



ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

For over 25 years, Inter-Faith Housing Alliance has been serving vulnerable families in Montgomery County who are experiencing homelessness. With strong roots in civic engagement and community collaboration, IFHA helps families move to a more stabilized status.

In an otherwise wealthy county, deep pockets of poverty and a dearth of affordable housing options leave some families unable to meet their most basic needs. While all of the families we care for are low income, according to HUD definitions, 50% of our families are very low income and 30% are extremely low income. Families living in poverty are under constant distress. Hunger, scarcity, and housing insecurity caused by poverty often lead to chronic trauma. Under these conditions, families are ill-equipped to gain access to stabilizing services that could lead to self-sufficiency. By stabilizing a family's housing situation and providing critical services that support movement towards self-sufficiency, IFHA works to mitigate the effects of homelessness on the children and families we serve. The following program components provide essential support so families experiencing homelessness can make transformational changes:

Emergency Shelter (Interfaith Hospitality Network)

Provided through our network of 20 local host congregations, families are sheltered up to 90 days and congregational volunteers bring and share meals with our families, provide overnight assistance, and help with transportation needs. While sheltered, families work with our case manager to establish and work towards goals in pursuit of more stable housing.

Transitional Shelter (Hope Gardens)

In the over 25 years we have worked with families, we recognize that a 90-day stay in emergency shelter is rarely if ever enough time to heal from the traumas that impede positive life changes. In response to this significant need, IFHA opened Hope Gardens in 1995 to serve as a stabilizing transitional housing option. Families are housed for up to two years during which time they receive comprehensive support services and work towards identified goals for a successful transition to safe, affordable, decent housing.

Support Services

During their time in emergency shelter or transitional housing, families receive comprehensive support services designed to help parents care for themselves and their families, begin intentionally improving their life skills and decision-making abilities, and develop the internal resources necessary to become self-sufficient. Services include Intensive Case Management, Life Skills Training, Children's Services, and On-going Support Services for families who have moved into permanent housing.

Food Cupboard

Located in Abington, the Food Cupboard is an important way in which IFHA supports Montgomery County families who are experiencing hunger as a result of poverty. Families are often forced to choose between paying rent and feeding their family. The Food Cupboard is open five days per week year-round to fill the gap.

The Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce recognized IFHA as the 2014 *Humanitarian Organization of the Year*. This award is reserved for organizations who make significant contributions to the community and use an innovative approach to service delivery.

In November 2014, the Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia recognized IFHA as a *Zone of Peace*. Zones of Peace recognizes organizations that are pioneering creative responses to the root causes of violence, including poverty and homelessness.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR FY2015



Inter-Faith Housing Alliance has historically utilized a diverse pool of funding sources to ensure our longevity. In FY2015 IFHA successfully improved fundraising efforts, particularly through foundational support. Individuals, partnering congregations, events, government funding, corporations, and earned income provided approximately half of our income; several local and regional foundations provided the other half. Some of these relationships span over 8 to 10 years. We are proud to be part of a select group of organizations chosen by the Fourjay Foundation to receive reserve funding from their recent dissolution process.

Foundations

Balzereit Foundation
Breaking the Cycle
Foundation
Connelly Foundation
Charter Foundation
Dolfinger McMahon
Foundation
Drueding Foundation
Fourjay Foundation
Green Tree Community
Health Foundation

John Paul Endicott Fund of
the Philadelphia Foundation
Leo and Peggy Pierce
Foundation
Marion Prochazka Charitable
Trust
McLean Contributionship
Mill Spring Foundation
Montgomery County
Foundation
Nelson Foundation

New Life Presbyterian
Church
Patricia Kind Family
Foundation
Stratton Foundation
VNA of Greater North Penn
Willow Foundation
W. W. Smith Charitable Trust
Your Way Home

Corporate and Corporate Foundations

Univest
PNC Charitable Trust

Government

FEMA
Community Development Block Grant

PROGRAM IMPACT



IFHA provided critical housing and support services to 26 families, comprised of 35 adults and 51 children, in FY2015. Of the 26 families served, 15 families, consisting of 19 adults and 29 children, were served through emergency shelter; over half of the children were 5 years old or younger and nearly half of the families were African-American. A total of 11 families, comprised of 16 adults and 22 children, were served through Hope Gardens transitional housing; the majority of the families were African-American. Additionally, our Food

Cupboard in Abington served 540 households, comprised of 1,040 adults and 876 children.

