



... a look back
at a **great year.**







FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters and Friends of The Village Group,

It is with great pride that I can say that The Village Group had an immensely successful 2016 and we are laying the foundation for an even more successful 2017. The Village Group's successes would not have been possible without the help of our community leaders, parents, elders, concerned citizens and most of all, our many invaluable volunteers. I thank you all for your dedication, hard work and true acts of charity that has helped The Village Group grow into the great entity it has become.

We are reaching out to you in this new year to let you know that The Village Group is on track with the expansion of educational programming in 2017 and our next decade of service to youth in Georgetown County. Here are just a few updates:

- Plantersville Enrichment Academy: Recently we've been marching on towards academic excellence with the launch of the Plantersville Enrichment Academy (PEA). PEA's aim is to revitalize the wonderful school community of our local Plantersville Elementary by providing students with after school enrichment and leisure activities geared towards increasing their reading literacy and math fluency. Under the direction of Mrs. Queen Funnye and the staff at Plantersville Elementary School, we hope to bring our year-round educational programming full circle, allowing at-risk youth consistent opportunities and support throughout the academic year.
- The Village Flyers: We have launched a companion program, "The Village Flyers", which aims to get kids outdoors and active by providing them with mountain bikes and biking excursions to help them develop healthy lifestyles and foster a love of the outdoors.

With your continued support, we hope to move forward with a stronger vision and drive that will help us help children make great strides in their academic achievements and the overall quality of their lives. Like you, our dedication to providing the youth of Georgetown County with high-quality, stimulating educational activities has not wavered. We look forward to a continued partnership with you in the near future. Together I know we can have a successful and bright 2017.

Sincerely,



WWW.THEVILLAGEGROUP.ORG
(843) 240-0534
director@thevillagegroup.org



ABOUT THE VILLAGE GROUP

The Village Group was founded in the rural African-American community of Plantersville, SC and has grown to offer activities and programming for students and residents throughout Georgetown County.

Our mission is to serve as a conduit for the people, working to make positive changes in our community that will improve the quality of life for all. We seek to develop and sustain meaningful partnerships with individuals, public agencies and organizations in order to promote and achieve:

- YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
- LITERACY ENRICHMENT
- STEM-BASED EDUCATION
- RECREATION ENHANCEMENTS
- COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

Operating on a six-figure annual budget, The Village Group is largely the product of massive volunteer effort and hours. In addition to the board, which is comprised of community leaders, the ongoing administration is handled on a volunteer basis. Planning and implementing most programs is also the work of nearly four dozen volunteers.

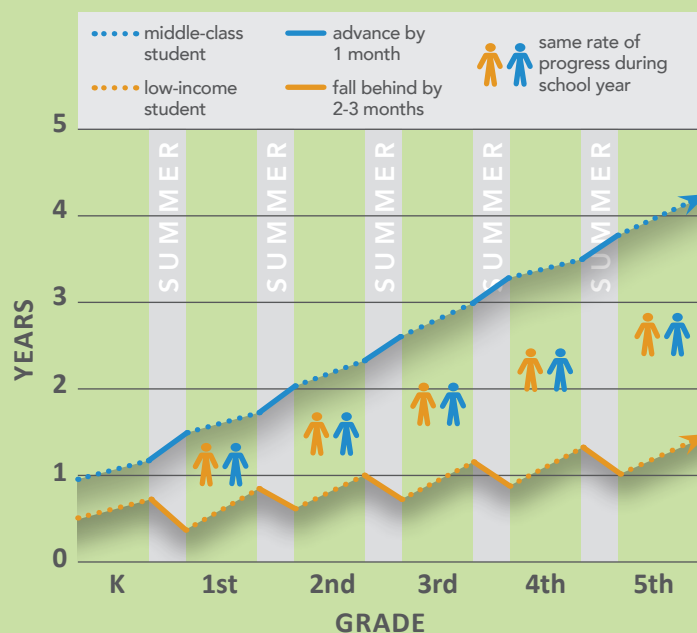


The Village Group Board of Directors

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Low-Income Students Fall 2.5 to 3 Years Behind by Fifth Grade

All students lose academic ground during the summer. However by the fifth grade, low-income students fall 2.5 to 3 years behind their middle-class counterparts due to a lack of summer educational and personal experience opportunities.



