The future of the partnership is bright,” Harlan Beckley continues, “ We plan to continue to support interns to help with this vital program, and the bonus for the Shepherd Consortium is that the interns learn a great deal that they take with them as they begin their professional lives and their contributions to society as citizens. Tom would be proud that the legacy of service continues through this powerful collaboration.”

“One of the most important things I learned this summer was the importance of making connections with children in order to make an impact on their life. You have to help them see how amazing they are and show them that they are capable of achieving great things.”

-Elizabeth Wesley, the 2016 Shepherd intern, spent most of her time this summer mentoring and educating students at the Bob Burdette Center and the 4-H summer camping program.

In Memory of Jay Margolis



Jay Margolis was a wonderful man and an exceptional mentor. He was generous, kind, thoughtful and always went above and beyond the call even when he never expected reward or recognition for it. I have known Jay for many years, however, I didn't get to really know him until this past fall when he became an Elevator at Chamberlin Elementary School.

Jay was paired with a little boy named Ryan and they "were a match made in Heaven," as Ryan's guidance counselor, Mandy put it. Jay visited Ryan weekly where they would play games, read books, and enjoy each other's friendship.

After only a few sessions together, Jay attended the Thanksgiving luncheon with Ryan. Ryan was incredibly shy and when the guidance counselor tried to take a picture of him, Ryan dove under the table. You know what Jay did? He dove under the table, too!

From the beginning, Jay always saw Ryan's strengths. On one occasion, I told Jay that when Mandy introduced me to Ryan, he put his head down on the desk. Jay responded, "He is such a good kid and so smart, too. Ryan is going to be a psychologist one day."

When Jay learned of his cancer diagnosis, he contacted me to let me know that he was concerned that he might not be able to continue his meetings with Ryan. "I want to keep visiting him as long as I can. He has already had enough disappointment in his life--I don't want to add it," he said. He paused for a minute and then said, "Perhaps my wife, Julie could become Ryan's Elevator if something happens to me?" When I asked how he was doing and he said with a little chuckle, "Oh me? I am just fine. When my number is up, it's up. There is no sense in worrying about it." There wasn't a hint of sadness or anger in his voice. I was stunned by his positivity and his genuine concern for Ryan.

A few weeks later, Jay emailed me an update. He left his doctor's appointment so his son, Jim "Chamberlin 95" could meet him. Jim and Ryan practiced doing handshakes- something that my father had my siblings and I do with his "elevatees" when we would come into town.

Towards the end of the year, Ryan was transferred to a school in Princeton, WV, but even the distance did not deter Jay from his commitment to Ryan. Jay visited Ryan at his new school, engaged in conversations via Skype and sent him postcards. He even dropped a postcard to Ryan in the mail on the morning of what turned out to be his last checkup at Johns Hopkins.

Two days before Jay ultimately passed, Julie contacted me to let me know that Jay's condition had declined quickly. Jay asked her to let me know that he wouldn't be able to continue his visits. Even with his own impending death, making sure Ryan wouldn't be left disappointed waiting for him to show up was at the forefront of Jay's mind.

When I informed the staff at Chamberlin about Jay, they were devastated. "Jay was able to connect with Ryan in a way I have never seen anyone connect with a child," said Mandy. "Jay pulled Ryan out of his shell and literally changed his life". She explained that before they started meeting, Ryan barely spoke, but by the end of the year, Ryan "laughed and smiled." One day, Mandy even saw Jay and Ryan dancing in the halls. "Jay brought Ryan alive," she said.

I am grateful that Jay's involvement with Education Elevators gave me the opportunity to get to know such a genuinely beautiful soul. Not only did Jay make an indelible impact on Ryan's life in a few short months, he made one on mine, too.



- Allison McJunkin, Executive Director

Education Elevators Foundation
PO Box 553
Charleston, WV 25322

Please visit our website at
www.educationelevators.org to
learn more, donate, and to stay
connected with us.



*Relationships are the soil in
which children's emotional
learning skills grow."*

-Susan Jones & Suzanne
Bouffard, Harvard University

Education Elevators and Keep Your Faith Corporation Host Student Wellness Day

Since 2014, Education Elevators and Keep Your Faith Corporation (KYFC) have worked together to organize Student Wellness Day at the Appalachian Power Park. KYFC is a local non-profit that assists children and adults with overcoming reading and spelling difficulties. Wellness Day was created to empower students by providing them with knowledge about maintaining their overall health. Students engaged in physical activities, including Zumba, yoga and pilates, learned about the importance of exercise, dental health, mental health, eating healthy and being active. Other areas of focus were anti-bullying, violence prevention and stress reduction. In the past, the event has been attended by fifth graders from Piedmont, Edgewood and Grandview Elementary. Students were led through the various stations in groups led by members of the University of Charleston Women's Softball team.

Last year, the event was sponsored by Jackson Kelly PLLC, Wells Fargo, Amherst Madison, Suttle & Stalnaker and Generation Charleston. Capitol Market provided apples and oranges for all the kids.



Thanks to our participating organizations!
Read Aloud West Virginia, West Virginia University Extension, Integrative Mama, YMCA, Pilates WV, KEYS 4 Healthy Kids, ECA Wellness Division, Governor's Highway Safety Program, Bob Burdette Center, CAMC Respiratory Therapist, Dale Vogelbach, BridgeValley Community and Technical College Hygienist School, Charleston Pediatric Dental Group, Brickhouse Cardio & the Choose to Change Mascot.



Our Mission is to elevate the abilities and aspirations of students to make them confident in themselves, more motivated and more receptive to learning.

Education Elevators partners with businesses and organizations with local schools to match their employees with students in need of mentors, role models, friendship and individual attention.



"To succeed, kids need the ability to read, aspirations and someone who believes in them."

-Tom McJunkin, Education Elevators Founder