

Operation Fresh Start, Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

1925 Winnebago Street
Madison, WI 53704
Phone: 608-244-4721
Fax: 608-244-8162
www.operationfreshstart.org

FROM OUR DIRECTOR: A YEAR OF CHANGE

Hi, I am the new guy. I became Operation Fresh Start's Executive Director this year. I have lived in Madison for about fifteen years. I had heard a lot about OFS and jumped at the chance to be part of this organization. I'd like to say everything was great when I started, but it wasn't.

The truth is that a soft housing market, loss of a grant source, and a difficult donation environment left OFS in a rough spot. Things are getting better. Two years ago, OFS was mired under debt services on over twenty houses. Today we have nine and are aggressively working on selling those nine.

But no matter how many houses OFS builds or sells, this organization is still not about the houses. It is about giving young people a fresh start-an opportunity to succeed in their education, learn employability skills, and move towards a job. We help young people begin a life of independence.

The time for being beaten up by a housing slump is over. The time for being the leaders in a movement to stop our community's young people from falling into a cyclical poverty trap is now.

In order to do this, we are reaching out to you as we undergo Strategic Planning. Please email your ideas on youth development, educa-

tion, and career training to gmarkle@operationfreshstart.org. You received this newsletter because you are a partner in the OFS mission. Please help us take this mission further.

I am excited about working with you as OFS adapts, achieves, and grows to fulfill the need in our community. It is because of community support that I have the chance to be part of this great staff at OFS. It is because of you that OFS will change the trajectory of so many lives in our community.

-Gregory Markle

(From December 2011 Newsletter)



Operation Fresh Start:
Building Lives

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Operation Fresh Start, Inc. is to:

- Help participants to become self-sufficient contributing members of the community by providing an opportunity to gain employment training, education, independent living skills and
- Produce quality affordable homes for low- and moderate-income families.
- Contribute to ongoing local conservation efforts.
- Provide technical assistance to communities and organizations that want to implement the Operation Fresh Start program model.

Contents:

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND	2
2011 PARTICIPANT REPORT	2
2011 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS	3
FINANCIALS	4
FUNDERS	4
STAFF & BOARD OF DIRECTORS	4

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Operation Fresh Start (OFS) is a non-profit organization with 501 (C)(3) status formed in 1970 by volunteer business and community leaders who wanted to assist Dane County, Wisconsin "high risk" youth and adult public assistance recipients to become self-sufficient, productive members of the community. They also wanted to address the community's need to create affordable housing. To reflect the double focus of their program, they adopted the motto, "People and Houses", for the organization. They believed that the rejuvenation of run-down houses by program participants would lead to the re-kindling of their self-esteem.

Since 1970, Operation Fresh Start directors, staff and volunteers have developed the program into a comprehensive approach to employment, training and education for youth and adults who face barriers to self-sufficiency. These barriers include alcohol and other drug abuse, poor health and nutrition, low educational achievement, poor employment history, physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, and a criminal history. The programming addresses these barriers through a training model that enables participants to acquire education, employment and technical skills.

Each participant has an individualized plan that includes education, health and nutrition, mental health, independent living, work training and job placement services. The heart of the program is the work site, which during the past several years has included construction of new housing, rehabilitation of existing housing, and conservation projects such as prairie restoration and watershed preservation. The job site provides participants a chance to learn work skills, be part of something that is worthwhile to the community, and gain the attitudes and skills needed for self-sufficiency.

During OFS' forty-one years, more than 6,500 youth and adults have benefited from its program. Eighty percent have successfully completed their individualized program. Sixty-five to sixty-eight percent have achieved long-term self-sufficiency. Participants have produced over 220 homes which are now owned by lower-income families. In addition, OFS has partnered with Movin' Out, Inc., Madison Area Land Trust and WI Partnership of Housing Development to assist in their efforts to provide housing options for low-income people and those with disabilities. The community receives many benefits from the program: a better prepared work force, an increased tax base, removal of blight, and production of housing affordable to low and moderate income families.

2011 PARTICIPANT REPORT

Enrollments	121	
Male	85	70%
Female	36	30%
Minority	72	60%
Less Than High School		
Diploma/Equivalent at Enrollment	83	69%
Outcomes		
Continuing into 2012	45	37%
Quit/dropped from Program	10	8%
Completed Program	66	55%
Status of Completers		
Returned to High School	7	11%
Post-Secondary Education Only	7	11%
Obtained Employment Only	38	57%
In Both PSE and Employment	10	15%
In Placement Process/Other Supportive Activities	4	6%
Average Wage at Placement	\$9.57/hour	
Earned High School Diploma or Equivalent	*34 of 61	56%
	eligible	

*Of the 83 youth who did not have a diploma or equivalent at enrollment, 22 were too young to earn it during this reporting period and are working toward completing testing or meeting graduation requirements in 2012 or after.