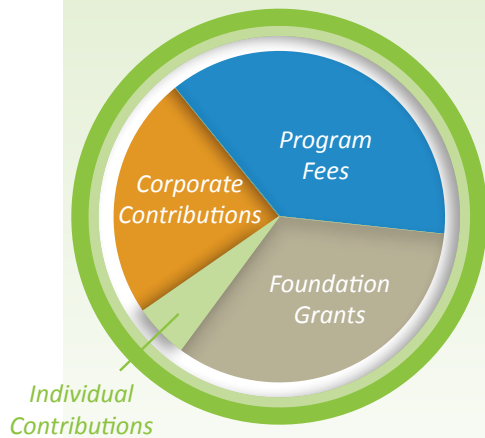
The largest program – Plantersville Summer Academy – pays its program director, certified teachers and a few staff only during the 7-week program.

The bulk of the organization's income is generated by moderate registration fees for the Summer Academy, which is open to any of the 5,000+ school children (K-9) in Georgetown County. Scholarships are available for students unable to pay the fee.

The remaining operational and program funds are raised through grants, as well as individual and corporate contributions.

2016 REVENUE

TOTAL: \$193,203



Program Fees : \$72,149

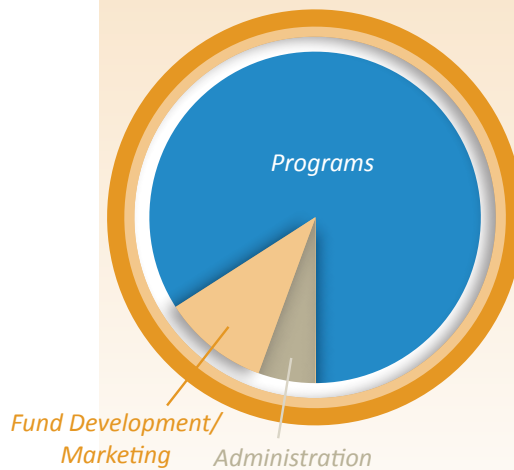
Foundation Grants : \$63,593

Corporate Contributions : \$42,615

Individual Contributions : \$14,846

2016 EXPENSES

TOTAL: \$180,191



Programs : \$150,975

Fund Development/Marketing : \$18,228

Administration : \$10,988

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Richard Freedom
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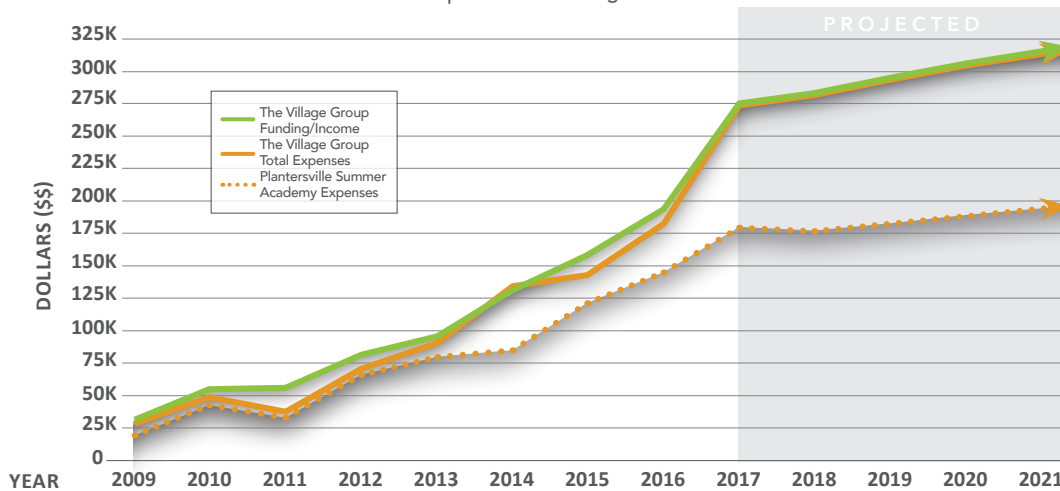
Rochelle Geathers

