

Auditor General DePasquale Calls for More Help for Pennsylvania Students Struggling to Pay for College

By Gary Miller

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today released a special report calling for more help for Pennsylvania students struggling to pay for college. The report also follows up on a 2008 performance audit of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, the state's student loan agency.

"Pennsylvania is one of the top states for total student borrowing and the average student loan debt in our state is now more than \$37,000," DePasquale said. "Pennsylvania must do more to help students and parents afford college, as well as understand the implications of borrowing for higher education."

A performance audit released in 2008 under former Auditor General Jack Wagner called for PHEAA to halve the number of governing board seats held by legislators, among other changes.

"Overall, I'm glad to report that PHEAA took the audit to heart and made most of the improvements that that it recommended," DePasquale said. "In just the first two years the improvements helped PHEAA save \$74 million to reinvest in Pennsylvania students."

Among the improvements cited by the special report:

PHEAA has implemented most of the department's 2008 recommendations, including reducing the vehicle fleet, updating the vehicle use policy to prohibit personal use and use by non-employees, and using a standardized form to properly track vehicle expenses across the agency.

PHEAA updated its travel policy to include specific language defining business expenses, clear explanation of non-reimbursable expenses and approvals required for any business travel. It also instituted new procedures for corporate travel and travel cards, agency fleet vehicles and car rentals.

PHEAA reined in some of its previous spending practices, including by bringing most compensation packages more in line with other state agencies and curtailing most executive and management employee incentive programs. As the 2008 audit recommended, PHEAA is now offering employee events at a discounted rate instead of paying for the entirety of the event.

The 2008 audit found that PHEAA misclassified \$2 million in expenditures. In response, the agency has developed a four-year risk-based audit plan that is updated annually. The resulting audits are reviewed by an audit review committee, which is composed of the PHEAA board.

DePasquale noted that PHEAA's board could benefit from including more individuals with professional backgrounds that directly relate to the agency's financial functions and core mission.

"As was the case in 2008, the PHEAA board is still top-heavy with legislators," DePasquale said. "There's no reason why these important board seats shouldn't go to individuals who have relevant experience in higher education and finance."

Under current law, legislators are essentially allowed to hold onto PHEAA board seats for as long as it suits them to remain. This has effectively kept the board from becoming more diverse and including members with related professional experience in the private sector.

The special report also recommends that Pennsylvania create an independent Office of Student Loan Advocate or similar ombudsman to help borrowers navigate the increasingly complex world of student loans.

"The Pennsylvania Treasury would be the right department to house this type of ombudsman," DePasquale said. "It's an independent office that already operates a college savings plan."

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH WORKSHOP SERIES



Our DVAM workshops are at no cost and will be held every Tuesday in October from 12:00-1:00pm. They can be found on our website and on our Facebook page.

Workshop #1

10/6 - Recognize, Respond, Refer for Medical Professionals
<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/rrrfmpdw/>

This interactive workshop is geared towards students and professionals in any medical practice, clinical setting, mental health or rehabilitation center to learn how to refer someone for services at Turning Point.

Workshop #2

10/13 - Introduction to Domestic and Intimate Partner Abuse
<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/itdaipadw/>

This at no cost, interactive workshop will cover different types of abuse as well as highlight the resources that Turning Point provides to the community.

Workshop #3

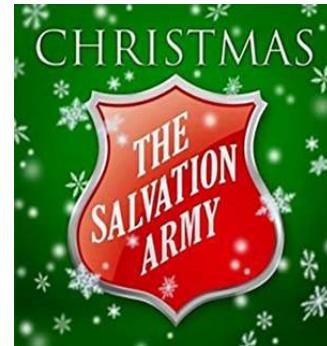
10/20 - Teen Dating Abuse: Creating Healthy Boundaries in Virtual Environments
<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/tbachbivedw/>

This at no cost, interactive workshop will explore teen dating abuse and how virtual learning environments are influencing teens' ability to have effective boundaries with dating partners.

Workshop #4

10/27 - Community Forum DVAM Workshop
<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/cfdw/>

Join Turning Point's Outreach Team for the final Domestic Violence Awareness Month Workshop Series. This workshop will be in the style of a Q&A as the Outreach Team fields questions from the community about topics related to domestic and intimate partner abuse.



DOING THE MOST GOOD®

Merry Christmas Fund for the 2020

By Captain Barbara Cure

PEN ARGYL - The Mission Of The Salvation Army: The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human need in His name without discrimination.

