Partnerships Help Us Better Serve Youth and Community

Collaboration provides opportunity to expose the young adults of OFS to other organizations and their areas of expertise. Every year, Operation Fresh Start partners with over 20 different nonprofit agencies in the area. Some exciting 2015-2016 partnership highlights include:

DAIS Meets with Women’s Group
The wonderful staff of DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services) have met with our Young Women’s Group three times this year. Each visit, the group delves deeper into healthy relationships.

Conservation Academy with the Audubon Society
For the 3rd year in a row, Madison Audubon Society has offered this five week academy which highlights careers that benefit the environment and provides hands on educational experience for youth.

Second Harvest FoodBank
Is Operation Fresh Start’s partner in registering eligible youth for FoodShare. We are grateful that their staff is willing to come to OFS and discuss the program with young people. In exchange for our gratitude, we spent our Day of Service volunteering at the Foodbank, moving thousands of pounds of food!

Copies of this most recent annual report are available to the public. Visit www.operationfreshstart.org/about-ofs/annual-report/
Hello Annual Report Reader,

I hope you are having a happy New Year. We are busier than a hotdog stand at halftime here. We have launched a Capital Campaign to be able to serve twice as many young people. This is really different for Operation Fresh Start. We haven’t ever asked the community for this type of help. The people I work with are folks that care more about what they do than the building in which they work. They invest their hearts and souls in every young person they meet and look past the cramped space of an outdated facility.

Two years ago, during a Strategic Planning exercise, we asked the community what we could do better. You simply said, “Do More!” At times it is difficult to think of doing more. We love the young people we work with, but making significant transformations in older youth isn’t easy. This is tough, grueling, high intensity work and to do more? Really?

Yet doing more is what we shall do. It is our mission that each youth has a path forward. The Building Futures Campaign is about a new facility where we can serve twice as many youth. Twice as many eyes opened to new opportunities. Twice as many dreams renewed. We aren’t building sandcastles here; we are building futures and we will be able to build twice as many in our new home.

When the community said, “Do more!” and the idea for the Building Futures Campaign started, I had no idea what it would be like. In addition to doing our daily work, we have to plan a building and determine how our young people are going to help build it. How cool is that? Through this process so much has happened. Additional programming has already started so we are even more cramped. We have a new building site, we have an ambitious plan for the space, and we get to begin building and renovating the interior in January!

All of this is awesome! But something else very personal has happened to me. I have never felt so hopeful. Grim news just washes past – I don’t have time for it. When a youth talks to a donor about his/her dreams for the new Fresh Start and they bond over this hope, the whole of humanity grows. My hope turns into faith. I can’t know exactly how this Building Futures Campaign will go, but I have more faith in my community then I ever have.

So stop by the hotdog stand and grab an apron. It is going to take all of us to pull this off. Come on board and let the hope grow inside you as it has in me. It is a wonderful thing.

Thank you,
Gregory Markle
Participant Highlight: Giselle – Life After Pathways

This past year, Giselle graduated from the OFS Pathways program. She is currently working at the Hyatt Hotel as a housekeeping supervisor. Also, since her time at OFS, she has completed personal finance classes at Madison College. In addition to working full time, she is signed up for the Surgical Technician program at Madison College and working towards her goal of becoming a Surgical Technician.

Giselle says, “The most important thing I learned at OFS would have to be: not to react to situations immediately, to take a step back and think about the consequences if you do react a certain way right away.”

“OFS did wonders for me! I’m beyond thankful for discovering this program when I was at the point of giving up. I would with NO hesitation recommend someone to OFS when wanting a new ‘fresh start.’ I would do it all over again if I could. OFS was honestly like a family to me and I loved the sweetness and care the staff showed you. You could definitely tell that they just have your best interest at heart.”

Did you know all that Operation Fresh Start does?

- OFS serves **15,000 meals** annually (breakfast and lunch) to participants of Pathways and Strive, and to participants in our partner programs including Urban League’s Foundations for the Trades and YWCA’s Construct U.

- Our part-time nurse offers **health assessments** to all participants in our Pathways and Grad Crew programs.

- Through our partnership with Urban League’s Foundations for the Trades, OFS staff offered OSHA certification, CPR/First Aid, Fall Protection, Flagger certification and Forklift training to **27 adults**.

- Operation Fresh Start issued **81 work permits** for youth to gain employment. This is a service we provide to the community throughout the year, including during the summer months.

- OFS provides space and **curriculum training** for both Foundations and Construct U.

- Every day, **past OFS participants** come in for case management, resume review, and referrals.
Since early 2014, OFS crews have been working hard at Silverwood Farm Park near Edgerton, WI where we were commissioned by Dane County to transform a 300 acre farm that was donated to the county into a beautiful place for education and recreation. Now this tremendous project is coming to a close.

**In the Last 3 Years Our Crews Have:**
- Created a bat habitat (so they stay out of the old stone house, now the Visitors’ Center)
- Carved out walking trails in the nearby woods
- Created a gravel parking lot with pond access
- Farmed an acre of land which produced vegetables for OFS and food pantry meals
- Renovated the Silverwood family’s old stone house into a Visitors’ Center. This included…
  - Placing beams in the ceiling to support the roof
  - Chipping away plaster to expose the original masonry walls
  - Building an addition where restrooms will be located (to be completed by a group at a later time)

The work has been hard, the climate often forbidding. But now nearly 80 youth can say they have spent over 26,228 collective hours of work on this transformative project that will be used by thousands of nature lovers in the years to come. Visit [www.silverwoodpark.org](http://www.silverwoodpark.org) for more information and to plan a trip to see the fruits of our labor!