Eileen Fleming-Patonay

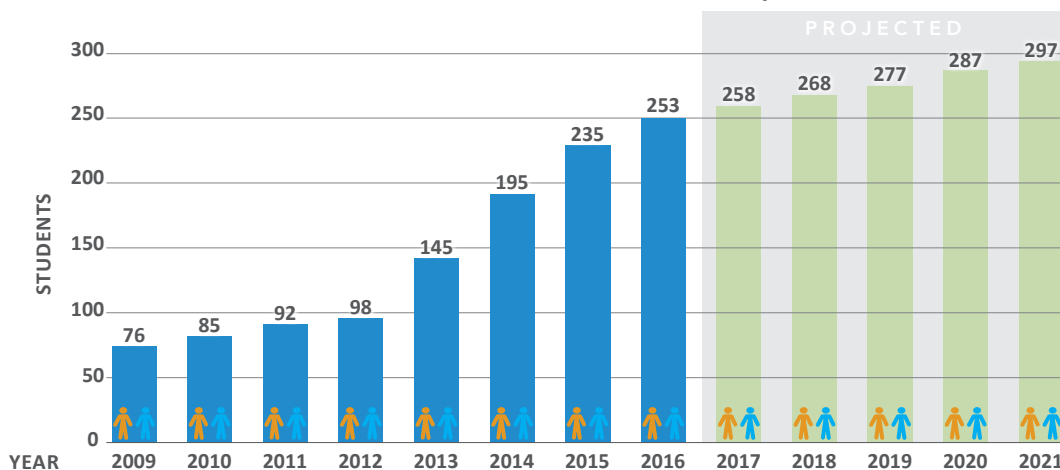
Rev. Brian Swinton

Ray C. Funnye
Executive Director

Expenses vs. Funding/Income



Student Enrollment in Plantersville Summer Academy (PSA)



FINANCIAL
OVERVIEW
&
BOARD



PLANTERSVILLE SUMMER ACADEMY

"Summer Vacation" held a very different agenda for the 253 kids who attended Plantersville Summer Academy (PSA) this year. Instead of sleeping in, they were in class or participating in many fun and educational field trips.

The kindergarten through ninth grade students focused on math and literacy curriculum in a nurturing environment. PSA keeps them engaged in the summer months while also helps many of them improve performance on standardized tests, potentially increasing the number of students who graduate from high school.

Each year the number of students enrolled in the academy grows. But even with the increased numbers, The Village Group is dedicated to making sure the experience is beneficial to and very focused on each individual child's needs. This summer, the academy tested a Black River United Way pilot program which teams up 10 students per teacher for first and second graders. The academy can have as many as 25 students per teacher.

Ray Funnye shared, "... you see you're making a difference in the lives of young people. And that's what we want to do. We want these young people to have the ability to love learning and also to be an asset to society in some special way."

“ You don't lose it, but you gain knowledge over the summer. ” JEREMIAH EPPS



Jeremiah enjoys watching the 2nd graders he teaches at the Summer Academy. Preparing them for the upcoming school year, he notes how helpful it is for them to learn new concepts. "It makes them more comfortable with learning at school," he says. He also reflects on how much he loved being a student in the program. Jeremiah started attending when he was in the 5th grade and returned each summer until he became a teacher. His fun memories are not only of the classroom, but of the field trips they took. PSA "gave me opportunities to go places that I would not have gotten to go. Kids in this neighborhood just don't get to do those things."

Parents and teachers alike have seen improvements in the academic performance of PSA students, but they also see students discover talents they did not know they had. Talents in art and sports are often revealed through the other activities offered at Plantersville Summer Academy. Interest in history and culture also ignite through enriching excursions.

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM Along with classroom learning, swimming lessons and sports activities were available. Special guest presenters brought new experiences for the kids. Students also had the opportunity to take several educational, entertaining and culturally-rich field trips.

