



County Commissioners

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Director

Drew Fredericks

2018 JDCAP Ongoing Program of the Year Nomination

“Writing Circles”

Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center

Years Volunteered: 15 years

Scott Feifer

Scott Feifer has been volunteering his services at the Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center for fifteen years where he has conducted his Writing Circles program. Scott Feifer is an English/Literature teacher at Landisville Middle School and has taught there for 29 years. Scott spends anywhere between 3 and 6 hours a week offering his programs to our residents in both detention and shelter at our facility making sure he gets to meet with each on-level group. Scott has been recognized and given various community awards including the Jefferson Award and the WGAL 8 Who Care Award for outstanding volunteer service and the Teacher Impact Award for his work as an educator and teacher. Scott is the kind of volunteer and person that is able to draw out the best in others and we are so very thankful to have him be a part of our team here at YIC.

Scott has a unique ability, during his Writing Circles program to inspire residents to openly express their feelings, thoughts and emotions and to begin to deal with some very difficult issues. During one of his times here with our residents, Scott led them through the reading of Walt Whitman’s poem “Miracles” and they then used his poem to create their own writing coming up with their own collaborative “Miracles” poem. Residents are given the choice to share their writings with the group. It is at this time that we see the residents open up the most. We are able to hear the residents share traumatic events in their lives without fear of being judged. Even if the residents do not share their writings they were able to write them down and in a sense get their feelings out. Scott will always then respond to these writings that he received with some well thought out comments about what the individual had shared in confidence with him. Sometimes Scott has even had our youth care worker staff join in and the residents are able to hear the staff share different events in their lives and this sharing helps to build positive relationships between residents and staff. This example I’ve shared of a recent Writing Circle was the inspiration for our Miracles Mural that was completed and hung in our shelter wing that was done in cooperation with Scott’s Writing Circle and the Art Smart program.

Scott also conducts Circles at Manos House a local placement for those youth with drug and alcohol issues, the York Development Center and at the Lancaster Library. With the addition of our PULSE and ETC programs he has started doing a family circle program with residents and inviting their families to take part in this process. It is really wonderful to see the connection that takes place in the family members that are present after sharing in this way. Scott will often donate books to our library and has encouraged numerous of our residents toward reading more regularly. Scott has shared as a JDCAP presenter in the past at one of the annual conferences. Scott has the ability to reach youth in a manner that is hard for many and for this we at the Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center nominate his Writing Circles program for JDCAP’s Ongoing Program of the Year Award in the state of Pennsylvania because of the many contributions he has made to the Lancaster and surrounding communities as a whole, but more specifically to those youth he has impacted with his genuine reflections and faithful dedication to being there for them as a listening ear.

Submitted by:
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