

2014 Annual Report



Mission: Church and community partnering for change, street by street

1 John 3:18 *"Dear children, let us not love with word or tongue but with actions and in truth."*

<http://www.projecturge.org/>
585.223.8340



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Project URGE, Inc.

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Church and Community partnering for change

Project URGE develops urban and suburban church partnerships to work with faith and community organizations to become practitioners of Christian Community Development





After-School Reading Program at Sully Library (formerly called Heart for the City)

The goal of the after-school reading program at Sully Library (Ryan Center) is to staff an after-school reading program for elementary school children from the Rochester City School district. The mission of this program is to “Serve our Lord, Jesus Christ through faith-based programs that build trusting relationships, strengthen families, and improve literacy” within under-resourced neighborhoods in the City of Rochester. It is one of several ministry programs provided through Project URGE that focuses on bringing

Christians together to minister to pressing needs with our community. Building strengths into children at an early age is vital to restoration.

The program recruits caring adult volunteers to provide staff for the after-school reading program at the Sully Public Library, 530 Webster Ave., in Rochester. This program is administered through the Rochester Public Library system; so all volunteers must complete a volunteer application form, which includes agreeing to a background check (mandated for all adults volunteering to work with children).

The after-school reading program runs Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3pm to 5pm, and follows the Rochester City School district calendar (no program during school vacations or summer). Please pray and consider if you could give of your time to be a caring adult to elementary school-aged children. Please contact Mary Stevens, at either (585) 750-3762 or stevens_mary@roberts.edu to learn more about the program or to sign up to participate.

Volunteer hours totaled nearly 237 hours for 2014!

Thanks to our volunteers: Mary and Tom Stevens, Yuki Cameron, Daniel Deveau, Kathy Dummer, Nancy Jones, Peter LePore, Bill & Betty McCullough, Jeff & Katie Telle, Dawn Rivet, Betsy Barr, Diane Cole and Dora Schaible

Bread Run Team

The Bread Run has been operating since 2004 and maintains a volunteer roster of 7 individuals and families. Just over half of our volunteers come from the Canandaigua area while the others live in the Rochester Metro area. Our volunteers pick up donated baked goods from Tops on Lake Avenue and deliver items to Grace United Methodist Church, Sanctuary House, Mercy Community Services, Outreach Temple, Nielsen House, Women’s Place and Francis Center.



Our volunteers are faithful and this past year we have not had any missed weeks. Though most of our volunteers have never met each other, our team has many who are quick to help out and fill in when necessary.

We are always looking for new volunteers who are able to serve on our team. The Bread Run is a great way to start getting involved in the city. It’s a low time commitment, with most volunteers spending 2 hours once every other month delivering food. It is also a great opportunity to see Rochester in a different light as you connect with people from all different walks of life. What a blessing it is to see God in the unexpected and in the abandoned places of our city! We are so thankful to our volunteers for their time and continued service to God and the city of Rochester! Thanks to Christin Babcock, Nelson Bowen, Steve Copeland, Debra Faulkner, Dave Jeanne Gloss, Cindy Mead, Tim and Ruthie VanGorder, and Karen Walrath.

Free to Fly



Free to Fly is the newest ministry team of the Project URGE family. Our mission is: to provide opportunities for personal growth and education for low-income people in neighborhood communities in order to eliminate barriers to individual self-sufficiency - a hand up, not a hand out.

Our principle function is to work with individuals who wish to take steps toward moving out of their own poverty, becoming self-sufficient. We do this by providing each person with a personal coach, training and skill building, financial workshops and financial advisors, and provide free food and household goods to help people stretch their disposable income. But it's not free. Participants pay a small fee (currently \$10/month), agree to meet every other Saturday, volunteer for us or other Project URGE ministries or affiliated organizations, and commit to making progress toward their own goals. We are all about building hope and being a part of people transforming their own lives.

In addition, participants are invited to take part in a Bible study and discussion at the close of each session, facilitated by John Housel, who attends Browncroft Community Church.

We are currently working with three participants. Just since September, participants are learning how to budget their money and pay all their bills on time, taking advantage of job skills programs, and finding the way to move into their own apartment. These are positive steps to leading a self-sufficient life, a life that's transformed from being strangled by daily needs to being able to plan and live for the future. We are currently recruiting up to five additional people.

There are a significant number of people and organizations that make this possible. Coaches are the key to success and FocusPlus is an organization, which recruits and trains coaches. We have eight trained coaches and have new coach training February 26th. Foodlink has been a key supporter. Advantage Federal Credit Union is an important partner providing the financial workshops and financial advisors. Catholic Family Center has been an important source for us as we navigate through issues and regulations. In addition we logged 1144 hours of volunteer time including all the coaches, the participants, neighborhood groups, the leadership team, Jacob's Ladder team, Roberts Wesleyan College students, Maria Wehrle and Tim Letzin who were invaluable getting us started. Tim continues to manage the storehouse. And we couldn't have ever begun without a very generous financial gift from the Knights of Columbus, Webster branch and the parishioners of St. Christopher's Church in North Chili. Their financial gifts supplemented the financial support from Project URGE and helped Project URGE's financial contribution go further.



