



Annual Report 2014

Rental and Mortgage Assistance

Designed to help families avoid homelessness, the Rental and Mortgage Assistance Program provided \$545,176 in assistance to 339 families or 835 individuals with rental and mortgage payments in 2014.

The average rental or mortgage assistance per family was \$1,608. Funding for this program comes from county and state grants, private and corporate donations.

We completed our fourth and final year of our Financial Stability Program funded by the United Way of Monmouth County. This grant provided select families with intensive case management and wraparound services to help them become stable and self-sufficient.

Our annual holiday program saw 100 families adopted by churches, organizations and families. An additional 70 families received new toys and gift cards donated to Interfaith Neighbors by schools, residents, and organizations.

Nutrition Division ("Meals on Wheels")

Approximately 350,000 meals were served to seniors and disabled persons in 2014 in Monmouth County where Interfaith Neighbors operates over 70 routes delivering Meals on Wheels.

We have 500 volunteers who work to prepare and deliver meals to people at home and also serve meals at our seven congregate sites where seniors gather for a noontime meal.

Those sites are the Asbury Park Senior Center, Howell Senior Center, Bayshore Senior Day Center, Keyport Senior Center, Middletown Senior Center, Neptune Senior Center and Red Bank Senior Center.

Three additional sites --Long Branch Senior Center, Bradley Beach Center and Asbury Towers -- operate as auxiliary sites where volunteers pick up meals to deliver to residents.

A free breakfast program for the most needy residents continued in 2014. We purchased a commercial kitchen kettle and a new truck to use for deliveries of up to 100 meals.

We also prepared box lunches for senior groups and clubs with the profits from those \$4 meals helping to underwrite the free breakfasts.

Affordable Housing

Since 1996, our housing program has completed 50 homes. Most often new houses built on vacant lots at affordable prices in Asbury Park and Neptune. In 2014, we sold two new houses – 30 DeWitt Ave. funded through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and 40 DeWitt Ave. funded through the Monmouth County HOME program.

Three additional homes at 38, 36 and 32 DeWitt – all four bedrooms and two and a half bath homes built under the Home program-- were completed and are under contract, and are being sold at \$125,000.

Interfaith Neighbors is approved to build three, three-bedroom single family homes – two at 15 and 17 DeWitt Ave. and one at 23 Atkins Ave. under the Home program and Neighborhood Revitalizing Tax Credit funding.

Upcoming plans also include building a five bedroom, five bathroom single family home to provide transitional housing for homeless neighborhood youth on land we own and can be subdivided into two lots at 522 Prospect Ave.

Covenant House will operate the program known as Rites of Passage, where young people will learn how to live independently, complete their education, find and keep a job, save money and cook healthy meals.

Interfaith will retain ownership of the house and can build a second similar house on the second lot.

New Jersey Youth Corps

Interfaith Neighbors is in our eighth year of operating the Monmouth County Chapter of New Jersey Youth Corps, a year-round program where young people aged 16 to 25 work to pass their GED exam (adult high school diploma), perform community service and gain job training skills.

According to yearend statistics, from June 30, 2013 to the end of December, 2014, 13 Youth Corps members passed their GED exams, 17 got jobs and 5 obtained driving licenses.

Staff members also made inroads in reaching young people who otherwise might not make it to the program at Interfaith Neighbors' headquarters in Asbury Park.

Coordinator Meg Flores set up a new work site at St. Mark's Center for Community Renewal in Keansburg where Corps members in that immediate community could work two days a week. Transportation was arranged so they could come to Asbury Park the other three week days.

Three Corps members have also come to Asbury Park from Freehold, overcoming a transportation challenge in the past.

Community Service Sites

Springwood Center, Asbury Park
Atonement Lutheran Church, Asbury Park
First Pentecostal Church, Neptune
Triumphant Life Church, Asbury Park
The Center, Asbury Park
Meals on Wheels
IFN Affordable Housing Program
St. Mark's Episcopal Church Center for
Community Renewal, Keansburg
FoodBank of Monmouth/Ocean Counties
Long Branch Community Garden
Trinity Church, Asbury Park

Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program (NRTC)

Interfaith Neighbors has received approval for Project #5 funding that will begin in 2015 under this state Department of Community Affairs program that brings approximately \$1 million each project year from corporations which receive 50 percent tax write-offs to fund our housing, economic, employment, recreation and family stabilization projects on Asbury Park's West Side.

