

**Pittsburgh Community
Services, Inc.**

2000-2001 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The mission of Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. is to address the causes of poverty and to diminish its effects through the development, implementation, sponsorship, and support of programs and activities designed to enable and empower low income residents of the City of Pittsburgh to make measurable progress on the continuum from impoverishment to self sufficiency.

Ring out the Old Millennium and ringing in the New

We have usually published an annual report that encompasses the calendar year. However, we decided that a better way to tell the story of how we rang out the Old Millennium and rang in the New, was to issue a report that spans the two millennia.

The program statistics, positive outcomes and representative success stories found in this report primarily reflect efforts to carry out our mission from July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001, which is the Fiscal Year of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, our primary funding source.

During that period of time, we served more than 18,000 persons—through the efforts of three direct service components, a limited joint venture/Partnership with five community-based social service agencies and by subcontracting with a number of other community-based organizations located throughout the City of Pittsburgh.

Our **Neighborhood Safety Program** installed locks, smoke detectors, “life-lights,” other home security devices and instructed residents about their proper and effective use—thereby, greatly reducing the possibility of fire-related death and injury, providing a proven deterrent to burglary and better assuring a quick response in times of emergency.

At the request of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services’ Office of Community Services, we began an NSP Pilot-Project in the County in the Fall of 2000. Until that time, our services were limited to residents of the City of Pittsburgh, since the funds with which we have operated the program have been granted to us from the City’s Community Development Block Grant allocation.

Initially, we targeted persons who were being served by the County’s Family Support Centers. In 2001, the County effort moved from pilot to regular status, with a wider service area.



NSP Coordinator, Don McEachern, is shown holding a dead-bolt lock as he explained the program and discussed various security hardware items at a meeting of Allegheny County staff and other service providers.

CSI’s **Project Life Line**, provided family-centered counseling and case management to delinquent youth and their families, with the objective of strengthening the family and helping youth lead a more positive life at home, in school and in the community. The program has an astounding success rate of 93%, i. e. only 7% of those youth referred to us by Juvenile Court exhibited delinquent behavior after a

year of participation in Project Life Line.

Project Life Line became involved with Johnny Sims and his family in April of 2000; and, the staff worked with him and his family for over a year. Initially, both Johnny and his sister were having problems in school and there was poor communication between them and their mother.

As a result our intervention, the family was able to communicate more openly with each other. Johnny graduated from high school, got a job and is still working. His sister, Tennil, is a Senior in high school and also works after school. The Sims’ are truly dedicated to continued improvement of their family relationship.



The success of Project Life Line’s family counseling is clearly shown on the faces of Mrs. Cecilia Sims and her children, Johnny and Tennil.

During 2000/2001, we also continued operating the **Supported Work Program**, a Welfare to Work component, which helps clients make the often very difficult transition from Welfare-dependence to gainful employment—thus, taking a major step toward self-sufficiency.

One of the SWP’s most effective tools is Work Experience, which provides temporary employment in non-profit agencies for clients who have limited experience and/or who are dealing with various issues in their lives. Work Experience is utilized as a step toward

longer-term employment.

Despite the many obstacles that the SWP clients must overcome to secure and retain employment, this component also has an excellent track record. During 2000 and 2001, more than 50% of the participants were placed in jobs; and, nearly 70% of those placed held their jobs for at least 90 days.

Louise Day was referred to the Supported Work Program as a Food Stamp Recipient who also receives SSD. Although she had not had a paying job for over twenty years, Ms. Day had extensive experience as a volunteer at a number of social service agencies and had received certificates of recognition for her dedication to helping others.

Ms. Day expressed an interest in obtaining employment in a people-serving agency. Our staff arranged a Work Experience placement for her at Miryam's, a residence and treatment center for women. Ms. Day's performance at Miryam's was so positive, that she was hired as a part-time Case Management Aide. She also continues her volunteer efforts.



In her capacity as a Case Management Aide, Louise Day shares a happy moment with one of the residents of Miryam's.

Our Partner Agencies—The Brashear Association, Community Human Services, Hill House Association, Southwest Pittsburgh CDC and the YMCA of Pittsburgh—and, our other subcontractors, helped us ring out the Old Millennium and Ring in the New, by providing a variety of vital services, including youth development, emergency food and nutrition, job placement and health-related services—to a wide range of persons, infants to senior citizens.

The Partners and a network of other subcontractors are funded with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) monies that are allocated to us by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Another set of subcontractors provide emergency food and pantry services utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds granted us by the City of Pittsburgh, for what is called the Hunger Trust Fund.

Some of our smaller subcontractors and the sub-sites of larger agencies have been among the most effective in reaching out to our beneficiaries and addressing their needs.

Neighborhood Centers Association functions as a Hunger Trust Fund umbrella and fiduciary for a number of pantries on Pittsburgh's North Side, including Northside Common Ministries. The Common Ministries operates what is arguably the "Giant Eagle" of our pantries, in that they are the best stocked and best equipped pantry in the network. Clients select what they need and are even provided shopping carts and shopping baskets.

A number of those who use the pantry also receive other social services, which are provided by Northside Common Ministries at the same location and/or by way of information and referral.



