

2015 Annual Report



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Church and Community partnering for change, street by street

Project URGE, Inc. 2015 Annual Report

Bread Run Ministry 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 Saint Luke's Tabernacle, Sanctuary House, Mercy Community Services, Outreach Temple, Nielsen House, Women's Place and Francis Center. In 2015, the Bread Run logged 168 volunteer hours!



Our volunteers are faithful and this past year we have not had any weeks where food was not delivered. 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, seeking to serve God and the city, but also serving each other. This past year saw an increased level of commitment to those on the margins whom we serve as many collected paper products, blankets, towels, toiletries and other items to donate to several of the shelters on our route. God is faithful to show us Himself if we simply allow ourselves to open up to the possibility of finding him in the least of these.

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! Many thanks to Nelson Bowen, Steve Copeland, Debra Faulkner, Dave and Jeanne Gloss, Cindy Mead, Tim and Ruthie VanGorder, and Karen Walrath: you are what keep this ministry going!

Christin Babcock - Ministry Team Leader

Mothers In Need of Others and Furnished for Life Ministry Teams

It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone for our Mothers In Need of Others and Furnished for Life ministries!

It never ceases to amaze me when I sit down to write these reviews at the end of the year, just how much has happened in just 12 short months! God has been hard at work tending to the needs of His people through the ministries of Project URGE!

This Summer, I sat down with three business leaders to streamline the record keeping process of our Furnished 4 Life ministry in order to keep a more accurate count of the number of pieces of furniture and appliances distributed through our lottery. I am pleased to report that from just August 1st through December 31st we distributed 271 items to 43 social service agencies and church outreach programs. Many thanks



to our donation sponsors!

- Baywinde Senior Living Center
- Hampton Inn & Suites
- Mel & Company Estate Sales
- Nothnagle Realty
- Re/Max Realty
- St. John Fisher College
- Wadda Ya Need
- And to the many private individuals referred to us through Project URGE, The Community Wishbook, and 211 help line, and friends, family, and co-workers.

Our Mothers In Need of Others ministry began a partnership with Roc City Bottoms Diaper Bank starting in November of this year. To date, we have distributed 5,000 diapers for them to various family agencies!

As a part of our Christmas efforts, we delivered 100 gift bags made by the children at Bay Trail Middle School to Newborn Fellowship Church for their Christmas Outreach. Thank you Principal Harrigan, Mr. Garza. and Bay Trail Middle School staff, parents and students for those beautifully decorated bags full of personal hygiene products!

Our MINO ministry was blessed yet again when one of our long time donors, sent eight people from Second Chancez ministry to see the new Star Wars movie! A wonderful time was had by all!



Mothers In Need of Others ministry under Project URGE, Inc. and in conjunction with 441 ministries, the Historic Parsells Church, Rochester Bible Baptist Church, Grace Road Church PCA and Fairport United Methodist Church,

incorporated the philosophies of Robert Lupton/FCS Ministries and their Pride For Parents Store in Atlanta, staging our first ever Beechwood Christmas Store! An amazing two day event was held that offered brand new toys and gifts to the neighbors in that area at deep discount prices! We raised close to \$4,000 which was distributed back into the community to various social service and church outreach programs. Please check out the Project URGE website for pictures of the event! A heartfelt thank you to all of our donors and volunteers that helped to make the event a success! We couldn't have done it without you!!!



I would be remiss in not saying that it is through the grace of God that these ministries are alive and well and continuing to grow! It's the people that make what we do so worthwhile - all of the caseworkers, the clients, and volunteers whom we have come to know and love over the years! I often get asked why I do what I do...what's the pay-off? I have permission to share the following email with you. I think it sums up the answer to that question perfectly! This is an email from a nurse who went the extra mile for one of her clients in order to pick up a sofa bed for them; one of 20 which were generously donated to Furnished 4 Life by Theresa Fantone from Hampton Inn & Suites in Victor, NY

Theresa and Maria,

I wanted to thank you both again for helping to arrange for the sofa donation. The family who received the sofa was elated! This sofa will allow them to sit together as a family to talk, or to watch TV. It will also give the grandchildren a comfortable place to sleep on the weekends when they spend the night (as opposed to the leaky air mattress they had been using).

