

**Regional Engagement Center President & Founder, Kelly Feiler Remarks at
10th Anniversary Celebration**

8.17.2026

Thanks to Jon Stante of Heartmade Productions for putting that together for us. Jon rents the John Family Foundation room here at the REC, and his children attend our Summer Drop-in program. We're very happy to have the Stantes as neighbors, as well, that have watched us grow over the years.

And Chris! You were the first teen leader and I am so very proud of you, all you've accomplished, and grateful for your words. Thank you!

Each of you is here tonight because you played a part in the success of the REC.

Some of you helped me dream about it before it even existed. Sara Lauver...thank you for helping me turn an idea into reality. Others have been the wind beneath all our wings, like my exercise class members. Every one of you has helped make this place what it is today.

Quite simply, none of this would be here without you.

I hope you feel an incredible sense of pride in what we've built together. If you'll indulge me for just a few minutes, I'd like to recognize some of the people who helped make this dream a reality.

First, my parents, Marv and Raven Rudnitsky.

When my dad stepped down from the Board, he told everyone he still has one of those old legal folders at home labeled "Kelly's Dream." That folder represents years of encouragement, advice, and unwavering support.

From attending community meetings, reaching out to friends, helping establish our 501(c)(3), serving on the Board, and being the REC's true O.G.s—our "Original Givers"—they have been with me since day one. Mom and Dad, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Would you please stand?

Next, I'd like to recognize our current and past Board of Directors.

Serving on a nonprofit board is completely voluntary, yet these individuals give their time, wisdom, connections, and resources to help guide our organization and keep us strong, visible, and sustainable. I am so grateful to each person who has served on our Board.

Our founding Board Chair, Dr. Lorinda Krause, couldn't be with us today, but we're grateful for the faith she had in us to help launch the REC.

Our current Board Chair, Melissa Laniewski, started us off here tonight and is serving her second term on the board and year as board chair. Melissa leads with strength, heart, dedication, and the memory of having grown up in the REC's backyard. Melissa, along with all current board members, would you please stand?

And if you've served on the REC Board at any point over the years, would you please stand as well?

In the beginning, Joanne Troutman generously shared her expertise in capital campaigns, and together we began finding compassionate people who believed in our mission enough to invest in it.

Joanne, along with our room donors— Bill and Teri Robinson, the Rudnitskys, Larry and Lorraine Yarger, the John Family Foundation, Bill and Carolyn Fairl, Ann Dzwonchyk on behalf of what used to be Evangelical Community Hospital and Jared Roush on behalf of what used to be Northumberland National Bank— please know we think of you each day we pass the plaques honoring your gifts and your generosity is shared with others. Thank you for believing in us so early.

And yes...we still have a few room naming opportunities available if anyone's interested!

Our building itself is really a community project.

Before we even had a building, we met at All Saints Episcopal Church; thank you Paul Donecker. Dave Bowersox oversaw construction. Rocky Baer donated architectural designs. Cole's Hardware donated paint used by friends for work. Bingaman & Son Lumber provided flooring. Heister House Millworks donated doors. My friend Tut helped remove the church pews, and our beloved Mike Flock helped coordinate so much of the work that brought this building to life.

If you're here tonight and had a hand in creating this building, thank you. We are so grateful.

One person who deserves special recognition is Javier Videla, our second AmeriCorps VISTA.

Javi truly helped launch us into the next chapter of the REC. He organized many of the signature programs that still define our Drop-In Program today—including Mentoring, TBIZ Kids Café, and Teen Leadership Club.

And perhaps most importantly...he helped all of us make it through COVID.

Javi, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

While Javi was building programs, I was learning the world of grant writing.

Along the way, so many community foundations and businesses patiently taught me, encouraged me, and invested in our mission.

I'd especially like to thank Kara and the Community Giving Foundation, the Degenstein Foundations, Scott Britt from AXA XL Insurance, Danelle Wagner from PCCE, Susquehanna Valley United Way and so many others who believed in our vision and made these programs possible.

I'd also like to recognize Judy Coutts.

For four plus years, Judy has volunteered as a math tutor through "Learning with Judy." I often think about how many young people will someday look back and remember the person who helped them finally understand and not be afraid of math—and helped them believe in themselves, made them math wizards.

Judy, thank you for sharing your time, your talent, and your heart.

And my final thanks: My husband, Steve, is by my side every day cheering us on – that's his great voice in the video! He's been my glue for over 35 years, and for that I love you and am so grateful. Our boys are pretty amazing, too!

Finally, I'd also like to recognize and invite up front someone who has been cheering us on from the beginning—Senator Lynda Schlegel Culver. Senator Culver has been a strong advocate for youth and for the REC since our earliest days and patiently worked with us through the RACP days. Senator, thank you for your encouragement and support. Please join me in welcoming Senator Culver.

Senator Culver Presented a State Senate Citation Recognizing the Regional Engagement Center for Ten Years of Service to the Community

Kelly Feiler - Whether you gave financially, volunteered your time, listened when we needed advice, introduced us to new partners, or simply believed in what we were trying to accomplish—you are part of this story.

Every time you drive by and see kids filling this building or parking lot, or hear about one of our programs, I hope you feel proud.

Because you helped build this.

And now, my dream team: Matt, Shellie, and Zach.

Each day we show up and work together to sustain and grow something pretty special. We've built programs, solved problems, shared plenty of laughs, and most importantly, we're making a difference in the lives of hundreds of young people. This is a great team!

Matt leads with calm, steady confidence. His ability to connect with every young person and every parent who walks through these doors is remarkable.

Shellie moved across the country for a job that didn't end up looking exactly like we expected—but she has embraced every challenge, brought incredible organization, creativity, and professionalism to the REC, and helped transform this organization.

And Zach joined us just a year ago, yet you'd think he'd been here for years because of the dedication, compassion, ideas, and energy he brings every single day.

It is because of the confidence I have in these three that I feel completely comfortable passing the torch at the end of this year.

Matt will become the REC's Executive Director.

Shellie will become Administrative Director.

And Zach will become Development Director.

Because I love this place—and because it's practically in my backyard—I won't be far away. I'll always be here to support them however I can.

So please join me in congratulating and welcoming the leadership team that will guide the Regional Engagement Center into its next decade and beyond.

Thank you all—for believing in a dream, for believing in this community, and for believing in the REC.