This past summer, students:

- toured an Airport
- visited an AmTrack station and rode a train
- explored an Art Museum
- enjoyed Busch Gardens & Myrtle Water Park
- watched live performances by Clowning Around
- had fun at The Jump Room
- toured Howard University
- studied at Smithsonian Air & Space Museum
- took a trip to Washington DC



TORI AKLIN

“ Summer Academy changed my life a lot. ”

According to Tori, former PSA student and now a worker there, Plantersville Summer Academy teaches more than skills and discipline. “There’s so much love in the program. They care for us. They nurture us. And they make sure we have everything we need when we go back to school.”

“Where should your child go for the summer?” asks Tori. “Somewhere they could learn, have a good time, meet new people, eat really good food, and go new places? I would say go to Plantersville Summer Academy. It’s awesome!”



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



BACK TO SCHOOL RALLY

One of the earliest organized events for The Village Group when it was founded, the annual Back To School Rallies are still an extremely important part of preparing students for a successful school year. This year was no different. Parents and students, along with school administrators, came together to meet before the start of the school year. There were free backpacks, school supplies and a meal shared, which kicked the school year off right.



AN EVENING OF LOWCOUNTRY MUSIC AND ART

Last September, the widely acclaimed Lowcountry Voices, under the dynamic music director, Nathan L. Nelson, came to Georgetown and presented a benefit concert. The concert also featured the paintings of the Rice Collection produced by internationally known artist, Jonathan Green. Jonathan Green is one of the most significant artists of the Lowcountry experience. There were special guest speakers and singers, as well as vendors offering traditional goods such as sweetgrass baskets, authentic African wear and items from the Jonathan Green Collection. It was a fabulous evening celebrating lowcountry culture, while raising awareness and funding.



THE VILLAGE FLYERS BIKE CLUB

The Village Flyers Bike Club was a very exciting, NEW program for The Village Group this year. It paired mentors and kids together for regular bike rides, connecting the community with underserved youth and providing regular activity as part of a healthy lifestyle – helping to develop beneficial habits for the kids. In this first year, we had 10 students join the club and ride! The club also partnered with the Georgetown Sheriff's Department and learned about safety. The bike club is teaching goal setting and responsibility while providing a great time and exercise.

JASMINE JOHNSON HAZEL

“They always gave us an extra push to be better.”

As Jasmine completes her Senior year of High School, she looks forward to her future and plans to major in biochemistry when she goes to college. Jasmine started attending the Plantersville Summer Academy when she was eight. “I discovered that learning is a year-round activity and what I learned at the Summer Academy really helped me academically.” She noted, however, that Summer Academy is not only focused on academics, but on preparing youth for the larger world. “We learned public speaking, etiquette, going out to eat, being polite, how to speak to other people and how to convey ideas in ways we hadn’t considered,” explains Jasmine.





FEATURED PARTNERS

BOEING

Boeing, the largest aerospace company in the world, provides more than 102,000 jobs and is located nearby in Charleston, SC. The education relations team from Boeing spent the day at Plantersville Summer Academy - first with students, then with staff. The message was that any student in the area, with the right direction and preparation, could compete for a life changing job at Boeing or one of the manufacturing companies that supply them.

Hands-on demos, educational information and guidance, as well as a question and answer session about how to get kids “career-ready” filled the day. This all took place just two weeks before Boeing celebrated its 100th Anniversary.


Ray Funnye, Executive Director of the Village Group, said, “I’m just excited about this day we are having: Boeing Day in Plantersville. What an honor to have them come and speak to our young people to get them excited about careers in aviation!”



BMW

Twenty PSA students had the opportunity to visit and tour the BMW manufacturing facility in Greer, SC last summer. BMW is committed to introducing students to applications of their education, specifically science and math. As a huge proponent of education, they teamed up to give middle and high school students the BMW Experience. PSA students got to see exactly how concepts they learned could be applied in the real world. They also could see career doors that could be opened through studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).





*THANK YOU to all of the donors, supporters,
volunteers and community partners who help
The Village Group carry out its mission each year.
We could not do it without you!*

Looking ahead.
Join the **mission** in...



2017 !

the  village group



MAKING HEADLINES



the **village group**

WWW.THEVILLAGEGROUP.ORG

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The Village Group



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