

Phoenix Project spreading its wings in Petersburg

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Body

The Phoenix Project is growing its outreach and presence in Petersburg.

That is welcome indeed.

Recently, the Phoenix Project added two new members to its staff. David Carter will serve as general counsel and director of programs and Shanice Penn will be the operations manager

"This will really help us do more in Petersburg," said Marion Forsyth, associate director of the Phoenix Project.

The new staff will help expand the partnerships between higher education in Virginia and the community and focus on the summer program.

But the excitement concerning the Phoenix Project is not just about adding staff. Rather, the innovative organization is also looking toward its future programs.

The Phoenix Project continues to be a part of our community. Already, the Phoenix Project is working with Downtown Petersburg Inc., the Army Community Heritage Partnership Program, Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corp., the Supported Alternative for our Valued Youth and Petersburg Public Schools.

One program will help Petersburg students work toward getting into higher education and achieve success in college,

"The community continues to be our leading source of advice and guidance," Executive Director Greg Werkheiser said.

Also, the Phoenix Project will hold its third summer program over six weeks in June and July with about 30 students from across the state. Student volunteers work with other organizations to help out with economic and community development projects in the city.

Last summer, about 40 students from many of the colleges and universities in Virginia participated in the Phoenix Project's Nonprofit Leadership Programs.

The Phoenix Project uses college students and faculty to work on social problems. At its founding in 2006, it chose Petersburg as its pilot program, partly because of the city's economic struggles.

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"We're beginning to see, in two years, the economic and social impact of the work." Werkheiser said. "We're very satisfied."

So are members of the Petersburg community.

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