

Inspired to Give Back

A Word with Dr. Pam Joyce

We all have different sources of inspiration -- those things that spur us into action. For Dr. Pam Joyce, a reading specialist at Montclair High School, it was Oprah. Watching her highlight ordinary people doing extraordinary things, Dr. Joyce knew there must be a way she could contribute, but she wasn't sure how.

To find her answer, she did what comes naturally: she read books on how to give back. After taking inventory of her gifts and abilities, she realized her answer was something she did every day in her job: helping children read. "It sounds pretty obvious, but I guess it's human nature to take your own gifts for granted," reflected Pam.

Eager to put her skills to work, Dr. Joyce contacted IHN about tutoring. Turns out it was just the call we needed as IHN was in the process of expanding its *Home for Good* program to include tutoring services. Even better, Dr. Joyce wasn't content in just teaching reading, but designing a comprehensive tutoring program by recruiting other teachers. The result? IHN now has tutoring available to children who have exited the shelter and live in permanent housing. Subject areas include math, language arts, reading, and general elementary education. As the program becomes more established, Dr. Joyce hopes to get parents more involved with understanding how to integrate the tutoring with their home life. She plans to meet with parents and provide them with tips on creating a conducive homework environment, organizational techniques, and learning expectations that are age-appropriate.

For IHN, we look forward to enhancing our Family Resource Center. Thanks to a grant from Hyde & Watson, we'll be equipping the space with new tables and chairs, bookshelves, and supplies to better support the tutoring program.

As Dr. Joyce observed, giving back is all about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. IHN is grateful to her and all of the teachers for caring to make a difference for our children.

Ellen Donker
Development Associate
Interfaith Hospitality Network
46 Park Street
Montclair, NJ 07042
973 746-1400, ext. 14
www.ihnessexnj.org