Marie Makoski is shown receiving a bag full of items that volunteer Cheryl Morris has packed for her.

The Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center is a CSBG subcontractor whose mission is to help residents of the surrounding area find jobs. The agency is also a Career Links Mini-Center, where clients are able to receive "wrap around services," including drug and alcohol counseling, child care referral and literacy counseling.



Elizabeth Moore helps one of the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center's clients, Marlene Murphy, fill out a job application.

The **YMCA of Pittsburgh** operates a very successful youth-oriented employment program called Youth Employment Services, based at the Y's Allegheny Program Center, located on the City of Pittsburgh's North Side.

Jessica Parham, a seventeen-year-old young woman who lives in the area, was referred to Y.E.S. after coming to the Program Center in search of a child-care position, for which she was ineligible, because of her age. After reviewing her work experience and giving Ms. Parham some coaching on interview techniques, the Y.E.S. Director helped her secure a position as an aide at the Allegheny branch.



Y.E.S. Director, Jason Zak, shows Jessica Parham the information she must record and update while staffing the front desk at the Allegheny Program Center.

Another of our CSBG-funded subcontractors, **The Hazelwood Glenwood Glen Hazel Council**, operates a telephone reassurance project called Phonecheck. Staff regularly contact elderly residents who are living alone and/or who are housebound, to inquire about their well being and to arrange for assistance, if necessary. Phonecheck serves as a lifeline between these senior citizens and the outside world.



HGGH Phonecheck staff person Ruth Goodman, calls a regular client to ensure that she is well and has no health problems or other concerns.

Greater Love Outreach is a small faith-based organization, operated by a husband and wife team, which has been one of our Hunger Trust Fund subcontractors for many years. They serve the Hill District as well as the broader community.



Rev. Charles Upshur gives a box of non-perishable meal-fixings to Ms. Audrey Goodwin, who has come to Greater Love's food pantry for assistance in supplementing her inadequate food budget.

Capacity Building

CSI places a high priority on meeting the challenge of developing and implementing a social services delivery system with its Partners and other subcontractors that is characterized by excellence. The high-quality social services system for which we strive, requires clear and measurable goals and objectives, quantifiable outcomes, well-trained and compassionate professional staff, effective organizational development and fund raising efforts as well as ongoing evaluation.

To help develop, reinforce and assure the presence of these essential capabilities, we were successful in securing a Partnership Capacity Building grant from a local foundation.

Our approach to building and sustaining Partnership capability is a three-pronged one that includes: a Next Step Fund; in service training; and, incentive grants.

The **Next Step Fund** was implemented to help clients achieve movement towards self-sufficiency. Occasionally, these funds are provided to case management clients when situations arise which might cause the client to lose ground in their quest for self sufficiency. Generally, however, the funds are intended to assist and/or accelerate the client's positive movement along the continuum towards self-sufficiency, when other tangible aid is either not available or unavailable at the time of need.

Marianne Welsch entered The Brashear Association's Self-sufficiency Program in March, 2000. The mother of two adolescent boys, she relied on her husband's part-time earnings and her Social Security Disability income to support her family.

Although suffering from severe arthritis and diabetes, Ms. Welsch wanted to improve her family's circumstances without jeopardizing her disability benefits. After several weeks of Brashear-assisted job search activities, Ms. Welsch secured part-time employment in the accounting office of a local optical firm.

She also became an active volunteer with The Brashear Association and received a special award for volunteer services.

In 2001, Ms. Welsch received assistance through the Next Step Fund for the purchase of special shoes and inserts, necessitated by her disability. This type of assistance reinforced her ability to stay employed.



Marianne Welsch stands outside her home, proudly showing us the shoes with which she is able to keep taking steps toward improving her family's economic well-being and enhancing her own independence.

Richard and Nicole Swartz were also participants in the Brashear Association's Self-sufficiency Program. When they entered the Program, they and their five-year old daughter Ashley were in the middle of a crisis.

Having recently moved to the City of Pittsburgh, Mr. Swartz was newly employed; but, his income was not sufficient to pay for housing and the other necessities, so they were living in their car.

Having helped the family locate a suitable apartment, the Brashear Case Manager applied for Next Step Fund assistance. Within forty-eight hours, CSI was able to turn this request around and to send a check to the landlord for partial payment of the first month's rent and the security deposit. Mr. Swartz was able to pull together enough of his own income to pay the rest of what was needed to move in.

The Case manager was also able to provide the family with emergency food assistance from Brashear's pantry, which is underwritten by the Hunger Trust Fund, and to help secure basic furnishings and household equipment from Goodwill Industries. The family remains in the apartment and Mr. Swartz continues to be employed.

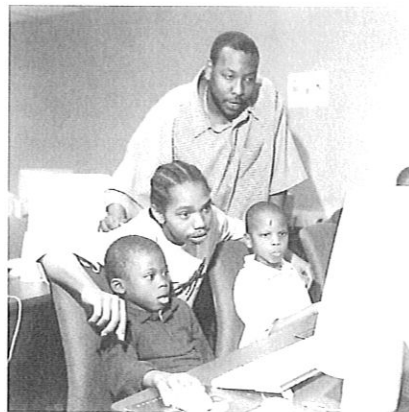


Richard, Nicole and Ashley Swartz pose for a casual family portrait in the living room of the apartment which they had already begun to make their new home.

