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# Annual Report - 2015

**Educating and Mentoring Young Adults Who Are Aging  
Out Of The Foster Care System.**

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## Our Mission

The R.J. Leonard Foundation (RJLF) educates, mentors, and initiates the careers of young adults aging out of the foster care system; we empower them to succeed, free of government assistance for the rest of their lives.

While The R.J. Leonard Foundation is supportive of government programs to assist the underprivileged, we are dedicated to providing our Fellows with the resources that will put them back on a level playing field with their more privileged peers. In this way, they will live their own lives and raise families without government assistance. Self-sufficiency is imperative.



## Our Program

Much attention is given to matching a Mentor with each Fellow who then goes through our training program and is supported by our Mentoring team. We also provide tangible support to ease this pivotal transition. We provide them with critical support in three areas: Education Scholarships, Transportation Support, and Social and Cultural Enrichment Opportunities.

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## A Message From Our Founder

Jo Leonard



“So much as been learned and accomplished over the past 8 years. But we have also missed opportunities through lack of resources and wisdom. Now we have found our stride and are superbly positioned to make a trajectory-changing impact on the lives of foster care youth in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. For this we are proud and fulfilled. Our board members feel personally connected to the youth we serve; our executive board make profound improvements in our relationships and processes with minimal financial reimbursement and a huge dose of passion and commitment. Our mentors give of their time as if they are supporting and guiding their own children, and receive gratitude and a dose of frustration on a weekly basis! And finally, our donors understand that while government subsidies are necessary for some, they love that they are contributing to an organization that develops self sufficient young adults who will step into the real world and be happy, healthy and productive adults, free of government assistance, for the rest of their lives.”

*Jo Leonard*

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## Our Team

**Caitlin Deppeler:** Board Member  
Valley Youth House

**Kathleen Kasper:** Senior Director  
R.J. Leonard Foundation

**Delana Fiadino:** Board Advisor  
Arbonne International

**Jo Leonard:** Executive Director  
President & Founder, Jo Leonard & Co.

**Jenny Fluder:** Board Advisor  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development

**John Ortolf:** Board Member  
Wells Fargo Advisors

**Julie Holcombe:** Board Advisor  
Pfizer

**Sameer Somal:** Board Member  
Blue Ocean Global Health

**Jeff Chirico:** Board Member  
6abc Action News

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## **Community Partners**

A number of organizations in our community have generously given their services and resources to the R.J. Leonard Foundation in 2014 - 2015 and have allowed us to maximize the resources that we provide to our Fellows.



### **Deserving Decor**

<http://deservingdecor.org/>

Volunteer non-profit supplying beds and furnishing essentials to women and children escaping domestic violence and homelessness, and teens aging out of foster care.



### **Plant a Seed**

<http://plantaseedfoundation.org/>

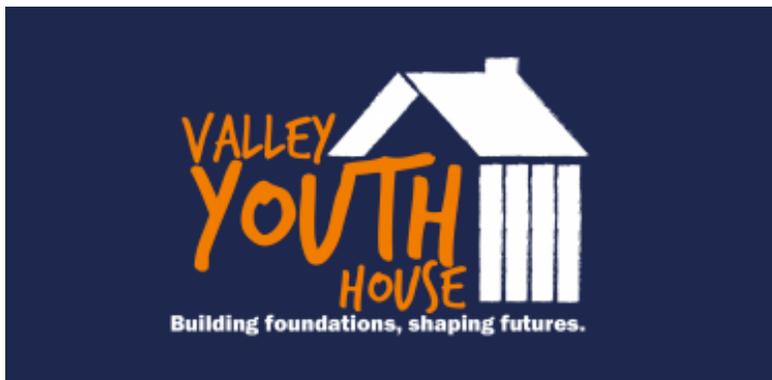
The Plant a Seed Inspire a Dream Foundation provides annual scholarships for children ages 10 to 18, to pursue passions and interests outside of school.



### **One Simple Wish**

<https://www.onesimplewish.org/>

Most of the wishes granted by One Simple Wish are made by foster children and teens through the social service agencies that support them.



### **Valley Youth House**

<https://www.valleyyouthhouse.org/>

Providing a home for vulnerable, abused and homeless youth; we partner with thousands of individuals to build a solid foundation for young people and their families.



