

# ⊕ THE CENTER FOUNDATION ⊕

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# ⊕ THE CENTER FOUNDATION ⊕

## Annual Report 2011-2012



# Reflections of Hope

*The Center Foundation empowers women, teenage parents, and their families  
through mentoring, education, and support*

## Words from our Executive Director



Dear Friends,

In the midst of change it is important to be hopeful. Change is stressful and our mentors help our clients through it! As Oprah Winfrey said “A mentor is someone who helps you see the hope inside yourself.” We wrapped up our three-year program of mentoring and training services for the Young Parents Demonstration Program of the Department of Labor in partnership with PathWaysPA, made changes in our educational programming, did two national presentations, and for the sixth year in a row graduated all of our seniors in the Young Parents Support Network.

We changed the format of our life skills training workshops this year in response to participants’ requests, so instead of six sessions, we had three sessions with multiple topics. We tested our new evidence-based curricula in Nurturing Skills for Parents Program and the Adkins Life Skills Program: Career Development Series obtained from our capacity-building grant from the Nonprofit Finance Fund of the *Capital and Capacity for Economic Recovery (CCER)* program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Strengthening Communities Fund. The Nonprofit Finance Fund grant also enhanced our ability to evaluate our mentoring programs, and activities by implementing the CiviCore Mentor Management system, a proprietary database and reporting system designed for our programs.

Besides mentoring and training workshops, along with monthly support groups for WomenCare®, the year was also full with our other special events - Winter Carnival; our National Mentoring Month mentor appreciation ceremony, which for the first time was a dinner; One Hour Wonder, Summer Celebration honoring our year-long matches and high school graduates, and of course Holiday From The Heart. A record number of families were adopted by multiple sponsors and enjoyed dinner with Santa.

Early in the year I was retained by Social Policy Research Associates to be a subject matter expert on a two-day panel and meetings in Washington, D.C. for the Young Parents Demonstration Institute. At the Institute for the third round of the Department of Labor’s Young Parents Demonstration Program the focus was building new grantees’ understanding of successful implementation of mentoring programs combined with the other core program components.

In March Rachel Schendler and I were invited to speak at the International Mentoring Association conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Rachel produced an excellent presentation on “Building Social Capital for Teen Parents.” It was also an opportunity for us to learn from experts in the mentoring field from community based organizations, government programs, and educational institutions.

Ending the year, there were two other significant transitions. First, the Internal Revenue Service accepted our notice of termination of private foundation status so that we are now a public charity. Along with our award of new funding from the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, our new exempt status will help us expand our resources so we can serve more women and teens.

Secondly, and with more immediate impact, after thirteen years we moved our offices to a more convenient location in the heart of Media, right on the corner of Orange and State Streets. Our new space allows us to have a small computer lab, a much larger training and board room, reception area internet access for participants, and private offices for all staff. For participants and volunteers and interns it is also much more accessible to public transportation, whether by bus, trolley or train.

Our teen mothers in the Young Parents Support Network and women in WomenCare® are making many significant changes in their lives and those of their families. See their smiles and stories inside. We could not do all this without the help of our many supporters, volunteers, and wonderful hard working staff. Though we could only fit mentors in this issue, they and other volunteers gave us 6,678 hours this year! Thank you for being a part of supporting our mission of empowering young parents, women and families.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan K. Garrison".

Susan. K. Garrison, Executive Director

## Events and Happenings

Three workshops were offered this year, two which had a new format that included a longer time, several speakers on related topics and a nutritious lunch.

### *“Empowering Women Through Art”*

Women who attended this workshop learned to improve their self-esteem through artistic outlets, specifically bead necklace making. Susan Foley-Urban led the workshop supported by the Regional Center for Women in the Arts. The workshop was a huge hit, attendees loved the activity, and many said they will use the self-reflection exercises they learned in their daily lives.



### *“Personal Wellness Workshop”*



This exciting workshop provided a psychologist and life coach, Dr. Qatana Samanen, who came to demonstrate stress management and positive habits as well as a yoga teacher, Donna Rottenberk, who led the group in chair yoga. Finally holistic nutrition teacher Susan Bierman, above, provided instruction and hands-on tips. Participants enjoyed the topics and of course a healthy free lunch.

### *“Matters of the Heart Workshop”*



Matters of the Heart combined various health topics in the morning with three presenters from the Widener School of Nursing to discuss women’s heart health and take blood pressure. After lunch, two speakers shared valuable information about being a first time home buyer and how to have a healthy relationship. Jerry Duffy presented from Media Fellowship House and Maggie Chapman from the Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County.