The following outcomes were achieved by families residing in emergency shelter and/or transitional housing:

Families took goal-directed steps towards stability:

- 97% of eligible families applied for mainstream government benefits within 30 days of entry
- 93% of families created a working, realistic budget during their stay
- 90% of families maintained or improved their employment status during their residency at Hope Gardens
- 100% of parents created an individualized permanent housing plan that included savings goals within 3 months of entering the transitional housing program
- 93% of families passed monthly apartment inspections
- 86% of families participated in monthly educational programs

Children attended school regularly:

- 81% of children were enrolled in childcare or school as age-appropriate within 30 days of shelter program entry
- 100% of school-aged children attended school on a regular basis
- 100% of children were enrolled in before and afterschool care as needed within 30 days of shelter program entry

Families improved their nutritional intake:

- 100% of families staying in emergency shelter received food through their host congregations
- 100% of families staying in transitional housing received food through the IFHA food pantry

Families continued to move toward self-sufficiency after leaving the shelter:

- 1 family received housing subsidies to support their movement out of our transitional housing program
- 15 families who “graduated” from IFHA’s transitional housing program received on-going case management support services to improve their chances of success during their continued journey towards self-sufficiency

- 86% of families interviewed, who had moved into stable housing, retained their housing for at least 3 months after leaving the shelter; 86% retained housing for at least 6 months

The following longitudinal data was gathered through a December 2014 survey of 15 “graduates”:

- 15 families maintained full-time employment over the last 12 months
- 9 families are enrolled in some type of job training or education program
- 7 families have lived at their current address since moving out of Hope Gardens for at least 18 months or more
- 2 families bought a house
- 5 families have 1 or more children in college

We were pleased to have a graduate return this year to speak at our annual fundraiser of her time residing at IFHA. Ashley entered our emergency shelter program in August 2009 with her 11-month-old daughter, Emily. She was surprised to discover Inter-Faith’s program didn’t feel like a homeless shelter. The volunteers were “beyond incredible.” They cheered along with her when the baby took her first steps and created an environment that felt almost homey. In addition, Ashley started talking with the other shelter families and soon became close friends with them; they became an important support system.

In December an apartment in IFHA’s transitional housing program, Hope Gardens, opened and Ashley moved in. She and Emily received gifts, food, and housewares through the Holiday Giving Program. She still owns the red pea coat she received and wears it every winter. Every time she puts it on she can see how far she has come. While living at Hope Gardens, Ashley worked with the case manager to develop a plan. She went back to school to finish her degree and eventually found employment and stable housing.

By the time Emily was 3, Ashley had been promoted at her job and was earning enough money to take her to Disney World. She is currently working towards home ownership. Since “graduating” from IFHA, Ashley has donated Christmas gifts, meals, time, and money as a way to “pay back” the organization and people who helped her so much.



VOLUNTEERS

IFHA capitalizes on significant volunteer support in order to provide cost-effective services. Since our inception, volunteers have comprised the backbone of our programming. The majority of our volunteers are members of our partnering congregations. Over 9,000 volunteer hours were clocked in FY2015 through our emergency shelter network, Hope Gardens transitional housing program, in our administrative offices, or at our Food Cupboard.

Emergency shelter volunteers bring and share meals with our families, provide overnight assistance, and help with transportation needs. Hope Gardens volunteers help with painting, cleaning, sorting donations, and maintenance. Specialized volunteers facilitate our monthly parent education workshops and children's programs. Food Cupboard volunteers package and distribute food, and provide additional service resources to our families. During any given week, 35 to 40 volunteers invest critical resources across all of our programs.



The following partner congregations comprise Inter-Faith Hospitality Network:

First Presbyterian Church of Ambler
Congregation Beth Or
Grace Baptist Church of Blue Bell
Sanctuary United Methodist Church
Trinity Episcopal Church
St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Ambler Church of the Brethren
Ambler Mennonite Church
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
St. Anthony's of Padua RC Church
Supplee Presbyterian Church
Gwynedd Friends Meeting
Upper Dublin Lutheran Church
Jarrettown United Methodist Church
Bethlehem Baptist Church
Or Hadash
Maple Glen Bible Fellowship Church
Sanctuary United Methodist Church
Congregation Kol Ami



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is highly involved with IFHA activities, growth, and sustainability. Board members actively volunteer in multiple roles to support administrative needs and the needs of our families. They help plan and participate in annual fundraising events and 100% of the Board make an annual financial contribution.

Ron Flaherty, President
President, Univest Insurance

Tim Joyce
Owner, Stonecraft Tile

Charles Quann, Vice President
Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church

Lisa Miller
Principal, LAM Consulting Services, LLC

Peter Simon, Treasurer
Treasurer, Essent Group, Ltd.

Hildy Richelson
President, Scarsdale Investment Group

Jean Everett, Secretary
Attorney, Everett Law Office

Rick Rodes
Community Volunteer

William Capers, Jr.
Owner, Kiddie Academy

Susan Sullivan
CPA

Graham Kilshaw
President, Item Media

Tom Wynn
Community Volunteer

Margaret Koller
Sr. Vice President, Cotiviti Healthcare

Inter-Faith Housing Alliance remains committed to improving the lives of disadvantaged Montgomery County residents. Families enter our housing programs during a time of crisis. They have often been precariously housed for a period of time. They have been on the verge of eviction or have been staying with one relative or friend after another for an extended period. Children may have attended a number of schools in a single school year. Such upheaval and uncertainty is traumatic for the entire family and impedes positive steps that could lead to self-sufficiency. Meanwhile our nation's slow economic recovery from the recession and lack of affordable housing creates significant barriers for families working towards stability. IFHA's housing and support services provide families an opportunity to heal from the traumas of poverty while advancing necessary skills to maintain stable housing, health, and well-being. We are grateful to our many supporters who join us in this commitment. Together we can help Montgomery County families regain stability for more positive outcomes.





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