Because of the comprehensive and in-depth nature of their case management efforts, the Hill House Association has utilized the Next Step Fund more frequently and more successfully than any of our other Partners.

After Ahmed Jefferson successfully completed six months of work retention in the Hill House Association's Father's Program, he continued to work with an after school program located at the Hill House. Mr. Jefferson was able to obtain computer training for this position at Community College of Allegheny County.

The Next Step Fund was able to pay for essential car repairs that made it possible for him to travel to and from Hill House and the classes at CCAC, as well as carrying out day to day responsibilities as an active and caring father.



Ahmed Jefferson is shown giving computer-related instruction to Aman Milliones-Harris and Imani Milliones-Harris, participants in the after school program. Also pitching in is Case Manager, Michael Rogers. Mr. Rogers is one of the most astute users of the Next Step Fund.

In-service Training provides best practice and core competency skills training for case management staff, to increase their effectiveness in addressing client needs. Core competency skills, such as relationship building, treatment planning, family counseling, and cultural competency provide the skill infrastructure that staff need to deal with clients whose movement from dependency to self-sufficiency requires that multiple barriers be addressed, often simultaneously.

Providing professional training will arguably enhance staff interventions and treatment and increase the probability that staff-client interactions will result in additional and longer-term positive outcomes.

Our first In-service Training was a Family Development Certification course, in the Spring of 2001, taught by staff of the University of Iowa School of Social Work. This training module is recognized nationally as being of "benchmark" quality. More than a dozen CSI and Partner Agency case managers took this 48-hour course and the CSI Executive Director audited the course. Most of the participants received their Family Development Certificate.



Dynamic trainer John-Paul Chaisson illustrates a point by telling a folk tale.

Incentive Grants to the partnership organizations are available on a matching basis to encourage the Partners to become more self-sufficient in fund development and to help ensure that funds are available when the initial Partnership grant funds expire. Partner Agencies will be rewarded for securing additional funds to help underwrite activities and programs of our Joint Venture. The Partner-match must be new money that had not been previously dedicated to Partnership activities.

We anticipate awarding the first Challenge Grants in the Spring of 2002.



John-Paul gives the ground rules for a role playing session to one of several small groups into which the trainees had broken to further enhance the learning process.

Dialogue on Poverty 2000

In the Fall of 2000, CSI sponsored a series of forums, as part of the nationwide Dialogue on Poverty 2000: Leading America to Community Action. This effort was sponsored by the National Association of Community Action Agencies, based in Washington, D. C.

Each of our five Partner Agencies hosted a forum in their communities; and, nearly 200 persons of diverse backgrounds, from across the City participated.

The Dialogue 2000 Forums were intended: to provide opportunities for low-income persons to be actively involved in a process of helping to educate public officials, private sector leaders and the general public about current poverty-related issues and problems; to set priorities for resolving these issues and solving these problems; and, to formulate realistic and effective activities, strategies and policies needed to address poverty-related matters.

When we collated the results of a questionnaire filled out by participants, we learned that their top priorities were: affordable and accessible health care; early childhood education, including Head Start; quality child care; youth development; and, an adequate "living wage" for those now considered the "working poor."

The results of our dialogues were incorporated into a state report which, in turn, became part of a nation-wide report. It is hoped, that the local, state and national reports will provide a basis, at each level, for establishing appropriate policies and initiating corrective action to address the causes and the effects of poverty.

Statement of Revenue, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2001

Current Funds

Revenue	2000/2001 Total All Funds
Government Grants	1,329,853
Other Revenue (Contributions/Special Events/Interest)	40,709
Total Revenue	1,370,562
Expenditures	
Salaries/Wages/Fringe Benefits	545,793
Subcontractor Expenses	574,551
Other Operating Expenses	245,418
Total Expenditures	1,365,762
Excess Revenues Over Expenditures	4,800

Funding Sources 2000/2001

	2000/2001 Amount
Federal/Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED)	
Community Services Block Grant	921,156
Employment & Community Conservation – Supported Work Program	59,166
	980,322
Federal/City of Pittsburgh – Community Development Block Grant	
Hunger Trust Fund	170,830
Neighborhood Safety Program	119,535
	290,365
Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED)	
Employment & Community Conservation Program (ECC)	59,166
2000/2001 Total Funding – All Sources	1,329,853
Other Income	
Contributions (Project Lifeline) (Special Events)	31,650
Interest	9,059
Subtotal	40,709
Grand Total Support & Revenue	1,370,562

Persons Served by Service Category: 2000/2001

Service Category	Number Served with Incomes at or below 125% of poverty level	Number served above 125% of poverty level	Total
Employment	672	0	672
Education	107	0	107
Income Management	311	0	311
Emergency Services	503	0	503
Nutrition	13,686	200	13,886
Linkages	1,878	166	2,044
Self Sufficiency	69	0	69
Health	740	0	740
Total	17,966	366	18,332

