



c&fs

Child and Family Services

Community
Impact | 2013-
Report | 2014

From Our President

Dear Friends and Partners:

This was an exciting year for Child & Family Services. We made significant strides toward our vision of safe, healthy children, families and communities.

The nonprofit sector in Western New York is changing. Organizations are looking at long-term strategies to meet increasing needs with fewer resources. During this past year, our strategic direction has changed to respond to these needs.

With you as our partners and supporters, we will grow our Mission, we will become stronger advocates for those who depend on our services, and we will elevate awareness of all that our community has to offer. The magnitude of your support is profound; it is the source of sustenance and strength for children and families in our community. Thank you for your devotion and loyalty.

I am very proud of our efforts and results of the past year. Moving forward, we will continue to lead with quality and dedicate ourselves to having a positive impact on the lives of the people we serve.

Sincerely yours,



Francisco M. Vasquez, Ph.D.



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Making an Investment at 330 Delaware Avenue

Improving the infrastructure of Child & Family Services is one component toward enhancing quality of life for the children and families we serve and for the staff who provide services. The first major step in implementing improvements was renovating and expanding our counseling clinic at 330 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo. Renovation of the clinic was part of our 2014 strategic plan to invest in the health and well-being of the people we serve.



Counselors knew sessions would be more comfortable if the office space provided was larger, with a warmer, more inviting atmosphere. “A lot of the work here is done with families; it was challenging to handle family sessions within a tight space,” says Gretchen Szymanski, Manager of Clinical Services. The offices are now doubled in size and provide ample, cheerful space for clinicians and families to meet and work together.

Clients and staff are extremely pleased with the changes and feel welcome in the new waiting room. Many have responded with positive feedback. In the clinic's most recent satisfaction survey, one client said, “I love the new décor. It makes you feel very relaxed and comfortable.” “Overall, it was time for a face-lift within the clinic; our staff does a great job maintaining a trauma-informed environment from the first time someone calls to every time they walk through the door,” says Gretchen.

“Jane Wilson
(Preventive Services
Family Counselor) has helped
our family out in many different
ways. I am so blessed to have
her in our lives at this time.”
- Preventive Services
Program Client

“Gail Lacki
(Preventive Services
Family Counselor)
has not only been a great
source of support for my son
and me, but has also given me
a great wealth of
knowledge...”
- Preventive Services
Program Client

Supporting Our Youth through Community Partnerships

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

At Stanley G. Falk School we are proud of our graduation rate, but also concerned about the future of our students once they leave our care. With the help of a \$25,000 grant awarded by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, Erie Community College (ECC) partnered with Falk School to create the Successful Transitions Program. The goal of this program is to bridge the transition from high school to college for students who have the ability and the determination to succeed, but who require additional academic and social supports.

This pilot program required students to submit a letter expressing their interest in joining this college cohort and then participate in interviews to determine eligibility. Eight students were selected for the pilot. These students will be able to earn up to six college credits through Erie Community College's introductory level courses taught by a Falk teacher. The courses build in opportunities for the students to explore potential careers, sit in on courses taught on the college campus, apply for and access student support services through the college, and access all of the perks that the ECC campus has to offer. "The class discussions and the work produced by the students indicate a high level of investment on their parts, which makes the class very stimulating. I hope this trend continues," said Nicole Timm, Falk School/ECC Instructor.

The Children's Guild Foundation

Recreational activities at Falk School and at the Agency's Residential Treatment Program play a significant role in the therapeutic and personal development of the youth in our care. The value of team-building skills obtained through Falk athletic programs and social skills learned through recreational activities in residential treatment are immeasurable. The Children's Guild Foundation awarded \$25,000 for summer sports camps, fitness programs and skill-building clinics at the Falk School. The grant also funded therapeutic art activities, physical activities, nature programs and field trips to help build life skills, cooperation, peer interaction and self-discovery for youth in residential care.



A Story of Perseverance

Rebecca wanted a safe environment for herself and her children, free from domestic violence. A concerned friend gave Rebecca a Haven House flyer, encouraging her to seek help. Determined to leave, Rebecca picked up the phone and dialed the Haven House 24-hour hotline. She found strength and courage through her conversations with Haven House Counselor, Josie Houtsma. "I remember Josie telling me it's like taking baby steps to reach my goal, and that's exactly what I did," she explains.

Fortunately, Rebecca and her children had a safe place to live, and Rebecca attended weekly counseling. "Counseling was a blessing in disguise... I knew I was always strong but the abuse wore me down tremendously," she says. Rebecca attributes her new strength and confidence to her experience at Haven House.

Prior to coming to Haven House, Rebecca struggled to look people in the eyes and stuttered when she spoke. "It's a blessing to see how far I have come in life; I'm not afraid anymore," Rebecca declares. With the support of counseling, she was able to raise her children in a healthy and safe environment, find love and marry again. She has done well for herself and her family. "When you're in an abusive relationship you feel like it's never going to end and that you can't get out, but you can," she explains. Rebecca is proud of herself for overcoming abuse and encourages other victims who are afraid to seek help. Today, she is a mother of four children, a grandmother of one, and has been happily remarried for 17 years.