My 14 year old son assisted with the delivery of the sofa, and could not help but absorb the joy the family shared. He said he finally understood why I love my job. He actually smiled at something other than his iPhone for a change.

Thank you for helping me share this experience.

Katie Lashway, RN

Maria Wehrle - Ministry Team Leader

Furnished 4 life/Mothers In Need of Others Ministries



Free to Fly Ministry Team

PARTICIPANTS

As of December 31, we serve three participants, all of whom began the pilot program with us.

PROGRAM

On May 30, 2015 we launched our new curriculum, "Choosing to Thrive". Rhonda O'Connor, Director for Visions for Change, Syracuse NY, developed this curriculum. It is an advanced version of the curriculum that was a foundation of the Circles group which is based on the teachings of Ruby Payne.

In concert with our new curriculum, we also use "The Bridge" as a way to measure progress toward self-sufficiency. This method was originated by a group in Boston, The Crittendon Women's Union, and has been adopted by our coach training group, Focus+. It is well researched and is getting national attention. Rochester Catholic Family Center has also adopted this model.

Throughout 2015 we met every other Saturday from 9-11. Participants and Coaches met about 8:45-9:00 for social time. At 9:00 Jacky Smith, our Program Director, led us in training sessions from the *Choosing to Thrive* material. At 10:00, participants and coaches met privately for an hour. Shopping time followed the coaching time.

John Housel from Browncroft Community Church has been our faithful Bible study leader for over a year. He conducted studies and discussions with participants after the program time. These sessions are optional. Those who do attend report that John is a real blessing to them.

We conducted our first “Starting Your Own Business – The Basics” workshop on June 6th at the Phyllis Wheatley Library in the SW neighborhood. Erv Starr facilitated the workshop. Three people from Free to Fly and five people from the neighborhood attended. Guest speakers were Erv Starr (Strategy) Susan Sullivan (Marketing), Phil Sennett (social media), Frank Reynolds (Score), and Dick Pettite (SBDC).

COACHES

Each participant has a personal coach. As of December, 2015 we have three active coaches. We also have seven substitute coaches. We are always actively recruiting; churches are our best source for new coaches.

We will continue to rely on Focus+ to help in the recruiting efforts and to be the orientation provider for our new coaches. After the orientation, Free to Fly will be providing ongoing training and support in addition to the ongoing training provided by Focus+.

We also are fortunate to have Joyce Wagner, a professional counselor and PhD in Psychology, volunteer her time to give special coach training and stand by to help answer any specific personal coaching questions.

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATION EFFORTS

Advantage Federal Credit Union continues to be a partner with us. Marty Jacobson, Relationship Manager, occasionally provides financial workshops and has met 1:1 with participants.

Joyce Wagner, PhD conducted our first Free to Fly coach training this year and has been a guest speaker for one of our programs.

On June 25th, Marcia O'Brien and Jeff Peters (one of the coaches) met with members of the Rochester Community Fund and the Program Director of DHS' Sufficiency Program. We shared information about Free to Fly with them. It was well received. In December, Marcia and Jeff were invited to be a part of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty task force subgroup on mentorship.

We have informally partnered with a group from the Edgewood Free Methodist Church which has “adopted” School 19. We are engaged in good conversations, have had one referral and one inquiry, and have shared food and goods with them.

The St. Joseph Neighborhood Center contacted us about collaborating with them on one of their programs for women.

We met with a representative of Jordan Health Center, Genesee Street, and have received one referral from them. Unfortunately the referral didn't materialize but nevertheless a partnership has been started.