**Jo Leonard & Co.**

<http://joleonard.com/>

Professionals who provide relevant job shadowing and networking opportunities to clients by combining our own individual successful careers with the proven processes and curriculum developed by Jo Leonard over the past 15 years.



**Gravity Hill Farm**

<http://www.gravityhillfarm.com/>

A small family farm dedicated to teaching about nature and nurturing through organic farming and raising animals.

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# dtown tech

## Doylestown Tech

<http://www.dtowntech.com/>

Dtown tech is a full service computer and technology repair shop based in Doylestown, PA.

## COUNTY THEATER

## County Theater - Doylestown, PA

<http://countytheater.org/>

A nonprofit, community-based movie theater that specializes in independent, art, and foreign films.



## Motorcar Makeovers

<http://www.motorcarmakeovers.com/>

Located in Blue Bell, PA, Motorcar Makeovers has been a pillar in the Blue Bell community for its honest and reliable vehicle repair.

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## **Mentors**

Mentoring is a key component of carrying out our mission. They help our Fellows graduate the program and fulfill their dreams. Without our mentors, we would not have a successful program.

### **Christine English**

“My experience as a Mentor has been a fantastic one. Being able to help someone through the day-to-day that many take for granted, is a great gift. It has helped me recognize and appreciate everyone and everything I have in my life and made me want to share that much more with others.”

### **Jerry O'Malley**

“I have heard that a problem “shared is a problem halved, whereas gift shared is multiplied”. In working with the foundation, I have come to learn that We (the mentors) may take our life experiences for granted as we move from one day to the next. Sharing our experience and hope with a young person looking for answers while dedicated to their benefit, provides a cascade of gifts... The joy we the mentors receive when witnessing the stress lift from a client as we work together becomes a reward that cannot be measured. If your heart yearns to make a real difference the foundation is surely a great place to start YOUR journey.”

### **Barbara Ortolf**

“Being an RJLF mentor is a great opportunity to develop a relationship with talented young people who just need to see what is possible, and be supported as they achieve their goals.”

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## **Lisa Breitmayer**

“As a new RJLF Mentor I am blessed to offer guidance and support to an extremely bright and determined young woman whose drive and determination never ceases to amaze me. Going to college full time while raising a child and all that that entails is hard. There are so many obstacles along the way...affordable housing, living expenses, school loans, auto repairs and everyday stress. It has been so fulfilling to me be able to help guide her or even just to listen to her vent when she’s had a tough week and then see some sense of relief come across her face when we finish our conversation. I am reminded again and again how worthwhile this relationship is to both of us.”

## **Lela Casey**

“The mentor program has helped me realize what an enormous factor emotional support has on an individual's success. It's also helped me understand how even talented, motivated young people can fall behind without that extra financial and emotional boost. It has been my privilege to be a part of providing these things to my fellow.”

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## **Fellows' Accomplishments**

**Meet some of our Fellows and learn about their accomplishments.**

### **Jimmy**

Jimmy graduates this year with an AA degree in Music Technology. His goal is to transfer to a 4-year college and work in the music industry, his passion! According to our sources he is a very talented artist. He juggles classes and a full-time job with an amazing positive and appreciative attitude. This semester he attended our first financial literacy workshop and learned some really valuable lessons on how to budget more effectively and save for college. He is waiting to hear from 4-year colleges!

**RJLF has provided Jimmy with a Mentor, a laptop through community partner One Simple Wish, interview attire, car/transportation scholarship, and college & career coaching with Jo Leonard & Co.**

### **Theresa**

Theresa is a single mom, providing for her four year old son. Possessing an incredible work ethic, she is balancing two jobs, her role as a mom, and attending classes at a local community college. She will graduate with an AA in criminal justice this semester and will pursue her credentials to become a juvenile probation officer, a career about which she feels very passionate.

**RJLF has provided Theresa with a Mentor, career and financial counseling, clothing for her child, transportation and education scholarships.**

### **Patricia**

Patricia is a mature, bright young women who contacted us when she recognized she needed a mentor. Patricia is working both a full and a part-time job while taking two classes at a community college. Her goal is to become an occupational therapist. She is currently taking driver's ed so she can pass her test and finally drive a car!

**RJLF has provided Patricia with a Mentor, educational scholarships, college counseling, and household items through community partner Deserving Décor.**

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## **Caroline**

Caroline is working on becoming a dental hygienist. She is a single mother of a young son, attending community college full-time. Caroline is determined and focused, currently earning straight A's. She has chosen this field because it provides her with a flexible schedule and a good income.

