



Service Learning Project with Wilson Commencement Park

Spring 2008

Weekdays during Spring 2008, Geneseo students will be volunteering at Wilson Commencement Park, reading to young children, tutoring older children, helping with housing projects, etc.

Anyone interested in joining this project should contact Kay Fly, Coordinator of Student Volunteerism and Service Learning, by emailing fly@geneseo.edu.

Wilson Commencement Park (WCP) is a transitional housing and support services program. Located on Joseph Avenue in Rochester, Wilson Commencement Park provides

comprehensive, quality resources and services to low-income, single parents and their children so that they can improve their family stability, increase their economic independence, and strengthen the community.

Since its opening in 1991, Wilson Commencement Park has grown from a community-based program serving 50 resident families to one that now serves over 600 resident and community families annually.

When single parents find themselves homeless or escaping from a domestic violence situation, Wilson Commencement Park (WCP) empowers them to redirect their lives. Upon acceptance into the program, residents of Wilson Commencement Park (WCP), enter a comprehensive program not just housing.

Housing -- The housing program provides 50 two and three bedroom townhouses for single parent families, who may reside at the Park for up to two years.

Support Services -- WCP's Family Support Services requires residents to work full time, attend school full time, or work and go to school, as well as pay rent, meet with their family life coach at least twice a month and attend town meetings. They must also attend a minimum of 24 life skills programs annually focused on parenting, financial independence, housing mobility, child development, employment, stress management and nutrition. They are held accountable for following all program requirements and policies. Each resident's family life coach helps him/her develop an Individual Program Plan - a road map for achieving improved financial stability, family wellness, and next- step housing. Each plan is customized to meet the individual's unique needs. WCP provides a stable environment where residents can deal with deep-rooted issues with the support of a family life coach. The program empowers residents to set and achieve personal goals while developing healthy, supportive relationships with their family and within the community.

Early Learning -- While the residents and families in the surrounding community are working and attending classes, their children participate in WCP's accredited early learning program. WCP's Early Learning Center enriches children's lives and helps break the vicious cycle of poverty and despair. Our on-site childcare program, the Early Learning Center, offers an innovative 12 month curriculum, is accredited by the National Association for Education of Young Children and is a Universal Pre-K facility. Wilson Commencement Park's philosophy embodies the fundamental values of work, personal responsibility and community. Wilson Commencement Park believes that dignity and self-esteem arise from working and supporting one's family. The WCP mission is fulfilled each time a family becomes self-sufficient, saving public dollars from being expended on future welfare and other government assistance programs and restoring the pride that results from becoming economically independent and socially confident.

Wilson Commencement Park has been selected three times for national recognition in the Enterprise Foundation's "Beyond Housing" as one of the top-performing service-enriched housing programs in the US worthy of replication and The Philanthropic Initiative (TPI) has recognized WCP as one of the three top performing "transformational" housing programs in the country. In addition, Wilson Commencement Park received the 2006 Metropolitan Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing.

Destiny

Wilson Commencement Park's new building, Destiny, consists of 18 additional apartments of transitional housing on the corner of Kelly Street



Our Location



and Joseph Avenue. Destiny is an expansion of Wilson Commencement Park's mission, serving the needs of single parent families who need more mental health support while working to change the destiny of their lives. This additional housing allows WCP to help 68 families in all.



Photos from <http://www.wilsoncommencementpark.org/>

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