

*an annual report  
in celebration of*

***Delaware Opportunities Inc.***

**5<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary**

The logo is a circular emblem. The outer ring contains the text "DELAWARE OPPORTUNITIES INC." at the top and "OUR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY" at the bottom. The inner circle features silhouettes of a family: a woman on the left, a man on the right, and a child in the center, all holding hands. The background of the inner circle has a cracked or textured appearance.

***1965-2015***

*helping people, changing lives  
making a difference for today and tomorrow*

*From the Executive Director:*

*50 years ago, a SUNY College President, William Kensela, a college professor Seldon Krueger, a pharmacist, William Miller Jr., a veterinarian and elected official H.S. Dickson, and a retiree and avid conservationist Maurice Postley formed Delaware Opportunities Inc. in response to President Johnson's call to action to address the "paradox of poverty in a land of plenty".*

*The agency they created was (and remains) governed by a Board of Directors, one third of whom were elected officials, one third were representatives from the community, and one third were democratically elected by low income residents of the county. The mission of the agency, simply stated, was to identify people in need as well as the causes and consequences of poverty and then to find ways to address those needs.*

*An Executive Director was hired and other staff followed. Many programs and services were developed over the years. The following is a report of those services and what they are accomplishing today.*

*As we pursued our mission, we found that children living in households below the poverty line often were unprepared to enter school. We began the Head Start Program, providing a comprehensive child development and early education program for three and four year olds and referrals for services for the family. This year we served 234 children, providing bus service to nine locations geographically dispersed throughout the county.*

*We found that some senior citizens were being sent to nursing homes because they could not feed themselves at home and other seniors lacked access to socialization, recreation, and adequate nutrition, leading to a diminished quality of life and leading to premature institutionalization. And so we developed the Senior Dining Program serving 296 people at the senior dining centers and 499 who were home bound in 2014.*

*We found that people lacked employment readiness skills and we developed a work experience program and the "Better Employment Skills Training (BEST)" program helping 343 people in 2014. We helped 48 unemployed people find work and we helped them keep a job providing support and case management services.*

*We found that people could not work because they could not find day care or the cost of day care was prohibitive. We established an independent network that by 2014 included 46 family or group family day care providers providing 340 children with appropriate care and helpful child development and allowing parents to work. We established a day care subsidy program so that 125 lower income households could work and have the wages cover much more than child care this year. We established training for child care providers so that the quality of child care could be improved. We provided grants for new child care providers to meet health and safety requirements and open child care, and those becoming child care providers started their own businesses. We provided funds to help day care providers offer nutritious meals without the need to increase child care costs. And we established a child care resource and referral network so that we could refer families with child care needs to quality care.*

*We found that people were unable to work because they had no way to get to and from an employment opportunity so we offered 30 days of transportation to and from a new job and then provided a subsidized loan for the purchase of a vehicle.*

*We found that the lack of public transportation prohibited people from getting to medical appointments so we created a transportation network providing 8,400 one way trips each year.*

*We found that people with young children could not afford child safety seats and we secured funding to provide approximately 400 seats a year. We found that the proper installation of the seats was important to the safety to the children and we provided technicians to train people on the proper installation and use of the safety seats.*

*We found that pregnant, and breast feeding women and children 0 to 5 years of age often had poor nutrition, resulting in poor child development and we provided the Women, Infants, and Children's program, commonly referred to as WIC, serving 850 people each month.*

*We found that low income households were spending a disproportionate amount of household income on heating their homes, in some cases facing the "heat or eat" dilemma. We initiated the Weatherization Assistance Program, conserving fuel and reducing home heating costs by approximately 25% per household and this program served 50 households in 2014. We also identified the need for outreach and application assistance for the Home Energy Assistance Program, known as HEAP, and we provided assistance to 1,000 households who were neither receiving public assistance nor those age 60 and above (those populations were served by the Delaware County Department of Social Services and Office for the Aging, respectively).*

*We found that the housing stock in Delaware County was aging and in some cases deteriorating. We developed home repair programs, completing emergency repairs for elderly homeowners, making homes accessible for the disabled, and correcting code violations, addressing health and safety problems, and bringing older homes to comply with building codes. At the end of 2014, the agency had contracts for the rehabilitation of over 50 homes in the next two years.*