Over the summer we attended three neighborhood festivals where we had a table and were able to pass out information about Free to Fly and answer questions.

In July we had two invitations to talk about Free to Fly: Baden Street Settlement and OACES. We are always excited to share what Free to Fly is about and collaborate with any group where there are synergies. We welcome all invitations to speak to others and are grateful for referrals.

Our most promising collaboration in 2016 will be with Rochester Catholic Family Center. We will be piloting a relationship where clients who have completed their program at CFC come to Free to Fly to continue their journey to self-sufficiency. We believe this “after care” type model will be the best way to position ourselves to serve the community and will be developing this approach throughout 2016.

MARKETING

The students at Roberts Wesleyan College built a web site for us. <http://FreeToFlyNY.org>

Students at SJFC developed a marketing campaign for participants. Susan Sullivan was the lead contact and worked with them.

July 27th Meg Hartman and Susan Sullivan conducted a Marketing Summit to help us determine our strategy and the best tactics to begin with. This group will help us with our “after care” market positioning in 2016.

FOOD and GOODS DISTRIBUTION, STOREHOUSE

In 2015 approximately 1100 pounds of food was donated. We also swapped almost a ton of food with Foodlink. Food drives will be necessary in Spring, 2016.

The idea that we have free food is a draw for people to be interested in Free to Fly. Having household items available for participants is unique and sets us apart. However, once people are in the program, they tell us that it's the program itself which is valuable and food is just a bonus.



VOLUNTEERING

All participants are asked to volunteer two hours per month with us, a Project URGE ministry, affiliate or a SW neighborhood organization. Except for the summer fairs, it has been difficult to coordinate opportunities for our participants. It would be very helpful to have someone who could coordinate this.

For the year, we were blessed with 1035 volunteer hours.

FACILITIES

Throughout 2015 we met at 215 Tremont Street, subleasing from Pearl Ministries. In December we moved to a new location at The Pillar Church, 46 Mt. Hope Ave.

RESULTS

It really is too early to say anyone in the program has reached self-sufficiency. This is a journey, one which is longer and more difficult than we first thought. But, there are a few note worthy life changes that has happened as a result of what Free to Fly offers:

- One participant worked with Consumer Credit Counseling to consolidate debt (connection made possible by her coach). Instead of it taking her 46 years to pay off the debt, she will now be debt free in four years. This same participant also is working with Rochester Works for retraining.
- Another participant left the program last fall and has now been accepted back after making some significant personal changes.
- Participants continue to affirm that having Free to Fly means they have a support system, people who care, hope.
- Coaches are saying they are learning things from the new curriculum too (confirms that what we're doing is life affirming for everyone and that we are in this journey together).
- One participant attended a job readiness program at ABC.
- A participant will be attending certification training in Microsoft Office products (PowerPoint, Excel, Word) which is free through Baden Street Settlement.
- Three of our participants attended the Starting Your Own Business Workshop. All of them are considering some kind of self-employment to supplement their income.
- Participants are recommending Free to Fly to their friends.
- Advantage Federal Credit Union continues to be a supporter.
- Wherever we have the chance to talk about Free to Fly, we are positively received.
- It was significant that we were invited to the Rochester Anti-Poverty subgroup; we were the only volunteer, faith based organization in the room.
- In October, we conducted focus groups with coaches and participants. We also administered surveys to them. The results continue to affirm that our basic philosophy is consistent with what people want and need.

