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GECRC: Non-Profit of the Year, 2021!



GECRC staff and board members, L to R:
 Gayle Rueter, Lauren Mayerhoff, Cheryl Sammer,
 Celia Rodee, Lizzy Doty, Maryam Ghouse,
 Emily Lobdell, Jackie Reeves, Laura Ulepik,
 Erica Nelson, Christian Ambler, Karla Kampen

Proud and Deeply Honored!

The staff, board members and volunteers of GECRC were so thrilled to win the "Non-Profit of the Year" Award at the Glen Ellyn Community Awards, hosted by the Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce on March 1st.

"It is an honor to be recognized by the Glen Ellyn community as the 2021 Non-Profit of the Year because it means that the work we do to support students in our local schools is valued and appreciated," says GECRC Executive Director Leah Harding.

"As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we thank the hundreds of volunteers, board members, staff and community partners that made GECRC what it is today!"

Our volunteers are so vital to the success of GECRC. Thank you to the many volunteer tutors and community members who supported GECRC this year. Your dedication and care ensured that GECRC

could provide the academic and social support that our students come to expect and value everyday. See the story below for a feature about two of our special volunteers.

Volunteers Make Everything Possible



During January, "National Mentoring Month," we recognized two of our volunteer tutors who go above and beyond. Tom and Janelle Menzel are a married couple who volunteer once a week at Lincoln Elementary.

Janelle got involved with GECRC after getting a flier in the mail just before the pandemic began in March 2020. She started tutoring in-person at Hadley and tutored virtually during the 2020-2021 school year. In 2021, Janelle moved to Lincoln when there was an additional need for tutors. Lincoln hosted a "bring a friend to tutoring week" in November 2021, and Janelle brought Tom to school. Tom signed on to volunteer shortly after and is learning lots of 4th grade math!

Get Involved in 2022

Are you looking for a way to connect with GECRC this spring, summer or fall?

1. Volunteer Tutor:

Complete a [volunteer application](#) to get started. If you've tutored in the past, please send an email to volunteer@gecrc.com.

2. Fundraising Events:

Consider helping with an upcoming fundraising event:

- Dare to Dream, our 20th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser June 24; looking for silent auction donations, sponsors and individuals to help on the evening of the event.
- GECRC Golf Outing; scheduled for September 14. Also seeking donations, sponsors and volunteers.

If interested, please reach out to Laura Ulepik at lulepic@gecrc.com.

"We enjoy seeing the kids wave and their faces light up when their tutors walk in for the day," Tom and Janelle say.

"The kids at Lincoln really enjoy seeing their tutors and telling them about their day. We also enjoy watching their progression in homework."

Janelle also enjoys watching the kids beat Tom at various games, particularly Uno.

"In addition, we give the kids someone they can talk to if they are having a difficult day. In December, we went to the 'Holiday Shop' in the gym and helped the kids pick out presents for family members. During the shopping time, one of the kids was having a hard time due to the passing of a parent. In situations like that, it's important just to be present and listen to the kids, giving them a person they can talk to as opposed to being just someone that answers homework questions," Tom says.

"There are days that are difficult for all of us, but these kids really have overcome so much with the pandemic, changes in protocols, and often needing to help younger siblings with homework at times. We are so proud of all of them!"

Tom and Janelle, we are so thankful for you both, for the heart and soul you both pour into your volunteer work here at GECRC, making such a profound difference in the lives of so many of our students.

Congratulations to Maryam Ghouse!

GECRC Volunteer Coordinator Maryam Ghouse has recently taken on the role of Vice President for the DuPage Association of Volunteer Administration (DAVA). In her role, she will help DAVA rebrand and revitalize for the next generation of volunteer coordinators. Congratulations to Maryam!



Thank you, Bookstore of Glen Ellyn!

