



JAMIE WILLIAMS

The Open Doors Partners in Education staff (from left) Associate Director Julla Blyman, Executive Director Ashley Singer and reading instructor Emily Armstrong receive the Chestertown Rotary Club's 2023 Dr. Paul Titsworth Annual Community Service Award.



EMILY ARMSTRONG

Executive Director of Open Doors Partners in Education Ashley Singer receives the 2023 Dr. Paul Titsworth Annual Community Service Award from the Chestertown Rotary Club's incoming President Larry Vetter.

Ashley Singer honored for education work

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CHESTERTOWN — On a rainy Tuesday, there was plenty of warmth and cheer inside the Chester River Yacht and Country Club. The Chestertown Rotary Club presented Ashley Singer, executive director of Open Doors Partners in Education, with the 2023 Dr. Paul Titsworth annual Community Service Award. Incoming president, Larry Vetter said, "As a member of the Rotary, we're an organization that does charity work. That's part of the

purpose of us being here." He said their founding father, Dr. Paul Titsworth, was the first district governor in this area, and it was in his honor the award was given. Vetter said each year they look outside of Rotary for someone doing something impactful and helpful in the community. This year a club member nominated Singer, who started Open Doors Partners in Education in fall 2020 with a mission to increase the literacy rate of struggling readers. During the three years they've been in operation,

Open Doors has provided tutoring and literacy services to over 100 individuals in the community. After a lunch of chicken cordon bleu with red potatoes, Singer, accompanied by her coworkers, Associate Director Julia Blyman and reading instructor Emily Armstrong, talked about her work, commending her dedicated staff. She pointed out this was her second time visiting Rotary. Since that visit, there have been a few changes to report. After their old building caught fire in September, they relocated to a building

at South Lynchburg Street. Adapting to these changes, they have five classrooms and currently see 39 students every week. She's looking to expand with help from their corporate donors and nonprofit partners. She informed the Rotarians about their unique educational approach; the Orton-Gillingham approach — a teaching approach designed to help struggling readers. Singer noted its widely regarded by educational psychologists as the best way to help students who have dyslexia and other learning differences.

and weaknesses evaluated. From there, a plan is established in order to address those deficits. "What we're providing these children is a complex and strong approach that fills their need for literacy," Singer replied. Unfortunately, Singer added, that kind of specialized tutoring in a community like Kent County, with a fairly low average household income, cost \$60 or more. But that's also the reward because her staff get to see children who would not have those tools available in any other setting. Armstrong is excited seeing her students progress.

She added it reinforces that what they're doing is making a difference and is working. Singer agreed. "It's a really rewarding mission. It's really fun. And I've enjoyed during it for the past few years. I'm looking forward to seeing what we'll be able to do in this new space," Singer said. The Rotarians applauded Singer, Blyman and Armstrong who stayed and fielded questions. Open Doors Partners in Education will have their ribbon-cutting ceremony at their new office at 116 D Lynchburg Street at 5 p.m. on Dec. 1.

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Napoleon (R): 2hr 47min
11:50 3:10 6:35

The Holdovers (R): 2hr 13min
1:00 3:55 6:55

Wish (PG): 1hr 44min
11:45 2:00 4:15 6:45

The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds (PG-13): 2hr 47min
12:00 3:15 6:30

Trolls Band Together (PG-13): 1hr 41min
12:15 2:30 4:45 7:00

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Times and movies subject to change without notice.

FRIDAY, DEC 8
7PM
SATURDAY, DEC 9
4PM

Alexis Ward
Artistic Director
Stephanie LaMotte
Assistant Director & Pianist



Presbyterian Church of Chestertown

www.ChesterRiverChorale.org

The Chester River Chorale is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization sponsored in part by Ross Creek Collaborative, Choptank Electric Trust, Hedgeslow Foundation, Mid Shore Community Foundation, Kent Cultural Alliance, and Maryland State Arts Council.