The Salvation Army has been in Pen Argyl since the early 1900's, serving the families of The Slate Belt and beyond. Every Christmas an effort is made to serve as many families as possible. For the 2019 Christmas season we served over 125 families with food and gifts.

We would like to begin a Merry Christmas Fund for the 2020 Christmas Season with donations being made to help the Pen Argyl Corps stretch its regular operating budget during the holiday season and beyond. (These donations could be made in memory/honor of loved ones).

Those who wish to contribute to this fund can send donations via check or money order made payable to The Salvation Army, P.O. Box 57, Pen Argyl, PA 18072. Contributors who wish to be recognized in the Blue Valley Times during the month of December 2020 should include a very brief, legible holiday message with their donations.



NOTICE
**ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE
 EMAILED ONLY TO
 BVTIMES@RCN.COM
 BY FRIDAYS NOON**

Ackermanville United Methodist
1410 Ackermanville Road, Bangor
 Sun 10am Worship. Rev. Sukja Bang
 (610) 588-7818,
www.ackermanvilleumc.org

Bangor Church of the Nazarene
150 Bunny Trail, Bangor
 Sun 9:30am SS, 10:40am Worship
 (Children's Church to grade 2), 5pm
 Powerhouse Praice Practice, 6pm Teen
 Straight Talk & Small Groups. Kenneth
 L. Bean, Pastor
 (610) 588-6929

Belfast Bible
483 Belfast Rd., Belfast
 Sunday School (all ages) 9:30am, Worship 10:45am, Evening Service 7pm.
 Pastor Michael Yaworski.

Belfast Wesley United Methodist
607 School St., Belfast
 Children's SS & Adult SS 9am, Worship 10am, coffee fellowship following worship. Pastor Paul Milligan. (610) 746-3652.

Benders Mennonite Church
975 Benders Church Rd., Pen Argyl
 Sun Worship service every Sunday at 10:10am; Food Bank 3rd Saturday of the month 9-11am. 610-863-9114.

Bethel Bible Church of Mt. Zion
7742 N. Delaware Dr. (Rt. 611), Martins Creek
 Free Bread Every Saturday, 3eryone welcome, questions 908-483-8231; Sunday School 9am, Sunday Morning Worship 10am. Pastor Rick Tunis, 610-250-9890. Learn about us online www.bethelbiblechurchofmtzion.org.

**Christ Presbyterian Church
 of the Slate Belt**
 332 Kennedy Dr., Bangor
 Sun.-Worship 10:30 a.m. Rev Albert Martin
 (610)588-4864
 e mail - presbyterianbr@frontiernet.net
www.facebook.com/Presbyterianbr

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church
703 South Delaware Drive
 Mt Bethel, PA 18343
 610-588-7056
 The Rev. Larry Laine
 Worship at 9 AM
 Sunday School 10 AM

Clearfield Bible Holiness Church
1502 Bushkill Ctr Rd, Wind Gap
 Sun- SS 10:15am, Worship 11:15am & 3pm. Pastor Donald Herrick.
 (812) 653-3975.

Community Baptist
Weona Park Center, Pen Argyl
 Sun - Bible study 7pm. Separate class for age 10 & under.

Community Presbyterian
1755 S Delaware Drive, Mt. Bethel

Sun. - SS 9:15am, Worship service 10:30am, Coffee hour on last sunday of every month following service. www.mtbethelpresbyterian.org, (570) 897-6766.

Cross Road Baptist Church
201 Second St., Bangor
 Sun- 9:15am Praise Sing, 9:30am SS, 10:45am Worship; Wed- 7pm Prayer/ Bible Study. Rev. Jay VanHorn, Pastor (610) 588-3966, www.crossroadbaptistbangor.org

The Lady's Guild of Our Lady of Victory R.C. Church, Tannersville will hold a Chicken Cordon Blue Dinner on April 28th. We would appreciate your help in advertising this year's event without cost to the church.

