

Spring/Summer  
2022

# The Royer-Greaves COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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**Visit our [website](http://www.royer-greaves.org) to learn more about Royer-Greaves.**

## Dear Royer-Greaves Community,

The great person and great boxer Muhammad Ali said something that really resonates across Royer-Greaves right now:

*"Our only hope lies in the power of our love, generosity, tolerance and understanding, and our commitment to making the world a better place for all."*

These past few months, we have witnessed and received so much of all the important things Mr. Ali listed – all to the great benefit of our students and adults! In this newsletter, you will read about some of them:

- The commitment and love our staff members have shown to our students, adults, and each other, as recognized by our Above & Beyond Awards. Please know that this impressive list only scratches the surface of the generous, kind, and loving things we see around here and that so many more people do extraordinary things routinely!
- A Detwiler Family Foundation grant that will fund a full year of theater arts exploration and experiences for our students and adults with People's Light.

- The biggest volunteer effort ever at Royer-Greaves, which brought more than three dozen people of all ages and from five community organizations together to tidy our grounds and grace them with flowers.
- And the tremendous philanthropy of a stranger to Royer-Greaves, the late Barbara Bochey of West Chester. This woman who none of us knew left Royer-Greaves a generous gift in her will in a mysterious act of astonishing kindness.

As we reflect on Mr. Ali's words, it occurs to us that everything on his list can be considered a form of generosity. And these many gifts – time and effort, trust and treasure, from all corners of our Royer-Greaves community and beyond – have filled us with gratitude and hope.



Executive  
Director  
**VICKY MAYER**



Deputy  
Director  
**DEBRA JEROME**

## Royer-Greaves School for Blind Receives Generous Mystery Donation

***No one at Royer-Greaves knew the late Barbara A. Bochey until the school learned of her donation.***

Royer-Greaves School for Blind has received the single largest donation in its 100-year history from the late Barbara A. Bochey of West Chester – a woman with no known ties to the school.

"It is impossible to overstate the impact Ms. Bochey's gift will have on Royer-Greaves students and adults for years to come," said Royer-Greaves Executive Director Vicky Mayer. "It will serve as a springboard for meeting needs we could not have met. This donation, paired with continued fundraising, will help us serve more people than we could have otherwise."



Barbara A. Bochey left a donation to Royer-Greaves in her will.

### 'A Silent Angel'

"We are very solid fiscally, but this will help ensure the next 100 years of Royer-Greaves," said Michele Kraynak, Royer-Greaves' controller. "To make such a difference without seeking recognition, it's like we have an angel – a silent angel who donated this money to others who are very, very much less fortunate."

"Barbara was a very compassionate person and a very empathetic person," said attorney Bob Supplee, who represented the bank that was the executor of Ms. Bochey's estate until he decided to retire. "I wish I knew what the connection was between her and (her late husband) Thaddeus and Royer-Greaves, but people don't always tell you why."

The few details about Ms. Bochey that Mayer and others at Royer-Greaves know came from Ms. Bochey's will, her brief obituary, her

late husband's obituary, and attorney Lisa Comber Hall, who now represents the estate executor:

- Barbara, whose maiden name was Price, was 74 when she died on Oct. 4, 2020, at Chester County Hospital.
- Thaddeus earned degrees from St. Joseph's University and Villanova and was a chemist at Wyeth Labs. He was 73 when he died in 2001 at Chester County Hospital.
- There were two other beneficiaries in their will – a local hospital and a local Catholic parish.
- Royer-Greaves had been in the couple's will for decades, at least as far as the 1980s.
- The couple had no children.

### A Parallel to Royer-Greaves' Founder

This gift is one of the biggest Royer-Greaves milestones since Jessie Royer Greaves founded the school in 1921, two years after the death of her husband, Harry E. Greaves. People at Royer-Greaves have noticed a profound parallel:

"Jessie and Harry didn't have children, but Jessie founded a school that changed the lives of many, many children who at the time were not accepted at other schools," Mayer said. "Barbara and Thaddeus didn't have children, but this gift will enable Royer-Greaves to positively impact the lives of children and adults, some of whom have not yet been born."

### Appreciating the Gift, Hoping to Know the Giver

The donated money will be set aside until the school's current strategic planning process is completed. "It's essential that we use this money in a meaningful way that honors the Bochey legacy," Mayer said.

The strategic plan will be finished by the end of the year, said Royer-Greaves Strategic Planning Consultant Jim Powers. "We're looking at all of our existing programs – education, adult day program, adult residential, and Lifesharing – and will analyze the data focusing on what we currently offer and projected needs," he said. "Once we understand future needs, we will initiate a capital campaign to fund them. The Bochey gift is an enormous first step, one that we are confident will attract other donations and support."

