



Helping Hands Foundation

The Needle Arts Mentoring Program^(sm)

What is it?

Helping Hands Foundation, Inc. (HHF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that coordinates programs to teach children the various needle arts. The group's Mission Statement is "The purpose of our organization is to create community partnerships, which promote and encourage relationships between adults and youth, fostering curiosity, creativity and a feeling of achievement through the teaching of needle arts."

The **FOUNDATION** is called **Helping Hands Foundation, Inc. (HHF)**. The **PROGRAM** is called the **Needle Arts Mentoring Program (NAMP)**.

How did HHF begin?

HHF was started by a yarn company sales representative, Bonnie Lively, in Oregon. She coordinated the program from her home, with the assistance of one part-time staff member, since its inception in 1999 through June 2004.

How does the Needle Arts Mentoring Program work?

This is a volunteer-based program, in which volunteer adult mentors are connected with one to three children in grades one through 12 to teach them a needle art (knitting, crochet, embroidery, cross-stitch or needlepoint). Using school systems, after school programs, scout troops and library programs, HHF has a well-established venue for promoting the needle arts. Generally, mentors meet with the children one hour per week for a six to nine week session, although programs can be designed to suit a particular situation. Each program has a Volunteer Coordinator (VC) who communicates information to each volunteer and is the liaison with HHF. HHF provides the VC with training materials (a "Leadership Guide" and a training video) to help successfully guide mentors as they teach students. Each student is given enough supplies for their first project or two (for example, a knitting student will get knitting needles, about 1 ounce of yarn and a "How To Knit" book. The book and needles are theirs to keep at the end of the session). We suggest that the first two projects for knit and crochet programs be a bookmark, a simple first-time project, and a square to be incorporated into a blanket for charity. For needlepoint and cross-stitch, each child will have one kit for a small stitched picture.

How many NAMP programs are there?

As of January 18, 2006, there were 95 active programs in 22 states, representing over 2600 children learning needle arts around the country.

Where do the supplies come from?

The success of this program depends on the generosity of the industry suppliers. The manufacturers of needle art products donate yarns, threads, needles, canvases, patterns, etc. to the programs. Since 1999, TNNA has also donated their "How To" books to each child in a program.

How are other expenses paid?

Like any program, there are expenses beyond the basic supplies – staff time, postage, phone, fax, website costs, etc. – and some sort of revenue must be generated to pay these expenses. The goal for

this group is to eventually be self-sustaining through grants and other donations. To that end, an independent grant writer has been retained to seek out new grant opportunities. The Executive Director of HHF is coordinating the grant seeking endeavor and other fundraising activities.

Is there a Board of Directors?

Yes, the Board of Directors includes Bill Brinkley, Linda Carter (Secretary/Treasurer), Carol Gantz, Jan Kahn, Bonnie Lively and Linda Pratt (President).

What is the contact information for HHF?

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