EAST BANGOR UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
136 W. Central Ave.
East Bangor, PA 18013
 Thurs., Oct. 8
 -7:00 p.m. Bible Study (on ZOOM)
 Sat., Oct. 10 -8:00 p.m. AA Meeting
 Sun., Oct. 11 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (LIVE and on ZOOM)
 "155th Anniversary Sunday"
 Pastor David Goss
 (610) 588-4453 Dial-A-Message
 (610-588-3896) www.ebumc.org

Faith Alive Community Church
10 Mechanic St, Wind Gap
 Tues- 6pm Ladies Prayer Meeting (2nd Tues); Wed- 6:30pm Revival Prayer, 7:15pm Adult Bible Study; Sat- 10-2pm Prayer Stop (1st Sat); Sun- 9:15am Family Fellowship, 9:30am Intercessory Prayer, 10am Worship, 10:45am Children's Church, Communion at 10:30am (1st Sun). Pastor Matthew Whistler. (610) 863-6911, www.faccpa.org

Family Life Community Church
1115 Richmond Rd, Bangor
 Wed- Kidz Night Out at The Hub 6:30-8pm (kids 6 thru 6th gr.); Thurs- Teen Night Out At The Hub 6:30-8pm (gr. 7-9); Sun- 10am Celebration Service. Pastor Mike Poppa. 610-588-3736, www.flccbangor.com.

First United Evangelical
25 S 2nd St., Bangor
 Sun. - 7pm Prayer Meeting & Bible Study; Jan 20- 9am Prayer Meeting, 9:30am Church School, 10:30am Worship. Pastor Ronald Shipman at (610) 588-3226

First United Methodist Church
55 N. Third St., Bangor
 Worship every Sunday at 11am, Adult and Children Sunday Schools 9:45am, Communion first Sunday of month, Wednesday evening Bible Study 6:30pm. Pastor Chris Hardy (610) 588-4673.

First United Methodist
19 West & Water St., Wind Gap
 Sun.. 9am SS, 10am Worship/Communion, 11am Fellowship on 1st Sunday of each month. Pastor John Vidal

(570) 426-0645

Flicksville United Church of Christ
 1337 Lower South Main Street
 Bangor, PA 18013 Pastor Ken Hess
 610-588-4648
www.flicksvilleucc.com
 Adult Sunday School classes at 9:30 AM Worship at 10:45 AM following social distancing guidelines

God's Missionary Church of Northampton
4965 Nor. Bath Blvd (Rt 329), Northampton, PA
 Sun- SS 9:30am, Service 10:30 & 7pm, Youth Service 6:30pm; Wed- Prayer Meeting 7:30pm. Rev. Rodney Keister. (610) 262-4412. <http://GMC-N.com>

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church,
2904 Church Rd, Martins Creek PA
 Sunday Worship Service 9:00 am. Adult Bible Study Following Worship. Pastor Louise Williams. www.goodshepherdmc.com

Grace Lutheran Church
5907 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth
 Tue. - 6:30pm Choir; Jan 20- 9am Service/Communion, 10:15am SS, 10:30am Confirmation/Adult Forum. (610) 759-9080, www.gracebelfast.org

Grace United Methodist
404 Mountain Ave., Pen Argyl
 Sun.. 8:30am Contemporary, 10am Blended, 10am SS. Rev. J. Timothy Fisher. (610) 863-4811. www.worshipatgrace.org

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
1501 Trinity Court, Stroudsburg
 Divine Liturgy Sundays 9:30 AM; Vespers Saturday 6:30 PM. (570) 421-4455, www.holytrinitypoconos.org.

Hopesprings Community of Faith
301 Market Street, Bangor
 Sun-Services 10am. Jonathan Almanzar, Lead Pastor. 855-INFO-HOPE. www.hopespringscommunity.org.

Hope UCC
2nd & Cherry St., Wind Gap
 Sun- 10:30am Worship (Communion 1st Sunday of the month). All are welcome! SS 9:30 Sunday Morning. Pastor Emily B. Hall. (610) 863-4474

Living Waters Christian Church
396 Sterling Rd. Unit D, Tobyhanna
 Thurs- 6pm Christian Edu Sun- 9:15am Christian Edu, 10:30am Worship. Rev. Dr. Jacqueline R. Walters 570-350-4710

Mt. Bethel Church
A Church of the Lutheran Brethren
1270 Belvidere Cr. Rd, Mt. Bethel
 Sun.- 8:30am Traditional Service, 11am Contemporary Service Visit our website www.mtbethelchurch.org or call (570) 897-7142 for info.

Our Lady of Good Counsel
 436 South 2nd Street

Bangor, PA 18013
 Rectory (610) 588-5445
 Parish Website: www.ourladystvincent.com Mass Schedule
 Weekdays 8AM excluding Thursdays (See Church Website)
 Saturday 4 PM Sunday 8:30 AM
 Holy Days (See Church Website)
 Saturday Confessions 3:25-3:45 PM

Our Lady of Victory R.C. Church,
 Tannersville, PA will hold a Free Community Dinner on Sunday, July 21st from 3pm to 4pm. They would appreciate your assistance in advertising this dinner without cost to the Church.

