



Child and Family Services

2016 COMMUNITY REPORT



AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT & CEO, FRANCISCO M. VASQUEZ, PH.D.



When Francisco M. Vasquez became President & CEO of Child & Family Services four and a half years ago, he vowed to take a proactive approach to the challenges the Agency was experiencing. Francisco explained, "I brought a different perspective to the Agency that allowed us to be an organization that creates its own change and can pivot effectively when opportunities or threats arise." Francisco sat down to discuss the organization - including past, present and future goals.

On the strategic process: *When I came to the Agency, I saw the organization playing defense. I felt that we should determine our future rather than react to it. The best way to do so would be by further understanding the market in which we operate. We went about trying to define the market and understand it at a more in-depth level. To do that, we hired a consultant to help us evaluate the external forces that impact what we do. He helped to determine potential opportunities that are out there to assume growth and potential threats that might impede our ability to maintain what we already have. This led us to the development of a strategic plan.*

Francisco's vision: *To lead with quality, we made significant changes over the years. For example, we want to ensure that anyone we serve feels welcomed into a comforting and safe environment. As a result, we invested in improvements made to our 330 Delaware Clinic, residential buildings and other program spaces.*

Our mission is a promise to our community that we will be here when people need us. In addition, what we do needs to be sustainable and have a positive impact on someone's life.

Growth strategy: *There are several elements to the Agency's growth strategy. Further growth is anticipated for the Stanley G. Falk School over the next year. The focus is on finding a new building and growing the school by about 60-100 students.*

Another opportunity for the Agency is to recruit more foster parents. There continues to be a growing need for children in Erie County looking for a safe home. We are working everyday to help meet that need.

An important accomplishment is the collaboration with Say Yes Buffalo. Child & Family Services was selected for a \$3.5 million contract to support the Say Yes Buffalo School-Based Preventive Services. Our partnership also establishes Child & Family Services as the human resources, payroll and information technology provider for over 70 Say Yes Buffalo personnel.

Future: We have embarked on a collaboration with two other not-for-profit partners, Gateway Longview and New Directions Youth and Family Services. This effort is in response to what we learned during our strategic planning process. As we plan for the upcoming changes with Managed Care, we are preparing to provide the highest-quality service delivery at the lowest cost. In order for us to do that, we recognize the opportunity for growth through an affiliation with our partners. Moving toward a parent-affiliate business model will allow us to be smarter in how we manage our resources and change how we do business. An affiliation will allow us to lead with quality, be sustainable and have a positive impact on someone's life.



Volunteers from Enterprise Holdings are pictured with Francisco Vasquez, President & CEO.



Child and Family Services
2016

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SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

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REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACHIEVEMENT

Family Support Specialists of Say Yes Buffalo help school-aged children overcome barriers to success. Family Support Specialists, like Kari Cunningham, work with students and their families to connect them with healthcare, mental health services, after school programs and other basic needs. They also conduct home visits with students and their families and help them navigate what are often complicated school processes. Kari works primarily with children in preschool through eighth grade. She stated, "Building trust with the students and families I serve is the ultimate goal. Once that trust is established, parents let down their guard and greatness can be achieved."

Kari remembered when she was assigned to two brothers with poor attendance. These young boys have another sibling at home with special needs. Kari visited the students' mother at home. "I like to meet where the parent is comfortable. I visit with the family and speak of their strengths - all the good things they are doing. Once they are at ease, they let down their guard. Then they begin to be engaged and speak on behalf of their child."

Before Kari began working with the family, the mother was frustrated with the students' situations; she thought that each child would end up on the same path. Now, Kari proudly reports that, "The mother found her voice and recognizes that each of her children have different strengths and weaknesses." Kari helped the mother see that not every one of her children will need the same services and is now focused on improving attendance.

Kari has a kind, trusting way about her. It is easy to see how she can be of value to the students and families she supports. Her work empowers families and students. Kari is an example of how Family Support Specialists at Say Yes are making a difference and improving the lives of children and families in our community.





FINDING A FOREVER HOME

In a quiet room at family court, Darrick and Jodi Castronova signed the paperwork that officially made them three-year-old Chari's parents. The Castronovas are the only family Chari has known. Darrick and Jodi took her home from the hospital right after being born. The couple worked with Chari's birth mother in hopes that there could be a reunification. When that was not possible, they welcomed Chari forever.

