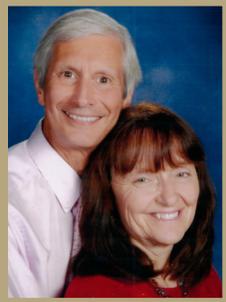


Human and Civil Rights Award Winner



◆ Wendy Marcec ◆

Reg Weaver Human and Civil Rights Award



When Wendy Marcec was a music teacher and special education preschool aide, a student said to her, “Oh, no, ma’am, we don’t have Christmas toys.” Wendy knew right then and there that she had to do something.

Since that small but powerful interaction Wendy Marcec, now retired from teaching, has worked tirelessly to alleviate the effects of poverty on students in Appalachian Kentucky. With 27 percent of the population below the poverty line, Eastern Kentucky is one of the poorest regions in the country.

Wendy Marcec’s first initiative was the S.A.N.T.A. (Send A New Toy to Appalachia) Project which has provided thousands of toys to children in Appalachia since 2008. In addition, she and her husband Jerry created A Lasting World, Inc. (ALW), a 501©(3). Its mission is to empower underprivileged children living in Estill County, Kentucky by providing them financial assistance and motivational support and inspiring them to take positive environmental action to promote long-term care of the earth.

Since 2005, ALW’s two main projects have been to sponsor a free-of charge, week-long outdoor education experience, Camp H.O.P.E., for students from Estill County Middle School, and an annual giving project so that impoverished families have a happy Christmas holiday. Overall, ALW has served over 130 students through Camp H.O.P.E. ((Help Our Planet Earth), and provided financial and in-kind assistance to more than 850 families through S.A.N.T.A.

Camp H.O.P.E.’s positive influence reaches beyond the education students receive and leaves a lasting impact on their lives. One former student wrote, “Wendy and Jerry Marcec are a big part of the reason I am who I am today. I simply cannot thank them enough.”

Many of Camp H.O.P.E.’s campers have been personally affected by fracking, which has devastated the mining economy in the region, leaving many families without a stable source of income. Camp H.O.P.E. and A Lasting World’s newsletter serve to educate participants about harmful environmental practices such as fracking.

Wendy has also successfully raised funds for community service projects from the Diocese of Lexington and corporations such as Toyota. Wendy and Jerry Marcec are a perfect example of how individuals can make a lasting positive impact on their community.