QUICK LOOK AHEAD

- Based on the survey and focus group results, we have been going through a re-assessment of what we do and how we do it. Now that Catholic Family Center will be our primary source for new participants, we believe our true strengths can be realized. We are very excited about our new physical space at The Pillar and an ongoing relationship with them as we all minister to those who are in need.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia O'Brien - Ministry Team Leader

Saturday Sonshine Program

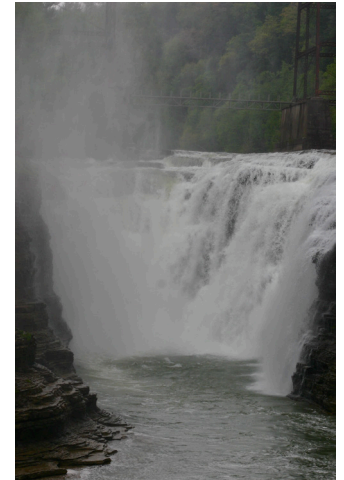
Once again, we had a very exciting and adventurous Saturday Sonshine Program year. The Historic Parsells Church (formally Parsells Avenue Comm. Church), and Project URGE, Inc. have built a partnership that has given our youth a chance to enjoy and explore different nature and



educational venues. The youth from ages 4 to 16 years old, attended once a month Saturday trips, which included places such as the Genesee Country Museum, where the youth enjoyed a pancake breakfast and toured the Country Museum Village. Even though the weather was a little rainy, the children had a chance to see what country life was like: reenacted through the many buildings such as the Old Post Office, the one room School House, horse driven buggies and many more replicas of the “old time” Village.

The youth also attended places like the Cummings Nature Center, Letchworth State Park, which they loved, and other areas around Monroe County. On alternate Saturdays, they also did activities at the Church. These activities, which were Bible based, focused on friendship, decision making, self-empowerment and the importance of family relationships. They also enjoyed games and sports activities.

Doreen Young - Ministry Team Leader



Volunteer Coordination



All year long we are plugging volunteers into our Project URGE ministry teams as well as referring some to other organizations and ministries serving the under-resourced. We set up church youth groups, high schools and college teams to serve in various capacities throughout the city. For example, Church of the Assumption youth were partnered with Heritage Christian Services and for the 10th year, Williamson High School came to serve twice during 2015! They volunteered with Prosper Rochester, Rochester Childfirst Network, The Pillar, Pathstone, St. Vincent DePaul, Gerhardt Neighborhood Outreach, Community Lutheran Ministries and others. Here's a note from Cameron Community Ministries which sums up the success of these

efforts:

“It went AMAZING. The kids were incredible and so helpful. I don't think I've ever had such a successful volunteer day with high school students. We'd love to continue to participate whenever something like this is offered!”

Jennie Papkin - Cameron Community Ministries



“Students always talk about wanting to go back after their experience and I am happy to hear they want us back.”

Ms.Tracy O'Hara W.H.S

Garry Manuel - Volunteer Team Leader



Networking/Collaborative/ Training Meetings

Our Networking/Collaborative/ Training meetings remain a vital tool in connecting people to ministries, organizations and each other. It is rare that people don't make some connection with others who share a similar passion or goal. These meetings offer an opportunity to hear presentations from an organization or ministry, share ideas or learn about ways to accomplish Christian community development. Over the years we have seen a number of people

become acquainted, then discover a common thread that leads to a collaborative effort. In addition, we often serve a meal, hand out informative books on community development and racial reconciliation. We have had a presentation on race and have conveyed strategies for more holistic approaches to development, along with plenty of informative hand-outs for follow-up. People are encouraged to bring cards and brochures to hand to others during the networking portion of the meeting. Presenters have included: Dr. Leonard Brock (Director of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative), Veronica Black (Children Awaiting Parents), Rev. Judith Davis (Facing Race, Embracing Equity FR=EE) and others. Our meetings averaged 38 attendees (30 to over 50) representing a broad cross section of church ministries and organizations that focus on issues surrounding the under-resourced.

We also convened meetings to organize for the Beechwood Christmas Store, which included leaders from Project URGE, 441 Ministries, Historic Parsells Ave. Church, Covenant United Methodist Church, Grace Road Church, which led to other churches, businesses and organizations becoming involved to work together to lift up a neighborhood.