\* A shortened version of the Adkins Career Development Training series was offered to a small group of WomenCare participants. Six half-day sessions were given over a two week period. Highlights included videotaped presentations by each person and the opportunity to do information interviews with three working women; a former mentor and CPA, a nurse; and one of our trustees, Robin Otto, from Bryn Mawr Trust. Nurturing Parenting pilot training for young parents was also offered by YPSN Program Manager Rachel Schendler and Program Facilitator April Dimezza.

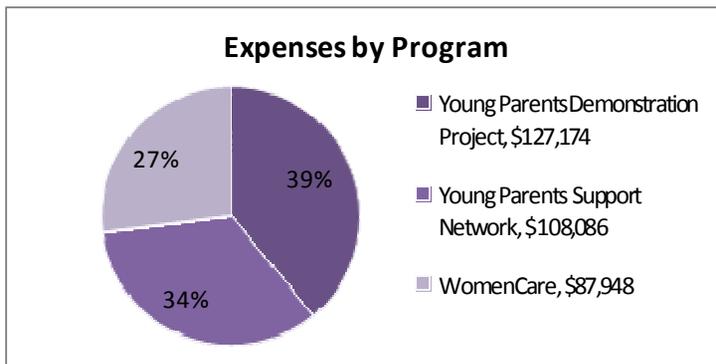
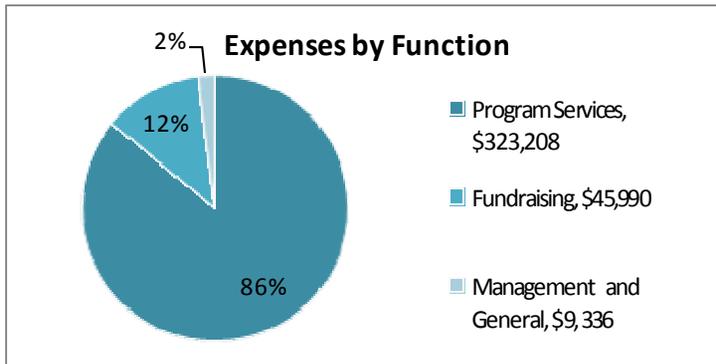
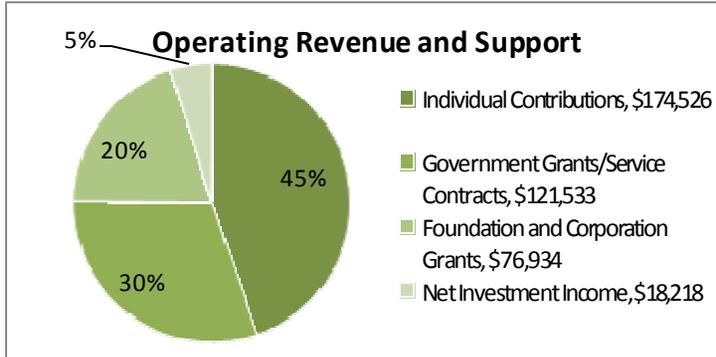
\* TCF received three very generous new grants during the 2011 fiscal year. The Patricia Kind Family Foundation approved \$10,000.00 in funding for three years to support both WomenCare and YPSN. Women’s Way granted \$12,500.00 to TCF for the general operations of its two mentoring programs, as did the Leo and Peggy Pierce Family Foundation with a grant of \$7,500.00. Continuing and expanded funding was awarded from the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern NJ.

## Financial Information

### July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012

#### Net assets

|                   |           |                          |          |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Beginning of Year | \$201,268 | Total Operating Revenue  | 376, 134 |
| End of Year       | \$213,945 | Total Operating Expenses | 376, 718 |



## Service Statistics

### WomenCare®

There were 25 active matches during this fiscal year, with 13 matches started during that time. Of the active matches, 11 successfully finished their year commitment, 6 were matched 6 months or more, 1 match continued the next year and 2 partners were re-matched the next year.

Of the 17 women who stayed matched 6 months to a year, 7 began classes at a community college, trade school or a four year college, either full or part-time. 9 women obtained new job or a better paying one within their current workplaces.

22 mentors were matched during this time period (3 were matched twice). 10 mentors active during this time have either already been re-matched or have agreed to be matched again when the time is right. There were 3 mentor trainings held, in August 2011, and in January and April of 2012, training 26 mentors, 8 for the WomenCare® program. Partner Orientations held in October, January and April prepared 13 women to be matched. A total of 43 women received services through the WomenCare® program, including resource referrals, case management, mentoring, counseling, support groups, and employment-related services.