The Royer-Greaves community would love to know more about Barbara and Thaddeus Bochey and what might have led them to give such a remarkable gift to Royer-Greaves. Anyone who knew them is asked to contact the school at [info@Royer-Greaves.org](mailto:info@Royer-Greaves.org).

# Royer-Greaves and People's Light Partner to Immerse Students & Adults in Theater Arts

Royer-Greaves students and adults will learn more of the theater arts and enjoy several theatrical productions thanks to a \$26,600 Detwiler Family Foundation Grant awarded to Royer-Greaves and People's Light.



People's Light and Royer-Greaves have an ongoing partnership. "The more discussions we and People's Light had, the more we saw a potential for our students and adults to have a bigger involvement with the theater," said Royer-Greaves Consultant Jim Powers. "We saw that our folks would benefit not just from the cultural enrichment aspects of theater, but from vocational and educational components as well."

People's Light has long been committed to making its productions accessible to all, and Royer-Greaves educators have served as advisors. "We want to make sure the joy of theater is available to everyone," said People's Light Director of Education and Civic Practice Kathryn Moroney.

Royer-Greaves students and adults have enjoyed sensory-friendly experiences at the Malvern theater, including the world premiere

of "Personality," a musical about Lloyd Price. Before sensory-friendly performances, audience members are told about loud noises, flashes of light, and other elements some people may wish to prepare for, and they are also welcomed to vocalize or move in and out of the theater however they may need.

People's Light artists are leading workshops at Royer-Greaves, during which students and adults will learn acting and story-building techniques and may also choose to learn elements of set design and construction and costume design. "We will teach about the voice and noises we can make with our bodies – and especially how the voice and the body also connect to our emotions," Moroney said.

This winter, a large group of Royer-Greaves students and adults will be invited back to People's Light for a special musical presentation of Alice in Wonderland. Some students and adults may also work with People's Light artists on a performance of their own.



A \$26,600 Detwiler Family Foundation Grant Funds the Ongoing Project

## Above & Beyond: Royer-Greaves Staff Members Recognized

Twenty-six Royer-Greaves staff members, some from every department, were recently recognized by their peers for excellent work "Above and Beyond" expectations. Thanks to all for an exceptional job in some extraordinary circumstances!

### Adult Training Facility

- CLA Supervisors Nathalie Nathaniel, Leteica Williams, Donna McGregor, and Rita Warren. Preparation for ATF licensing.
- ATF Lead Instructor Quiennette Mbakellah. Inspection preparation, showing love and care, helping staff.
- ATF Director Domnic Odida. Exceptional ability to do his job.



### Administration

- Program Coordinator Joanne Graham. Assisting the ATF and Lifesharing with state inspections.
- Controller Michelle Kraynak. Coming to work during Hurricane Ida to assist Life Sharing with inspection.

### Maintenance

- Charlie Wurst, Tony Checko, and Paul Dombleshy: Reading the ATF for inspection.

### CLA Group Homes

- CLA Edith Chealy. Amazing team work during the residents' beach trip and taking on extra cooking duties during short staffing.
- CLA Edward Marrah. Assisted with the beach trip even when off-the-clock.
- Deputy Executive Director Debra Jerome. Stepped in when a staff member resigned on trip day so there was enough staff for the residents to go to the beach.

### Education

- Supervisor of Education Carolyn Muller. Grew enrollment to an all-time high.

### Lifesharing

- Lifesharing hosts Suah Zubah, Mary Kyle, Senneh Sengbe, Nora Solo, Yungor Kemah, Mabel Nyepanh, and Ruth Abbott. Displaying incredible flexibility, ingenuity, and care before and during a state inspection that took place during Hurricane Ida.
- Program Specialist Lauren Jenkins. Instrumental in the success of the Lifesharing inspection and assisted Domnic with ATF inspection paperwork.
- Director Marica Debes. Recognized for her skill set and the confidence that brings those who work with her.

### Nursing

- Former Nurse Keli Henderson. Navigating Royer-Greaves through COVID.

### Special Recognition

- Executive Director Vicky Mayer. Direct support with the very challenging Lifesharing inspection and for all that she does every day.

## Volunteer Spotlight



### Our Biggest Spring Clean-up EVER!

This spring, 33 people from five different community organizations came together to clean-up and plant flowers all around our campus. Not only was their excellent work appreciated, but it was a sheer delight to be with so many extraordinary people from The Great Valley Leo Lions, The PBM Lions, The Masons, Paoli Fire Company and Drishti Foundation USA, a nonprofit organization that focuses on helping the blind and visually impaired.

Thank you!



## Show Your Support

Interested in donating to Royer-Greaves or volunteering? Visit [www.Royer-Greaves.org](http://www.Royer-Greaves.org) or call 610-644-1810.