Special thanks to Dane County and County Executive Joe Parisi for this opportunity for our county and our youth.

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<th>Income</th>
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<tr>
<td>Public Support</td>
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<td>Capital Campaign Investments/Pledges</td>
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<td>Private Donations</td>
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**Total Revenue**

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<tr>
<td>Capital Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management &amp; General</td>
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**Total Expenses**

| Excess (Deficit)                    | 774,909   |

**Assets**

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<td>Capital Campaign Investments/Pledges</td>
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<td>Property &amp; Equipment</td>
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**Total Assets**

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<tr>
<td>Liabilities/Net Assets</td>
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<td>Unrestricted/Net Assets</td>
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**Total Liabilities/Net Assets**

Types of solicitations include: appeal letters, contracts, donor engagement, events, fee-for-service and grants.
The Building Futures Capital Campaign is well underway. We launched the campaign at the 9th Annual Merrill Lynch Grand Gala in May of 2015. The campaign took off with great momentum, which has steadily continued. At the time of printing this annual report (December of 2016) we are 55% of the way to our $4,500,000.00 goal! It will take the support of the entire community to help OFS reach our goal.

We are excited to share that our new home will be located at 2670 Milwaukee St, in the current Holy Cross Lutheran Church and School.

With the help of OFS’ youth construction crews and community partners, we will take two years to renovate and reimagine the space to become a cost effective education and employment training center for youth at a critical time in their lives.

Gratitude to Our 2015-2016 Partners and Funders


Businesses and foundations listed are program partners or donated a value of $250 or higher during 10/1/15 – 9/30/16. We apologize that we can’t list everyone, even though we are grateful for each contribution. At this time, we are not listing individuals who donate to Operation Fresh Start. Please let us know if you’d like us to do so.

Building Futures Capital Campaign Update

Cabinet Co-Chairs
Lau and Bea Christensen

Cabinet Members
Betty Harris Custer
Jonathan DeSalvo
Eve Galanter
Jo Ann Healy
David Lehrer
Jason Loewi
Gregory Markle
Jill W. Pfeiffer
Louise Root-Robbins
Kathy Switzky
Jim Sykes
David Worzala

Supporters Include:
- The DeAtley Family Foundation
- Dan & Patti Rashke (TASC) Family Foundation
- Diane K. Ballweg
- Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corp
- J.H. Findorff & Son Inc.
- Lau and Bea Christensen

Additional Support of $2500 + in 15/16 from:

We apologize that there is not room for business logos and every donor. We are truly grateful for all!
**Pathways: Core Program Highlights**

**Affordable Houses Worked On:**
- **In Sun Prairie:** 57 Hart Rd, 60 Hart Rd, 63 Hart Rd, 715 Robin Dr & 727 Robin Dr
- **In Madison:** 902 Sequoia Trail & 4813 Maher Ave

**In Conservation:**
- 89 Miles of trails and waterways were developed.
- 292 Acres of parkland and public lands were improved.

**Pathways Participants:**
- **Age Range:** 16—24
- **Average Age of Enrollee:** 18
- **Female:** 18%
- **Male:** 82%
- **Black/African American:** 47%
- **White/Caucasian:** 28%
- **Multiracial:** 17%
- **Hispanic/Latino:** 7%
- **Asian:** 1%

**Pathways**
Pathways, OFS’ core program, continues to thrive, giving youth a life-changing opportunity to get their high school diplomas and gain invaluable work experience. This year, 113 youth participated in Pathways. The work experience, which involves building affordable housing and doing extensive conservation work, is a platform for education, teamwork, training and responsibility.

Highlights from Pathways this past year include our new partnership with the City of Madison Engineering Department. You may have seen one of our conservation crews at work in your city parks, medians, and neighborhoods making our green areas more sustainable and better suited for native species.

In Sun Prairie, construction crews are working on energy efficient homes. A recent “Energy Cost and Features” report shows a 53% savings on heating, 35% savings on cooling, and 31% savings on lights and appliances.

**Strive**
In July of 2016, Operation Fresh Start rolled out the first Strive cohort. This effort focused specifically on youth that have recently graduated from a traditional high school. The project activities included participants helping build, renovate and/or repair safe affordable housing, with a supervisor monitoring and job coaching on the construction site and identifying a path to a fulfilling job through developing and implementing work readiness training in the classroom. This cohort originally contained 12 participants, and the session ended with 9 strong completers. OFS continued to meet with community and partner organizations to assist these young people with developing and implementing their career plans, whether those included additional training, employment or post-secondary education.

**Options**
Our Options Program, funded by the City of Madison Community Development Division, expanded its target demographic to include young adults between 18 and 24. Despite the challenges of contacting and re-engaging an older, more disconnected population, we were able to:
- engage 66 young adults in the Options Program
- re-engage 37 young adults in high school credential programming
- assist 22 of those re-engaged young adults in earning their high school credential

**Graduate Crew**
Graduate Crew is an OFS program for those young people who show real promise and interest in the trades. This fulltime hire-for-service crew works on residential, commercial and other construction projects in the community. Through a Fast Forward grant from the Department of Workforce Development, Operation Fresh Start partners with J.H. Findorff & Son to have Grad Crew youth shadow a worksite for one week out of the quarter. Graduate Crew leads to apprenticeships for youth, as well as exposure to many of the subcontractors and roles needed to bring a project to fruition.

- Placement rate of completers: 100%
- Average rate of pay at placement: $17.32/hour
- Retention rate in apprenticeships: 85%

**Employment Services**
Through a partnership with the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin we were able to expand our Employment Services department this year. As a result, OFS participants met with 18 different employers drawn from National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) members and other businesses and organizations from around Madison.