In 2014, Project #4 funding paid for a van for elementary students in the Asbury Park Police Cadets program. Funds also went to the Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring program, the Community Affairs and Resource Center, the Faith Based Initiative Group, and the Asbury Park Heritage Foundation for youth musical training.

Funding was used for Interfaith Neighbor's Business Development Center, the Kula Café, affordable housing development, the Kula Urban Farm, and the Springwood Corridor projects --the Asbury JAMS (Jobs, Arts, Music and Sciences) building to be located on Springwood Avenue and Memorial Drive and the 26 townhome-style Turf Club Residences named after the famous West Side club and to be built diagonally across Springwood Avenue from the Springwood Center and Kula Café.

Project #4 initiatives are 80 percent completed and will be wrapped up mid-year 2015.

One half of the Project #5 funding in 2015 is earmarked to acquire property for the JAMS and Turf Club residences buildings. Funding also will go for the three planned affordable homes on DeWitt (2) and Atkins (1) avenues, the Business Development Center's Food Entrepreneur Program, the Kula Urban Farm, Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Community Affairs Resource Center.

Business Development Center (BDC)

Our Business Development Center located in Springwood Center at 1201 Springwood Ave. offers low cost incubation space, business mentoring, business workshops and lending assistance. Three significant projects were initiated in 2014:

The Kula Urban Farm located at 115 Atkins Ave. just behind the Springwood Center and Kula Café will create new job and educational experiences for residents and Kula Café participants. The farm which is to begin operations in 2015 will generate revenue for long term sustainability and increase affordable fresh fruits and vegetables for neighborhood residents. The farm will consist of a 20x84 square foot greenhouse to be built in the spring. A wash station was constructed in December.

The second new project introduced in 2014 is the Junior Entrepreneur Training (JET) program that will provide Asbury Park sixth, seventh and eighth graders with the chance to participate in a 15-session course in entrepreneurship designed to help them launch businesses of their own while improving school performance. The sessions will be held at the BDC from February to April 2015 as the students create and learn to market a business. A team of adult advisors will mentor the students.

Finally, in partnership with Rutgers University Food Innovation Center, Interfaith Neighbors will launch the Food Entrepreneur Program in early in 2015. The goal is to help local citizens gain access to specific food industry technologies, skill development and business mentorship to bring their own food product business to market. Interfaith Neighbors will make the Rutgers services available to all those who meet the program criteria. The initial plan is to begin with three to five food entrepreneurs with an ultimate goal of at least seven food company launches in a 12 month period.

Kula Café

Since opening in April 2013, the Kula program has seen: 12 graduates placed in local restaurants; 4 graduates placed in food service jobs ; 4 graduates went on to higher education or GED programs; 2 graduates worked in a non-restaurant hospitality business; 6 are current participants, and 5 left the program before completion for employment. One participant was hired part-time by the café to assist with youth recruitment and certification.

The café has built a catering business and cater for the city, for local nonprofits, for outdoor community events. The café bakes pies for holidays and started a popular story hour on Sundays at 12:30 where children are treated to free pancakes and read with Liz McNulty. Their families are provided with free coffee.

The Kula participants operate the Need to Feed program each Monday afternoon, which provides a free meal to local families in need. Participants also take part in the Kula Cohorts program, meeting with local businesses and community mentors and county WorkForce Development representatives.

Kula Café received the Monmouth Health and Life Readers' Choice Awards in the Cheap Eats category. The café also received 2014 Excellence in Housing and Economic Development award from the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency. Kula shared the award locally with the city of Asbury Park, the Workforce Investment Board of Monmouth County, PepsiCo of Asbury Park and Marilyn Schlossbach/Kitschens Catering.

General Information



The organization has 49 employees and offers health and dental benefits, a 401K plan with company participation and life insurance for its full-time staff. Its annual operating budget exceeds \$4 million.

The organization received support from approximately 40 faith-based congregations and over 250 private donors. It received government grants from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, the N. J. Department of Labor, the Monmouth County Department of Human Services and the Monmouth County Community Development Office, and it was also awarded grants from numerous corporations and foundations.