*We found that people could not afford to rent a decent, safe and sanitary home for their family. We developed the rental assistance program to help upwards of 600 families each year. The program provides assistance to limit the households rental expense and utility costs to 30% of the household income for rental units that pass a housing quality inspection.*

*We found that children in single parent households often lacked parental guidance and mentoring and were at risk of drug involvement, failure in school, or other negative outcomes and we developed the Big Buddy program providing adult volunteer mentors to children 5-14 years of age, and we enhanced the program to offer group activities. The program served 36 children during most of 2014.*

*We found that people want to live in a home of their own but lacked the information necessary to achieve their homeownership dream and we established the Housing Counseling program.*

*We found that families wanted to get ahead but were burdened by crises and conflicting demands and we established the family development program to support families, to help them develop goals based on their strengths, and to pursue and achieve those goals. And we provided that support and case management to 31 families and watched them succeed in 2014.*

*We found families at risk of, or indicated for, child abuse and neglect and we instituted a Parent Aide program, working with approximately 100 parents a month to provide parent education and support, to reunite families with the temporary placement of a child or children in foster care, or to eliminate the need for such a placement.*

*We found domestic violence prevalent in the community, and we established a safe shelter . . . a place for victims and their dependent children to escape violence and to plan for a future without such violence. We developed supports and resources both for the victims in shelter and for those victims who did not need emergency shelter but needed assistance in obtaining orders of protection, support, advocacy, and other helping services.*

*We found victims of sexual assault who were not receiving support and we established a rape crisis and sexual assault program. We offered preventive education as well as support for victims. We developed a hotline staffed by volunteers and we provided counselors to assure that victims received necessary services.*

*We found people with neither resources nor food and we assured that parents and children would not go to bed hungry by establishing a food pantry network. Today there is a food pantry in nearly every Town in the County, created by or at least encouraged to be in existence by the agency. These local pantries are staffed by volunteers. They generate local donations and they use those donations to support the local community. We supplement their efforts while also operating a central food bank. We directly served about 1,300 people in 2014. The network served over 10,000 people and provided approximately 205,000 meals.*

*We found that some did not have appropriate clothes to apply for work or to go to school and we developed a used clothing program using donations from the community to assist those less fortunate.*

*We found that people were homeless or about to become homeless and we developed a program to provide some financial assistance. We also received donations from the community to provide household goods for this population.*

*We found that children placed in foster care were being institutionalized because the voluntary foster parent network was unable to care for acting out, at risk youth. We developed a program with the Department of Social Services to provide foster homes with paid foster parents and support workers so that individualized service could be provided to the youth and institutionalization would not be required. We now operate 6 homes serving 18 children.*

*We found that children who were about to leave foster care were unprepared for independent living and we began the Independent Living Skills program, helping youth get driving licenses, learning how to shop and cook, establishing checking accounts, and other activities necessary to live on their own.*

*We found that families with developmentally disabled members struggled to keep the family intact. . . care-givers needed some respite or relief from the constant care needs of another family member. We provided aides to free care-givers so that they could work, shop, or have some personal time through Respite Care, Community Habilitation, or Day Habilitation operated in conjunction with the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. And we served 131 people in 2014.*

*We found that persons with disabilities or their primary care-givers were in need of case management and information and referral services and an advocate for quality services and we developed a Services Coordination program working with 80-90 disabled individuals or families with a developmentally disabled member each month.*

*We found that lower income families with infants might be at risk of poor child development, lack of resources, or face other problems and we joined the New York State Healthy Families network, providing case management staff to work with families with newborns to work for the appropriate development of the children, and we served 58 families in 2014.*

*We did not do accomplish the above alone. We were helped by approximately 400 volunteers each year. We were assisted by partner organizations at the local level including the Delaware County Department of Social Services, Public Health Service, Office for the Aging, Village and Town governments, local faith based groups and others.*

*Our work is not done. We continue to identify needs and we will continue to develop programs and services which address those needs so that we can eliminate the paradox of “poverty in a land of plenty” and we can achieve our mission. We need to assure that services are appropriate, and effective. We need to develop new services and to be innovative in designing our method of service delivery.*

*We need a Delaware County where jobs that pay a livable wage are available, where people have the training and skills to fill those jobs, where our children can grow in a safe and healthy environment, where they can dream of better and greater things for the future, and where they can see their dreams come true. And we are Delaware Opportunities and we can make this vision a reality.*