The Castronovas are not new to adoption. They adopted their son, Isaac, from Haiti and also have two biological children, Sam and Savannah. They hope their story encourages others to foster. Child & Family Services is always looking for foster homes to help care for children in need of a safe place. More information is available by calling 882-0555.

THREE DECADES OF GENEROUS DONATIONS

Mike and Dona King truly embody the spirit of giving. For close to thirty years, the Kings have supported the Agency's programs and fundraising endeavors through generous donations of time, energy, talent and financial support.

It was at Christmas time, several years ago when the Kings were introduced to Child & Family Services. Dona explained, "While I was shopping at the mall, I came across an information table for Haven House. I assumed that it was there to take donations, but the job of the people at the table was to educate the public about Haven House. What shook me was the fact that at the mall at Christmas time, it was more important to get the word out about Haven House, than it was to ask the public for money. This showed me how fortunate I was, I had such a good life and I would never need to find a refuge from my own home. From that day on, my husband Mike and I have made sure that we supported Haven House and Child & Family Services in whatever ways we could."

Mike struggled most of his young life, having come from a lesser advantaged family. It was in the early 1980's that he and his wife began Kings Express, a full-service freight company. Soon after, life began to become comfortable. In their 43 years of marriage, they have always felt it was important to give back as they are so grateful for all that they have. Child & Family Services' mission weighs heavily on the Kings, "Mike is always impressed when he sees people work hard to help themselves. He has a clear understanding of what it takes."

Dona said it was the tour of the facilities that made them lifelong supporters. "Mike and I liked what we saw and thought it would be a great organization to support." Friends like Mike and Dona make it possible for Child & Family Services to sustain the highest quality of programs and services that our staff delivers to the clients. Through their generosity, we can change the lives of those who need it the most in our community.



Friends of the Agency celebrate at the 18th annual Heartlight. Pictured (left to right): John & Amy Spitzmiller and Dona & Mike King.



STANLEY G. FALK SCHOOL GRADUATES: ACHIEVING DREAMS

Students of Stanley G. Falk School may be the first to attend college in their family. To help bridge the transition from high school to college for students at Falk, the Erie Community College (ECC) Advanced Studies program was created.

Students are able to earn up to six college credits through ECC's introduction level courses taught by Falk teachers. The College Success Skills (GS 111) course gives the students an opportunity to explore the benefits of a college education along with the steps and skills needed to attend college. After the first introductory level course is completed, students take History I (HI 101) where they experience an actual college-level class with lectures, readings and a research project. Teachers and counselors hand pick students to go through a rigorous process in order to be accepted into the program. Now in its third year, the program is for eight juniors and seniors who are required to meet certain academic and behavioral criteria.

The ability to offer this opportunity to Falk students, at no cost through the use of a grant, is crucial. Ms. Timm, ECC Advanced Studies program teacher, believes the program has given students the ultimate opportunity. "By opening the pathway to collegiate success, we are able to dramatically change what is possible for them to achieve in their futures." She stated that an additional benefit has been realized over the duration of the program. "Students who are fortunate enough to participate demonstrate good character and wear ECC apparel and gear with pride. The name of the ECC Advanced Studies program has quickly garnered an illustrious and revered reputation within our school community." We are grateful to partner with The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and The First Niagara Foundation who funded this opportunity for our students.



JP MORGAN CORPORATE CHALLENGE

Team Spirit! It was a perfect sunny night for the Corporate Challenge. Over 100 staff members from Child & Family Services and Stanley G. Falk School participated in the event on June 23, 2016.



HIGH-RISK DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TEAM

The Erie County District Attorney's Office and Congressman Brian Higgins announced the formation of a new domestic violence high-risk team in Erie County. The BE SAFE Program (Buffalo and Erie County Stopping Abuse in the Family Environment), specializing in domestic violence advocacy, team up with Child & Family Services and law enforcement to educate the public and prevent domestic violence. Specially trained advocates from Child & Family Services are available to address the community's special needs and circumstances regarding domestic violence. Whether a person has a criminal case or simply wants to discuss their options and learn about domestic violence, BE SAFE advocates provide a number of confidential services. This new team will be at the forefront of innovative and collaborative efforts against domestic violence. For more information, call (716) 884-6002.