Garry Manuel

Diversity Café



The men of the diversity café come from area churches and bring together urban and suburban congregations. Our mission is simple: build relationships across racial/economic/denominational lines. The Kingdom of God is an integrated community and so are we. During 2015 we met several times. These meetings included: prayer meetings, our regular once a month gatherings, a service project at East High School and helping at the Beechwood Christmas Store. We also planned a SuperBowl party for early 2016 (which went very well).

We are committed to this group—primarily because of the relationships we have already formed. We look forward to 2016.
Pastor Chris Jewell Co-leader

Social Events



We continue to provide social gatherings each year to provide an opportunity for people to become better acquainted outside the ministry work that we're involved in all year long. In the grand scheme of things, relationship building has always been integral to our mission throughout our fourteen year history. Approximately forty people attended our annual dinner celebration, which included dance, song and a glimpse at Project URGE ministries.

After-School Reading Program

For several years the reading program has been operating out of the Ryan Center at the Sully Public Library, 530 Webster Ave., in the Beechwood Neighborhood. It is one of several ministry programs provided through Project URGE that focuses on bringing Christians together to minister to pressing needs within 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. The scheduling and sign-up is now done through the children's librarian at the library. This activity runs Tuesday through Thursday.

Other community involvement:

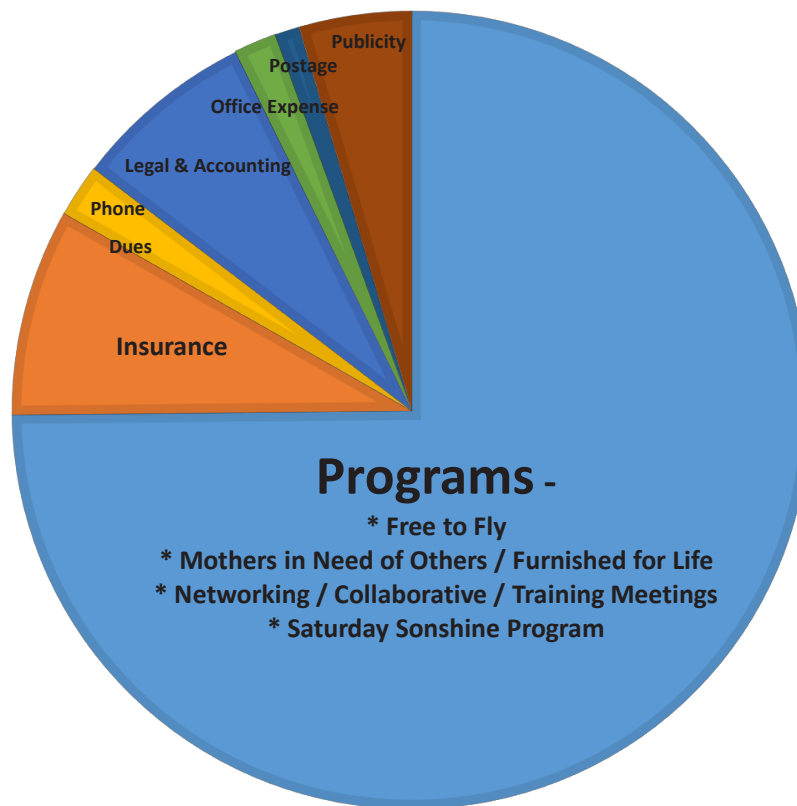
Mary Stevens has continued her work with the Interdenominational Health Ministry Coalition (IHMC), which helps churches get the tools and training needed to bring healthier choices in a holistic way into the community by way of churches and worship centers.

Garry Manuel continues to be involved with the The Children's Agenda's (TCA) Interfaith Coalition and Project URGE board member, Brigit Hurley, is the Policy Analyst for TCA, which analyzes data and advocates for changes that will positively impact the lives of children and families in under-resourced neighborhoods.

We continue to remain involved and encourage others to be involved in discussions and trainings provided by FR=EE (Facing Race, Embracing Equities) educational endeavors.