Haven House
provided shelter to

240
women and

192
children.

2,000

clients were served through the
Counseling and Advocacy
Program.

A Family Bond that Lasts a Lifetime

Roger Mark Seifert has fond memories of his childhood, growing up in a loving home in Western New York with his older sister and his mom and dad. As an adopted child, he remembers feeling happy and accepted, special and secure in his home with his family. At four months old, Roger was adopted by the late Evelyn and Richard Seifert. Unable to have children naturally, Mr. & Mrs. Seifert adopted Roger and his non-biological sister through Child & Family Services. "I have a photo with my family that I will always cherish, taken in front of our Williamsville home... the caption read, 'October 18, 1957 - the day that Roger Mark Seifert came to live with us,'" Roger recalled. Roger's adoption day, along with his birthday, was celebrated every year as a Seifert family tradition.

Mr. & Mrs. Seifert loved their children and always treated them as their very own. Through the years, the Seifert family created a lifetime of memories together. Growing up, Roger remembers traveling to forty-nine states and fifty-four different countries. Roger and his sister share a special bond and have been close since they were children. He cherishes being an uncle to her two sons.

Roger grew to understand how special he and his sister were to his parents. "I realized I was so lucky to have Child & Family Services find a loving home for me; I wouldn't be where I am today," Roger said. The love his adoptive parents gave their two children was immeasurable. Roger credits his family with helping to shape the man he has become today. As an adopted child, Roger encourages anyone who is considering opening their home up to a child in need. "Adopting can be such a positive experience; children can make all the difference for individuals or families."

20

adoptions were finalized with foster/adoptive families through the Foster Care & Adoption Program.

Nearly

75

children from newborn to 20 years of age were provided care through the Foster Care & Adoption program.

Utilizing New Space to Further Community Outreach

The Center for Resolution & Justice (CRJ) has moved its office to the Tri-Main Center, one of Buffalo's unique mixed-use spaces in the historic Central Park neighborhood. With offices, studios and light industrial facilities that are occupied by more than 100 diverse tenants, the Tri-Main Center is a community within itself.



Since the move, CRJ has launched a series of community education events and activities as part of an ongoing effort to start

conversations about conflict, resolutions, peace and justice. One such initiative is CRJ's new "Monday at the Movies" night; a series featuring films that show conflict from all sides for a wide audience that includes students, mediators, restorative justice practitioners, attorneys and anyone with an interest in peace and conflict resolution. For its inaugural screening, CRJ chose the award-winning film "*Beyond Right and Wrong: Stories of Justice and Forgiveness*," which presents the stories of people who experienced horrible losses in Rwanda, Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine and depicts their paths to recovery.

For those interested in becoming mediators themselves, CRJ has begun offering informational sessions about the practice of mediation in Western New York and about upcoming training opportunities. CRJ promotes events such as these to Tri-Main Center tenants as a means of meeting its "neighbors" and introducing a wide range of people to the power of mediation as a conflict resolution and peacemaking tool.

Nearly

10,000

individuals were assisted in resolving a wide range of disputes involving community, family and commercial issues.

The Center for Resolution & Justice helped more than

1,200

parents mediate custody and visitation disputes.



HEARTLIGHT 2014

Thanks to your generosity we exceeded our goal and raised nearly \$160,000.00

We would like to thank all of our 2014 sponsors:

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Audited Financial Statement

Statement of Activities for the Year Ending June 30, 2014

Changes in unrestricted net assets

Operating Activities:

Governmental fees and grants	\$ 14,608,067
Tuition revenue	15,686,583
Program fees	1,309,229
Contributions	748,621
Other income	113,310
<hr/> Total unrestricted operating revenues	<hr/> 32,465,810

Net assets released from restrictions	157,012
<hr/> Total unrestricted operating revenues and other support	<hr/> 32,622,822

Expenses:

Program services to children and families	29,103,531
Administration	3,076,386
Development	376,131
<hr/> Total expenses	<hr/> 32,556,048

<hr/> Operating income (loss)	<hr/> 66,774
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Non-operating activities:

Dividend and interest income	96,741
Net realized and unrealized gains on investments	762,896
Net change in market value of interest rate swap agreement	79,264
<hr/> Non operating income, net	<hr/> 938,901

<hr/> Changes in unrestricted net assets:	<hr/> 1,005,675
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Changes in temporarily restricted net assets:

Contributions	4,241
Net assets released from restrictions	(157,012)
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Changes in temporarily restricted net assets	(152,771)
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<hr/> Change in net assets	<hr/> 852,904
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Net assets - beginning	10,499,494
<hr/> Net assets - ending	<hr/> \$ 11,352,398

Includes Stanley G. Falk School and Child and Family Services Foundation



Child and Family Services

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