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COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

This year's Community Dialogue focused on racial equity in the workplace, in our neighborhoods and in our schools. More than 65 leaders from government, education, healthcare, business and human services engaged in a dynamic discussion about recent findings on race in our community. As we see Buffalo grow, the challenge grows more urgent to create a future where opportunity is not just available to all, but action is taken to address barriers to achievement for all.



FASHION SHOW WITH A TWIST

At Child & Family Services' Annual Fashion Show with a Twist, foster parents, domestic violence survivors, board members, volunteers and staff all walked the runway to help raise money for Haven House, Erie County's only licensed domestic violence shelter. All of the money raised went to Haven House to support victims of domestic violence. Since its inception in 2009, the event has raised over a hundred thousand dollars as well as tremendous support and awareness for domestic violence. The Fashion Show with a Twist is a casual evening for our supporters to mingle, shop and preview fashions on models from Child & Family Services. It is also an opportunity to remind people of the true impact of their support on countless lives.

FACTS & FIGURES

HAVEN HOUSE

- Nearly 400 individuals were provided shelter by Haven House - 233 adults and 163 children.
- 4,000 calls were answered by the 24-hour domestic violence hotline.
- 1,684 people were provided counseling and/or advocacy by Haven House.

FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION SERVICES

- Four children found a forever home when their adoptions were finalized.
- 100 children were provided homes by Foster Care & Adoption Services.
- 14 new families were certified to become foster parents.

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES

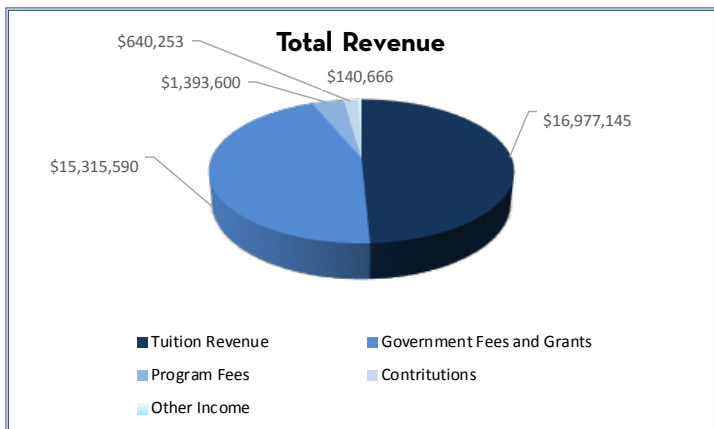
- 83 children lived in our residential treatment homes throughout the year.

CENTER FOR RESOLUTION AND JUSTICE

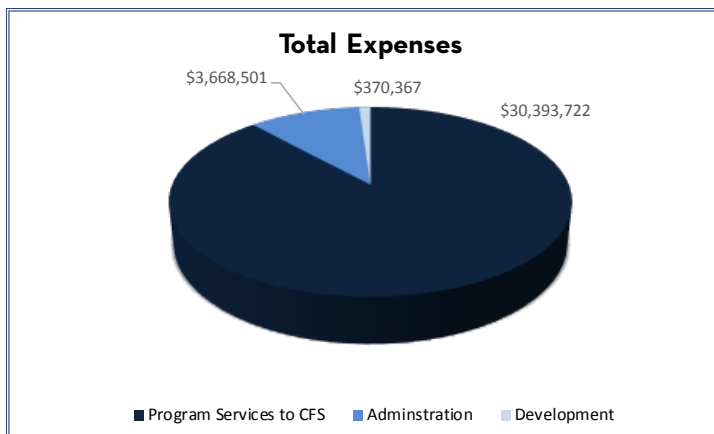
- 707 families were mediated for custody and visitation disputes.
- 3100 individuals were assisted by CRJ resolving a wide range of disputes.
- 552 of custody cases reached full agreement.



2015-2016 FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Total Revenue
\$34,467,254



Total Expenses
\$34,432,590

MISSION

Strengthening families and promoting the well-being of children through prevention, intervention, education and advocacy.

VISION

Safe and healthy children, families and communities.

FOLLOW US:

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