Portland Baptist Church
601 Delaware Ave., Portland
 Sun- Sunday School 9am, Service 10:30am; Wed- Bible Study 10:30 with Prayer Meeting to follow. Elevator and rampsWe are handicap accessible with automatic doors, elevator and restroom. (570) 897-6866 www.portlandbaptistchurch.com

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
2445 Lake Minsi Dr., Bangor
 Saturday Worship: 1st & 3rd 5:30 pm. Sunday School starts at 8:30am (September-May) Sunday Service- 9:45am Holy Communion is served weekly. All are welcome!

Richmond United Methodist Church
8538 Delaware Dr, Bangor
 Palm Sunday, worship at 10:00 am. Maundy Thursday, Soup at 6:00 pm and Worship at 7:00 pm. Good Friday 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm for Personal Meditation, Devotion and Prayer Easter Sunrise Service at 7:00 am (followed by breakfast) Easter Traditional Worship 10:00 am Rev. Ed Van Arsdale 610-588-7317

Slate Belt Church
1620 Church Rd, Pen Argyl
 (Across from the Wind Gap Middle School) www.slatebeltchurch.com
 Sun.- 9:30am SS, 10:30am Worship & Children's Church (nursery provided) 5:30pm Bible Study, Youth Group & Kids Program Pastor Steve Rebert 610-863-9274

St. Brigid's Episcopal Church, Nazareth.
 Delete Sunday school Holy Eucharist @ 9:30 a.m. St. Brigid's Episcopal Church 310 Madison Avenue Nazareth, PA 18064 Phone: 610-746-3910 Fax: 610-746-4515

St. Elizabeth's Parish
300 West Babbitt Ave., Pen Argyl
 Sun.- Masses 8am, 9:30am & 11am. Rev. Msgr. Vincent P. York. 610-863-4777

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran
12 N. Westbrook, Pen Argyl
 Sun.- 8:45am SS, 10am Worship/Holy Communion. (610) 863-4332

St. Joseph's Episcopal
1440 Verona Dr., W. Bangor
 Jan 20- Eucharist 11am; Christmas Eve Service 4pm. Rev Joel Atkinson. Coffee

hour after service.

St. Luke's U.C.C. Belfast
471 Belfast Rd., Nazareth (Belfast)
 SS 9am, Worship 10:30am. Rev. Cecelia Baxter and Rev. Jameson Baxter. 610-759-0244. www.stlukesuccbelfast.com

St. Mary's Episcopal
340 Lehigh St., Wind Gap
 Sun.- service 9am. Coffee hour follows service. Rev. Joel Atkinson. Maundy Thursday Service will be held at St. Mary's Episcopal Church Wind Gap at 5:30 P.M. Easter Morning Service will be held at St. Mary's Episcopal Church Wind Gap at 9:00 a.m.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran
1422 Church Rd, Pen Argyl
 (610) 863-6859
 Sunday Worship/Communion 8am and 10:15am; 9am SS www.stpetersplainfield.com

St. Vincent dePaul
 720 Delaware Avenue
 Portland, PA 18351
 Rectory (610) 588-5445
 Mass Schedule Weekdays (at OLGC) Saturday 6 PM Sunday 10:30 AM Holy Days (See Church Website) Saturday Confessions 5:40-5:50 PM

The Pentecostal Christian Church the Truth
(Iglesia Pentecostal La Verdad)
4 Jory Ave Pen Argyl
 Sun.- Prayer 14- Sunday School (Escuela Dominical) 12 noon, Praise & Worship (Cuho Evanglistico) 1pm.

Temple Israel of the Poconos
Egalitarian Conservative Synagogue
660 Wallace Street, Stroudsburg
 Sabbath Services: Friday evening 7pm followed by a Traditional Oneg Shabbat. Saturday morning 9:30am followed by a traditional Kiddush. Dr. Sandra Alfonsi 570-223-7062.

Trinity United Church of Christ
 632 S Delaware Dr. Mt Bethel Pa 18343 Sunday Worship 10:30 am SS and Confirmation 9:00 am Rev. Rodney Wells pastor

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran
404 Broadway, Bangor
 Thur - Christian Ed 6:30pm, Choir 7:30pm; Jan 20- SS 9am, Worship/ Communion 10am. Pastor Laine. (610) 588-2023, www.tlcbangor.com.

Zion Presbyterian Church
Water St., Wind Gap
 Sun.- Rev. Albert Martin will be speaking at the 9:30am service. Children SS during the service. Visitors welcome. (610) 262-8806



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