An enormous thank you to [The Bookstore of Glen Ellyn](#) for supporting GECRC through their awesome "Blind Date with a Book" Valentine's Day sale! The books were all wrapped with a brief description of the genre and plot, and readers could select a book to gift based on the "blind" description. They surpassed their goal of selling 100 Blind Date Books, selling 127 books and making a donation of \$1,270 to GECRC!

Board Members Getting Involved



Oh what fun we had on Pi Day (3.14!) delivering GECRC Board President Celia Rodee's delicious homemade apple pies to our social media contest winners! First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn Pastor Kendra Joyner-Miller accepts her Instagram contest winning pie in the photo above. Jim Hess accepted the Facebook winning pie his wife Dorothy Hess won in our random drawing. Thank you to all who participated, and congratulations to our winners!



Thank you to our awesome board member Rebecca DePorter and her son Connor for visiting our Lincoln program this quarter! They brought treats for snack time, chatted with our students, and then Connor stayed to help out with games and activities. A fun time was had by all!

An Alumna Returns to GECRC: Sandy Win Hilaire



Sandy when she was in grade school in the GECRC program



Sandy now, all grown up!

Sandy Win Hilaire moved to America from Thailand from a refugee camp in 2008 when she was just 8 years old. She and her family lived in the Parkside Apartments in Glen Ellyn for several years, and she and her younger siblings attended Lincoln Elementary School where she joined the GECRC Lincoln program.

"They helped me with homework after school... and let my parents know what was going on at the school," she says. Sandy learned to speak English through ESL classes at Lincoln, moving into traditional classes in 4th grade after she graduated from ESL.



Sandy and her family

Sandy says GECRC was tremendously helpful in communicating with her parents about her progress at school.

"The most impactful thing about GECRC was how open they were to help us, and how willing to help, especially because I don't like asking for help."

Sandy still keeps in touch with "Miss Lauren," one of her volunteer tutors from her time at GECRC. Sandy says she would encourage students in the program today to do the same.


"Keep a relationship and still talk to (your tutors)," she says. "You might need their help one day when you're older. Stay in touch with everyone!"

Sandy also says to "read a lot when your volunteer wants to sit down with you... that will help you to learn English a lot faster. Reading goes directly in your head. And ask for help when you need help!"

Sandy graduated from Wheaton North High School in 2020 (her family moved to Wheaton after her 7th grade year). She is currently studying business management at the College of DuPage and is getting married this month. She took her own advice to keep in touch to heart and

recently reached out to GECRC to see if she could help with social media initiatives, as she is taking social media development and graphic design classes. Sandy has also helped GECRC with Burmese translation at an information gathering community forum for GECRC stakeholders. We are thrilled to have her return to GECRC as part of our team! Welcome home, Sandy!



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First United Methodist Church located at Forest and Duane Sts., Glen Ellyn

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Fuchsia	shade	red/white		red/purple		
New Guinea Impatiens	shade	pink		white		
Boston Fern	shade	green		NA		
Sunpatiens	sun/shade	orange		purple		
Sunpatiens	sun/shade	red		pink		
Portulaca Moss Rose	sun	mixed		NA		
Calibrachoa Plant	sun	yellow		mixed		
Calibrachoa Plant	sun	pink		blue		
Geranium Plant	sun	red		pink		
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Dare to Dream

20th Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser

JUNE 24, 2022 • 6:00-10:00PM

GLEN ELLYN BOATHOUSE

You are invited to celebrate the community who built the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center over the past 20 years. This festive evening among GECRC friends will include an auction, raffle, games and live music. Join us as we lay the groundwork for our future.

\$225 per guest includes dinner from a variety of international food trucks and an open bar. Diet-friendly options available.

Dressy casual attire.

Space is limited so order soon. Purchase tickets at
<https://20thAnniversary.givesmart.com>

Questions and auction donations welcome, info@gecrc.com

[Purchase Your Tickets](#)[Donate Today](#)



Resource Center



345 Taft Avenue, Suite 205
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Office: 630 479-9920

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