

## My Story ... From a Foster Grandparent

### Grandpa Ray Finds Meaning in Mentoring



"I was scared that I couldn't do it but now helping kids through the PEACE, Inc. Foster Grandparent Program gives me a purpose," says Foster Grandpa Ray Nicholas. At the age of 17 Ray lost his father and a year later graduated high school and joined the military. After

serving for a few years, Ray returned home to take care of his mother and started working for a traveling carnival. Unfortunately Ray also began a prolonged battle with alcohol addiction which, at his lowest points, led him to homelessness and multiple suicide attempts. Through veterans' counseling services and his own hard work, Ray was able to change his life but something was missing until Grandma Betty and Grandma Lila met him at the bus stop and suggested the PEACE, Inc. Foster Grandparents Program. Ray is very proud of his work with at risk second graders at Meachem School. He helps the children follow directions and encourages them to do their best. Ray says "even the principal calls him Grandpa" and that is just the way he likes it.



The Foster Grandparent program offers volunteers age 55 and over the opportunity to stay active by sharing their time and talents with youth in their communities. Foster grandparents are role models, mentors, and friends to children with exceptional needs. To find out more about the program go to <http://www.peace-caa.org/fostergrandparent>.

Right & Below:  
Each year, Head Start / Early Head Start celebrates a harvest meal in November.



Right: Joe O'Hara serving at the Lafayette Head Start site harvest meal..

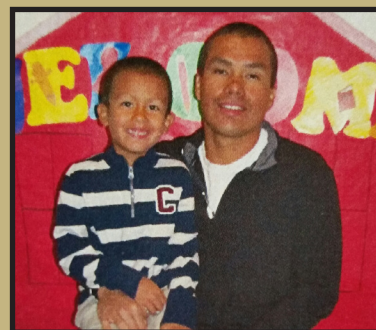


Did you hear the exciting news? PEACE, Inc. Executive Director, Joe O'Hara was named the Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. We, at PEACE, Inc. are so proud of Joe for this recognition and for a lifetime of improving the quality of life in Central New York. Check out the PEACE, Inc website to find out more. [www.peace-caa.org](http://www.peace-caa.org)  
*Hope to see you all at the parade.*



### Head Start Dad Nominated for Father of the Year

Haiwhahaande Nanticoke, a PEACE, Inc. LaFayette Head Start dad, has been one of the 19 nominated fathers to receive an award from The National Families and Fathers Coalition of America (FFCA). These 19 fathers have been nominated for the Honorable Stanley Seiderman National Father of the Year Award. According to the FFCA, despite their past disadvantages, these nominees have risen above their adversities to become 'righteous and upright men,' by volunteering at Ambassador Agencies in their community. They have offered their time and talents to enhance children, youth and families. They have committed to a cause bigger than themselves by making a positive contribution to their own children, as well as youth and families in their community. The event will take place at the "National Families and Fathers Conference" in Los Angeles in February 16-19, 2016.



Good luck Haiwhahaande, you are already a winner to us.

## OUT & ABOUT WITH PEACE, Inc.

Below: Fun, Fundraising and Community Building at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Champions of Diversity. Drumlines provided an excellent setting to honor George Kilpatrick, Haylor Freyer & Coon, Rick Shafer and Rasheada Caldwell for their commitment to improving the quality of life in our community and respecting diversity.



Left: PEACE, Inc. is proud to be the first-ever recipient of a \$1,000 award for best website from Syracuse University Council of Young Philanthropists at Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Thank you, Young Philanthropists!

### PEACE, Inc. Adopt A Family

The holidays can be an especially stressful time for families struggling to make ends meet. This year more than 120 families across Onondaga County received gifts for their families thanks to generous donors in our community. The PEACE, Inc. Adopt-A-Family Program matches donors with at risk families who are actively engaged in PEACE, Inc. programs. One mother, who had a particularly challenging year, was overwhelmed with tears saying "I have been dreading Christmas and now I am so grateful."