The above numbers reflect reporting for the period December 1, 2010 through November 30, 2011.

2011 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Formation of Women's Crew

Operation Fresh Start's first all women's crew will be working on a combination of conservation and construction projects. These nine brave young women have accepted the challenge of working outside all winter long and they plan to help each other make it through. In their time together, they will be completing a healthy relationship class that will focus on communication skills, physical health, goal setting and experience building. The goal is to address specific issues facing young women today by building self-confidence, connecting with the community and getting some hard work done! Here are some responses when asked what they hope to bring to the crew and gain from the experience:

"I hope to learn how to express and share my thoughts, sadness, happiness, and embarrassments, and to learn how to help myself and others to set short-term and long-term personal goals."
-Beverly

"I want to become the positive leader I know I can be with the help of Operation Fresh Start. I've never had something to look forward to so I hope to gain patience and respect for myself, to learn self-control and how to live in a positive way."-Lashair

Middle College Students

Operation Fresh Start Middle College students successfully completed their first semester at Madison College. These students had the unique opportunity to earn college credits while working to complete their HSED or high school diploma. They attended Learning to Learn Camp in August and complete the 8-week College Success follow-up component to earn 3 degree credits. Students then selected one of three career academies to earn 2 additional degree credits. These students will continue in their career academies and take an additional 3-credit course in the Spring 2012 semester. Students who successfully complete this course will be offered a paid internship for Summer 2012. Congratulations to the following students who completed their first semester in these career academies:

Business Technology Academy: Dominique, Zakk, Tyler, T'aira

Health Occupations Academy: Rachel

Industrial Trades Academy: Leyland, Sophie, Shakina, LJ, Jordan, Chris

Work After Operation Fresh Start (by Santiago Teniente, 2010 Graduate and 2011 Grad Crew Worker)

"I am currently in my first year as a Carpenter Apprentice for Sergenian's Flooring, Inc., working full-time as a Flooring Installer. In the past year I've installed flooring in hospitals, businesses, and Madison College. It's at a much faster pace than when I was at Fresh Start, but I really feel that I would not be where I am today without OFS. My training and supervisors gave me a real shot at a union job. Working on the Graduate Crew really brought my skills up to pace. Nothing can really prepare you for how fast they need you to do things, but OFS was a good start."

(Sergenian's Floor Coverings is an independent, locally owned business that has operated continuously in Madison since 1930. Sergenian's has also been recognized as a leader in sustainability on a national and local level, and is well known for its community involvement in Madison and Dane County.)

Thank You!

To Javis Industries, www.javisindustries.com, for generously contributing their services, time and expertise, providing IT solutions for Operation Fresh Start.

To Gordon Food Service, www.gfs.com, our food supplier for the breakfast and lunch program here at OFS, for donating an entire Thanksgiving meal for our 90 participants.

FINANCIALS

OFS Budget October 2010-September 2011

Income

Public Support	2224259
Private Donations	527825

Total Revenue 2752084

Expenses

Program Services	2644380
Management & Services	107668

Total Expenses 2752048

Excess (Deficit) 36

Assets

Current Assets	1554736
Property & Equipment	38775

Total Assets 1593511

Liabilities/Net Assets

Liabilities/Net Assets	1513268
Unrestricted/Net Assets	80243

Total Liabilities/Net Assets 1593511

FUNDERS

- United Way of Dane County
- Serve Wisconsin-AmeriCorps
- YouthBuild USA
- City of Madison-CDBG
- Dane County Department of Human Services
- The Corps Network
- Workforce Development Board of South Central WI
- WI Department of Corrections
- U.S. Department of Labor
- Madison Metropolitan School District-Work & Learn Centers
- Madison Community Foundation
- Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation
- Wal-Mart Foundation
- Gates Foundation
- Cremer Foundation

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STAFF

Gregory Markle, Executive Director
gmarkle@operationfreshstart.org

Brian McMahon, Program Director
bmcMahon@operationfreshstart.org

Judy Olson, Administrative Director
jolson@operationfreshstart.org

Nina DeHaven, Senior Accountant
ndehaven@operationfreshstart.org

Kelly Kirkpatrick, Construction & Conservation
Manager
kkirkpatrick@operationfreshstart.org

James Sanders, Participant Services Coordina-
tor
jsanders@operationfreshstart.org

Jeff Reed, Technical Assistance Coordinator
jreed@operationfreshstart.org

Tim Perry, Housing Developer
tperry@operationfreshstart.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Lehrer, President

Robin Carley, Vice President

David Worzala, Treasurer

Beth E. Lewis, Secretary

Brenda Brown

Anne Fischer

Dave Kinyon

Paul Moberg

Judith Wilcox

Edward Wing

Theresa Balsiger