### Young Parents Support Network



There were 50 referrals to the YPSN program during the 2011/2012 fiscal year, of these 42 were able to be interviewed. The remainder either became unreachable (moved, no response to calls or mail) or after completing an application lost interest in participating.

Of the 42 teens interviewed, 20 were matched; three were matched twice because of issues with their first mentors. Of the 20 matches, 14 lasted a year or beyond with their mentor and 3 made it to six months before life circumstances made it impossible for them to continue. During the fiscal period there were also 6 matches carried over from 2010/2011.

Of the 22 teens not matched, 10 were not matched because they became unreachable or uninterested in the program after the initial interview. The other 12 were not matched either because they were not stable enough to be matched or there was not an appropriate mentor for them. These 12 received supportive services from the YPSN program manager and the YPSN program interns. These services included academic and career support, advocacy, and referrals. For the 6th year in a row, all our seniors graduated high school and there were no secondary pregnancies.

### Young Parents Demonstration Project

The Young Parents Demonstration finished with 66 parents age 16 to 24 enrolled. Bump-up clients received mentoring, job coaching, and financial literacy training. As our participants' lives mirrored those of the women and youth in our other programs, maintaining contact was a perpetual challenge given the struggles in their lives, such as violence in the home, unsanitary conditions, foreclosures, and the like. Notwithstanding the young parents persevered; with the help of bump-up services ten found employment, two obtained their GED's, seven graduated high school, seven found internships, and four went into alternative dropout programs such as Project U-turn, Cyber Charter school, and Job Corps. For those employed at the start of the program average wages increased by 34% from \$7.13 to \$9.59 per hour.

## Ariana - A Story of Success

Ariana Little is a single mother currently living in Chester, PA. When she came to The Center Foundation a year ago at the age of 20, she was in desperate need of help. She was homeless and had no job or way of supporting her son or baby. "I didn't have many friends or a strong family," she explains, "I had no way of getting the support I needed."

Ariana realized she needed to do something to change her life. After contacting 15 different places, The Center Foundation was the only place that reached back out to her.

The Young Parents Support Network (YPSN) gave Ariana access to the resources that helped her get on her feet. "I needed and wanted to learn to take care of myself but I didn't know how. I was in such a bad place in my life. I felt so helpless and alone," she says.

After joining YPSN Ariana finally got the support she needed. Rachel Schendler, the Young Parent Support Network Program Manager, connected her to job interviews, schools, and day cares. "Rachel is the best," she says happily, "I love her. I don't know what I would have done without her."

Today, Ariana is proud of how far she has come. She is focusing on her nursing career and can't wait to begin working full time. "I know I'm still a work in progress, but being in this program for a year has done so much for me. I have my own place, I'm a full time student, I have a part time job, and my children are in daycare," she explains, "I finally have control over my own life."

Ariana credits The Center Foundation for helping her to succeed and thinks that other women who are in her situation should utilize The Center Foundation's resources. "I would recommend this program to anyone. I think it's amazing. If you are at a bad point in your life and need support, The Center Foundation is the place to go."



## Nancy and Terry - Women Helping Women



Nancy Leonard is a single mother with two daughters from Drexel Hill, PA. A friend told her about WomenCare®, a mentoring program for women in transition. She had been trying to find work for quite some time with no luck, was in turmoil with her youngest daughter, and no longer felt like herself. The WomenCare® program seemed like a good place to get help. After about a month she was matched with Terry, and that's when her life began to change.

Terry helped Nancy tremendously with her biggest issue – her lack of confidence. "I was really hard on myself," she explains, "I had no patience or hope." Terry taught Nancy that things don't always go the way you want them to. Sometimes things work out with family, dating or while searching for a job, and sometimes they take time. "I felt like I would never find work since I had been looking

for so long and was unsuccessful," Nancy recalls, "Terry told me that something would eventually come up."

During her year of being in a mentoring relationship, Nancy did secure a fulltime position working for a home health agency. She also moved to a more affordable apartment and got better control of her finances.

Terry also helped Nancy organize her life. She gave her advice about her daughters and taught her to rethink her approach to being a Mom. Terry also supported Nancy when she received surgery and even drove her to appointments when she could not do so herself.

Although Nancy says that her life is still a work in progress, she has come much farther than she ever imagined with Terry's help. "She taught me how to deal with disappointments and how to juggle working, dating, my family and taking care of my house," she says, "she's not just my mentor anymore; she's also my friend, and she changed my life."

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