Participants and Coaches 2014

Being able to offer free food and goods to participants is also a key to our success. This year, thanks to Maria Wehrle we were able to make a trade in-kind with Foodlink for almost a ton of food. We have also had food drives at St. Christopher's Church, Crosswinds Wesleyan Church and students at Roberts Wesleyan College that resulted in almost 1000 pounds of food.

Roberts Wesleyan College students and the Jacob's Ladder ministry team helped with transformation of the storehouse space. RWC students also sponsored a Poverty Simulation on campus to create awareness to the challenges faced by people in poverty and featured Free to Fly's activities and offerings. Also, RWC students have been working to build a web site for us. In 2015 St. John Fisher College students will be joining our campus groups and will be helping with marketing and promotions.

We are located at 215 Tremont Street, Door #2 where we sub-lease office and storehouse space (off Ford Street, between Main Street and Plymouth Ave.) . We believe investing in the SW neighborhood is a good way to begin. If people in this neighborhood can become self-sufficient, they're in a better position to participate in the revitalization of their own neighborhoods.

We are looking forward to 2015 as we are working towards recruiting five more participants and coaches and watching participants achieve their goals.

Respectfully submitted,



Making cookies for Christmas party 12/20/14

Marcia O'Brien & Rebecca Rodriguez, Co-founders

Jacob's Ladder Team



During the winter and spring of 2014 the Jacob's Ladder Team completed two separate projects. The first project was the cleaning and simple repairs made to the children's room at Parsells Community Church. The team made repairs to windows and drop ceiling that helped to not only make the space more visually appealing, but also it made the space more safe and energy efficient. The team also removed a lot of the old items and furniture from the room to make the space more functional.

The team also completed a dry walling project at Keys to The Kingdom Church. The project included the spackling and sanding of an elevated wall. The project was a success and made the sanctuary much more aesthetically pleasing.

The team also assisted getting the warehouse space for the Free to Fly ministry of Project URGE, painted, cleaned and readied for use.

Volunteers: Larry Telle, Chris Boss, Jeff Telle and Signory Kapend
Volunteer hours totaled nearly 285 working hours by participants.

Mothers In Need of Others and Furnished 4 Life

It has been quite a year for our Mothers In Need of Others and Furnished 4 Life ministries. From the very start, our F4L lottery has been full steam ahead providing gently used furniture, appliances, house wares, and baby items for the moms and families of the agencies and churches we work with! The lottery has proven to be tremendously successful! We now have a network of 260 caseworkers and pastors from over 70 social service agencies and church outreach organizations! PRAISE GOD!!! And it's getting bigger by the day!!! For those who are unaware of the lottery, it works like this! When someone calls to donate items, a notice is sent out to inform the caseworkers and pastors on our distribution list of what is available. The FIRST person to respond back saying that they have a client in need of the items being donated and transportation to pick up and deliver the items to their client, is the WINNER of those items! The items are distributed "AS IS" and at the discretion of the client's representative. All items distributed through the lottery are FREE OF CHARGE!!! We have given away some BEAUTIFUL pieces of furniture and appliances to those who would not have been able to afford them otherwise! The lottery's biggest challenge is that not all churches and social service agencies



have access to transportation or the manpower to move the furniture. We have been praying about and exploring options for this dilemma! We are trusting God for an answer, so that we can provide even more furniture to those who really need it in our community!

The lottery has had other unexpected blessings for our clients! Recently, a long-time MINO supporter generously donated tickets to see Abby Wambach and the WNY Flash. The children from Christ Community Church and Action for a Better Community had a wonderful time! We were also able to donate two pianos to the Rochester city schools for the children in their music programs, from the kindness of donors in our community! (*See pictures on our Mothers In Need of Others Facebook page!)

Our MINO ministry was blessed yet again, when we partnered with a ministry called Loved Twice, an incredible organization that provides boxes of new and gently used baby clothes to agencies who serve new moms in need. The boxes contain outfits in sizes newborn to 12 months for baby's first year of life. We will be picking up the boxes and arranging for their distribution to the agencies and churches we work with.

Due to a number of staffing changes in our regular party venue, our annual MINO Christmas Party was cancelled this year. But that did not stop the students and staff at Bay Trail Middle School in Penfield from donating 100 beautiful hand decorated bags stuffed with personal hygiene and baby items which we were able to pass on to several programs serving families in need over the holidays.