For a full list of Adopt-A-Family donors please see our website at [www.peace-caa.org](http://www.peace-caa.org)



## Recognition ... for their Work

For their innovative work with refugee families, two members of the PEACE, Inc., Head Start staff, Maria Taddeo and Christine Scott, were selected to speak at the Head Start Conference in Virginia this fall. Their interactive presentation focused on the importance of early learning and how it relates to immigrant integration and school readiness. Maria and Christine stressed the importance of getting feedback from the refugee families to help develop and adjust strategies. We are proud of Maria, Christine and their staff for the excellent work they are doing every day to foster the healthy development and school readiness of children in our community.

Head Start helps children ages 3-5 to achieve their full potential by providing early childhood development, health, family services and other support to participants and their families at no cost.

Early Head Start promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth of infants and toddlers, and provides prenatal education and support services to pregnant women.



Pictured from left from right: Maria Taddeo, Laura McCall, Rebecca Garza, Christine Scott, Kayla Myers, Essey Workie, and Dawn Ault.





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# Community Connection

## A letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Champions of Diversity was a great success! Back at Drumlins after a few years at the MOST, the event honored Haylor, Freyer & Coon, George Kilpatrick, Rick Shafer and Rasheada Caldwell. Many thanks to the event chairs, sponsors, staff, and board members who helped to make it such a special night.

I recently had the pleasure of receiving a note from a woman about to retire from a local company. Instead of a retirement party she asked her employer to donate the funds to PEACE, Inc. because of her positive experience with our Head Start Program at Jamesville Correctional Facility. In her words, “[w]e had the great opportunity of using the Head Start program when my son was at the Jamesville Correctional Facility and was able to be visited by his then 1-year old daughter. The program was extremely valuable as my son was able to maintain a relationship with his daughter during his 10-month stay.” I am grateful to this donor for her generous gift and proud of the PEACE, Inc. staff who make such important programs available to our community.

Every Kind Wish,

*Joe*

Joseph E. O’Hara  
Executive Director



## Taxes Prepared for FREE

Getting the tax credits that families deserve is what the PEACE, Inc. <sup>EITC</sup> You’ve Earned It Tax preparation Program is all about. PEACE, Inc. provides free electronic filing of state and federal tax returns for individuals and couples with a household income of less than \$54,000. Last year, we helped our customers claim more than 4 million dollars in refunds. And, after making sure that clients are receiving the maximum refund possible, we can also help with financial planning to help them identify and reach their monetary goals.

We are now taking appointments to prepare taxes. To make your appointment to have your taxes prepared, please call 315.634.3756. Visit [www.peace-caa.org/taxes](http://www.peace-caa.org/taxes) to find out if you qualify along with the documents you will need to bring with you.

We are grateful to our sponsors United Way, CASH Coalition, Key Bank, and ShoppingTown Mall for their generous support.

*If you are interested in volunteering for the tax preparation program please contact Ralph Lyke at 315.634.3756.*



PEACE, Inc.’s Mission: Helping people in the community realize their potential for becoming self-sufficient



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## UP COMING EVENTS FOR



**PEACE, Inc.**  
**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of Onondaga County

## BOWL FOR KIDS’ SAKE

**Sunday, April, 10, 2016**  
Flamingo Bowl Liverpool, NY  
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

FREE BOWLING • SHOES • REFRESHMENTS  
DOOR PRIZES DRAWINGS ALL DAY - EVERYONE IS ELIGIBLE

VISIT [WWW.BBBS-SYR.ORG](http://WWW.BBBS-SYR.ORG) OR CALL 315.470.3369 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Entry fees are \$50/adult and \$25/youth 18 and under. For each additional \$50/\$25 raised above the minimum entry fee, bowlers will receive one entry in the Grand Prize drawing.



Visit [cornerstorerun.com](http://cornerstorerun.com)  
to find out more



**Saturday, August 6, 2016**

5K Race Begins at 8:30 A.M.  
Onondaga Community College  
Syracuse

The Corner Store Country Run 5K is for everyone, from serious runners to leisurely walkers, from lone rangers to family herds. You’re encouraged to dress in ‘yer finest country duds and stick around afterwards for what folks are calling the “best post-race ever,” a country fair with free sponsor swag, food, live music and carnival games.

Last year, PEACE, Inc. Big Brothers Big Sisters received \$45,000 in proceeds from the event.