

Anthony Stevenson and Denick Herrin  
**Radnor Educational Foundation's 2017 Visionary Leaders**

In the fall of 2014, Radnor Middle School principal Dr. Anthony Stevenson and PTO President Denick Herrin asked representatives from the Radnor Educational Foundation to sit down with them to consider the school district's response to students facing financial crisis. Prior to requesting that meeting, the district's principals and members of the middle school PTO had conversations with our social workers, Christine Kulp and Ciere Evans, both with us today, regarding the development of a more formal framework for addressing need among our Radnor students.

At the time, Dr. Stevenson and other principals had been helping students facing financial crises at home through informal means, supported by anonymous donations by compassionate Radnor families. Anthony Stevenson and Denick Herrin recognized that this well-meaning assistance was not doing all that it could to help address financial crises, and that it was not the best system to stabilize students. They knew that REF and the social workers could be part of the solution.

Fast forward to today: through the formal yet responsive approach developed by the team that represents Neighbors Helping Neighbors, REF is able to quickly address situations identified by our social workers, so that educational progress is not interrupted because a student is facing a sudden financial crisis at home. To date, REF has been able to help over 15 students and their families through funds specifically restricted to this program.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors would not have become reality without Dr. Stevenson's and Denick Herrin's recognition that it is a rising tide that lifts all boats; where when one student struggles, the success of all students suffers. Through NHN, resources are speedily directed to serve real, immediate need. The students we help are presented with the best gift we can give them as a community:

**assistance** -- assistance which stabilizes home life and enables them to continue their studies, their homework, their education.

Those who know Anthony and Denick recognize that Neighbors Helping Neighbors is just one example of their commitment to a level field of educational opportunity for all students. Both Anthony and Denick have been champions of grants which provide support for students with financial need in a community of abundance. Both have made personal financial commitments to that vision: Dr. Stevenson joined the district thirteen years ago and has contributed to REF each year since that time. (I might also note that REF provides donors with the opportunity to make gifts in honor of individuals, and that Anthony is responsible for thousands of dollars in contributions in his honor as an educator.) Denick and her husband Charlie, parents of four children, have contributed to REF for the last ten years, and two years ago Denick joined REF's Grants Committee, where she continues to serve as an advocate for students with financial need and is a careful and ultimately compassionate steward of grant funds.

Together and separately, Anthony Stevenson and Denick Herrin have been tireless advocates for all children in Radnor Township School District. Because of their vision and leadership, because they have consistently demonstrated the conviction and courage to speak on behalf of students whose voices are sometimes silent, whose families are oftentimes unseen, the Radnor Educational Foundation is more compassionate in serving our vision.

For that, it is my great pleasure to honor Dr. Anthony Stevenson and Denick Herrin as **Radnor Educational Foundation's 2017 Visionary Leaders**.