RJLF has provided Caroline a Mentor, shadowing opportunities, a transportation and education scholarships, clothing for her son and household items through community partners OSW and Deserving Décor.

## **Lori**

Lori is a 19-year old mom working part-time while completing her GED. She plans to attend community college where she will work toward her goal of becoming a nurse. She is feisty and capable and a fantastic mom.

RJLF has provided Lori with a Mentor, financial literacy training, and scholarship application prep. We are hoping to secure a new laptop she'll need for college through community partner OSW.

## **Brittany**

Brittany is in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year at a medical education company in New Hope, NJ., working full time while also taking care of her 6 year old son. She continues to struggle finding career direction as she is so busy taking care of the people in her life, but hopes to get back to college later this year.

RJLF has provided Brittany with a Mentor, college and career counseling, education scholarships, and clothing for her son through community partner One Simple Wish.

## **Carl**

Carl is bright, articulate young man working as a counselor for a social service agency. RJLF is working with him in supporting his "dream" to earn a bachelor's degree and work in a field that combines his passion for writing and technology. He recently interviewed for a great new program

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in Delaware called, [CodeWilmington.org](http://CodeWilmington.org) and we are hoping he will be accepted into this program. He would then start his career as a coding professional and earn a very strong salary, bringing him stability and self-sufficiency.

**RJLF has provided Carl with a Mentor, assistance with housing, household items through community partner Deserving Décor, and college and career counseling.**

### **Tracy**

With the support of RJLF, Tracy graduated from Temple with her bachelor's degree. She is a feisty, tenacious young woman who has kept a positive spirit and commitment to her education and career through dramatically trying times. She has recently started at a new job as a community trainer for a large non profit in Philadelphia that works with youth in need.

**RJLF has provided Tracy with a Mentor, college and career navigation, a new laptop through community partner one simple wish, financial literacy training, education, transportation and social and cultural scholarships.**

### **Peter**

Peter graduated from Temple University with the support of RJLF. He worked with a Philadelphia sports team before relocating to California. He is committed to supporting underprivileged youth and giving back to his community. He is working closely with his Mentor to identify networking opportunities and is now in contact with a non profit who is interviewing him for a position. He is super excited!

**RJLF has provided Peter with Mentors, college and career navigation, zipcare assistance to get to interviews/transportation scholarship, professional wardrobe and briefcase, and an education scholarship.**

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## RJ Leonard Foundation 2015 Events

### Awareness

The County Theater in Doylestown and RJ Leonard Foundation hosted the showing of “Short Term 12”, a highly acclaimed film that tells the real world story of kids aging out of foster care. The film was followed by a panel discussion with subject experts who shared local and national stories and statistics.

### Panel included:

Paul O'Neill, President, Wellness Marketing at Ogilvy CommonHealth Worldwide

Frank Cervone, Executive Director, Support Center for Child Advocates

Joelle Pitts, Assistant Director, Valley Youth House

Nikki Johnson-Huston, Esq. Philly Tax Diva

### Chief Volunteer:

Lily Seward



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## Fundraising

Our fall fundraiser, 'Spanish Festival' was held at Cedarbrook Country Club October 23, 2015. It was wonderfully successful in raising awareness and over \$42,000.00 Approximately 100 people attended an evening of Spanish foods, wine, live and silent auctions, music, and moving presentations. Guest speakers included Nikki Johnson-Huston and Dean Fiadino.

Our next fundraiser will be held Friday, October 21, 2016 at Cedarbrook Country Club.



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**RJ Leonard Foundation**  
**Statement of Financial Income & Expense**  
**2013-2015**

	2013	2014	2015
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
Grants from Organizations	2,029	3,000	6,000
Support from the Public	9,165	14,264	70,037
Interest and Dividends	41	40	50
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$11,235</b>	<b>\$17,304</b>	<b>\$76,087</b>
<b><u>Expense</u></b>			
Awards and Grants	4,965	2,512	5,569
Contract Services	2,926	8,596	18,441
Program Management	5,053	3,725	9,626
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$12,964</b>	<b>\$14,834</b>	<b>\$33,635</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>(1,729)</b>	<b>2,471</b>	<b>42,451</b>