We are most grateful for our faithful God, our amazing donors, and the opportunity to serve others through these ministries, and we look forward to another year of doing so!

Networking/Collaborative/Training Meetings

One of the main ingredients in the intentions of Project URGE is to get people to begin building relationships and discovering ways that their churches and organizations can partner with each other for a deeper impact on poverty and racism. These meetings remain an integral part of what we do. Many organizations and parachurch ministries would not have the support and volunteers that they now have if it weren't for our quarterly meetings. In 2015 we have decided to hold more meetings with some focused on particular topics and trainings. Project URGE affiliates will also have further opportunity to make presentations during the year.



The Prayer Team

The Prayer Team dials in every Sunday morning at 6:30 am for a "conference call" type arrangement to pray for the ministry teams of Project URGE, people in crisis and the City of Rochester. Anyone wishing to join the team in prayer may contact us and we'll make certain you get the phone number and code to participate.



Saturday Sonshine Program

The Sonshine Program that is located at Parsells Community Church is collaboration between Project URGE and Parsells Community Church.

The Kick-Off for the 2013 program was December 7, 2013. We introduced the program with a festive Christmas Party which 46 children and volunteers attended. The children were assisted by volunteers with projects like Christmas card making to share with loved ones, reindeer paper bag puppets, cookie decorating, various board games and passing out gifts

to the children. The children and their families still talk about the good time they had!

The regular program meetings resumed after the holiday and met on Saturdays, from 10 AM to 12 PM. The goal of the program is to edify the youth in the program with Biblical knowledge, provide them with activities, and introduce them to various parks and landmarks in our area that they may not visit or be familiar with.

The youth enjoyed hearing stories and playing games that taught them valuable lessons from the Bible. An example of a lesson is a booklet that the children made which discussed having courage, standing firm in faith and ultimately doing everything in love (1 Corinthians 16: 13-14).

Trips included Mendon Ponds, Gonondagan State Park, Cummings Nature Center and more. The children who attended these field trips really enjoyed themselves and have not been to these places, even though they are in the immediate area. The trips provide educational value, cultural awareness and appreciation for nature. It is very important for urban youth to have this exposure and experience, because many don't often have the opportunity to travel.

On the average the program served 15 to 20 youth per meeting and at least 25-30 youth and volunteers on our trips.

Volunteers: Doreen Young, Garry Manuel, Annette Morgan, Phillip Hounshell, Anthony Douglass, Tanya Baird, Loretta Cross and about ten others volunteered about 6 hours to the program.

Volunteer Coordination and Events:

The past year and a half our services have not been utilized as much as in past years; however we continue to refer individuals who wish to volunteer to ministries and organizations in Rochester. Many people who have used our volunteer coordinating services in the past now have built relationships from their original time serving. A Williamson high school group spent a day at Community Lutheran Ministry. Seven students and faculty went through the storage room bringing out all kinds of things trying to focus on the gifts, and clothes (hats and mittens) used to fill backpacks for community children for Christmas. The volunteers organized the items and put back into the storage room the things that were not being used for Christmas. The items were labeled and reorganized. The girls were able to talk with other volunteers that were there putting food bags together for kids after school and it was a nice exchange about what things are like in Williamson and what things are like in the city. Again it was a win/win for everyone.



Project URGE takes calls throughout the year with regard to individuals, church groups and schools looking to find volunteer opportunities. We refer volunteers based on the needs to be filled and their passion, as well as the suitability of the task for whoever is asking to participate. This aspect of the ministry has worked so well in the past that many of the people are still volunteering with the same organizations where they first began serving.

Project URGE, Inc. - 2014 Financial Chart



Programs = 87.03% Insurance = 7.21% Telephone = 2.5% Dues = 1.79%
 Postage = 0.66% Office Expense = 0.54% Legal & Accounting Expenses = 0.28%

We thank our donors, who help us sustain the mission that God has given this organization:

Churches: Church of the Assumption, Community of the Savior, Crosswinds Wesleyan Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Fairport United Methodist Church, & St. Christopher's Church

Organizations: Advantage Credit Union, Beechwood Neighborhood Association, Healthy Harvest, Knights of Columbus (Webster), Rizzo, Di Giacomo, Hern & Baniewicz

Individual donors: Dan & Marsha Bardeen, Elaine Berner, Mike & Jane Bleeg, Chris & Laura Boss, Marlena Graves, David Honness, Phillip Hounshell, Kurt & Nancy Jones, Fayne Lappas, Garry & Mary Manuel, Marcia & Shaun O'Brien, Bob & Sharon Orr, Kathryn Pridey, Rebecca Rodriguez, JoAnne Rosato, Elaine Rose, Graham & Debra Smith, Mary & Tom Stevens, Jeffrey & Katie Telle, Ron & Cathy Tocci, John & Maria Wehrle,

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