PROJECT URGE, INC EXPENSES 2015

■ Programs ■ Insurance ■ Dues/Memberships ■ Phone ■ Legal & Accounting Expense ■ Office Expense ■ Postage ■ Publicity



We are Grateful for our Donors

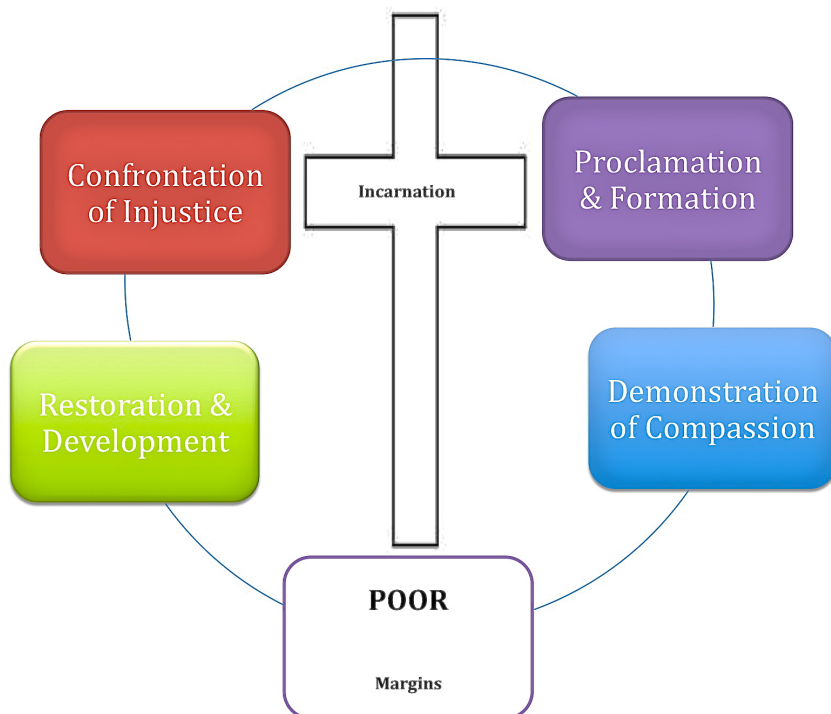
We are so grateful for the support we have received from churches, organizations and individuals. You supply such a vital role in the initiatives of Project URGE, Inc. and we sincerely thank you:

Browncroft Community Church, Church of the Assumption, Community of the Savior, Fairport United Methodist Church, Assisi Institute, Parkview Pediatrics, Dan & Marsha Bardeen, Tim Beck, Mike Bleeg, Chris & Laura Boss, Julie & Patrick Eble, Bradford & Jennie Guy, Karen & William Harnett, Helen Hemmer, David Honness, John & Margaret Housel, Eileen Limburg, Garry & Mary Manuel, Graham & Debra Smith, Mary & Tom Stevens, Christine Story, Anthony Taylor, Jeff & Katie Telle, Ron & Cathy Tocci, John & Maria Wehrle, Elvira Velasquez

Also, special thanks go out to our ministry leaders and the many volunteers who are intentionally living out John 3:18 “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

Special thanks to: Ms. Julia Garver, attorney, Andrew Soucier, Soucier Designs & Graham Smith

Kingdom Work by Noel Castellanos (ccda.org)



Project URGE, Inc. continues to challenge churches and organizations to utilize a more holistic approach to ministry efforts. Many churches and organizations are focused solely on either compassion or proclamation ministries; however, there is a need for a greater number of participants to be involved in initiatives that can be categorized as confronting injustices and neighborhood development. These generally are more costly and time consuming, and yet are vital to solving the challenges we face. That is why Project URGE, Inc. ministry teams fall into all of these categories and why we seek to encourage other ministries and organizations to follow this path toward having a greater impact in the work that we all do.

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