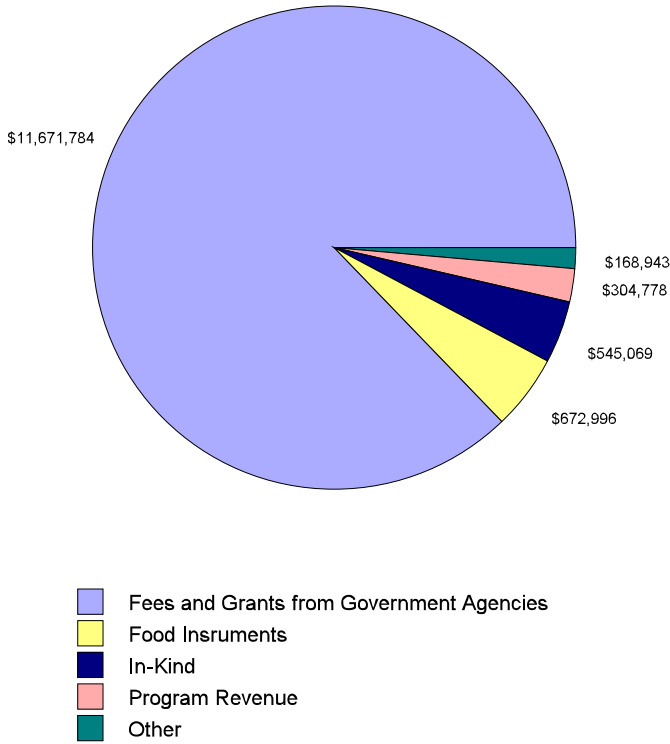
*I look forward to working with a dedicated staff and a committed Board of Directors in 2015 as we continue to meet the needs of residents of Delaware County.*

*Sincerely,*

*John M. Eberhard  
Executive Director*

## 2014 Revenues

### Funding Sources



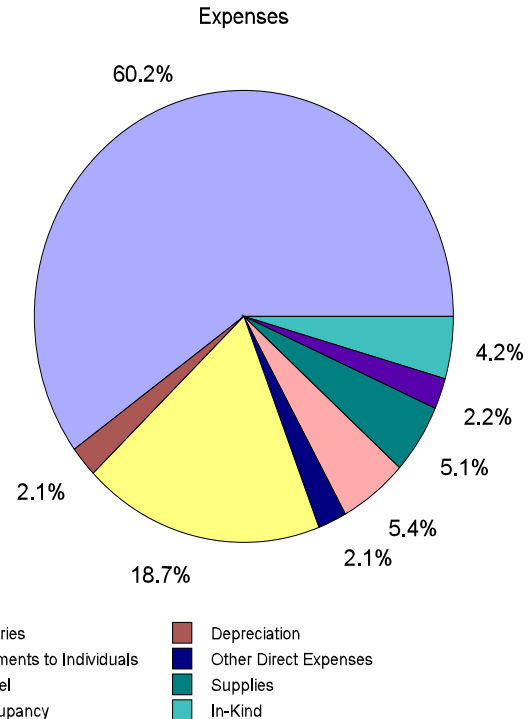
*Delaware Opportunities is a multi-funded not for profit agency and in 2014 had 87% of revenue coming from fees and grants from government agencies, and another 5% provided as food instruments in the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program.*

*Approximately 4% of revenues were provided as "in-kind" valuated space, supplies, and volunteer time.*

*Program Income came largely from donations to the Senior Dining Program and earnings from Weatherization activities and accounted for 2% of the revenues.*

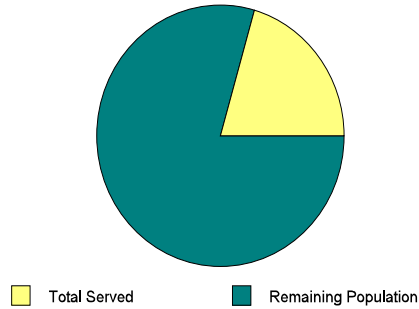
*Interest, contributions, and miscellaneous make up the balance of revenues.*

*Salaries and fringe benefits totaled \$7,749,282 and represent almost 59% of expenses. Payments to individuals include rental assistance, WIC vouchers, and other forms of assistance directly to eligible persons totaled \$2,408,296. This represents almost 18% of the total expenses for the agency. Supplies totaled \$651,097 and include Weatherization materials, and food for the Senior Dining and Head Start programs. Another \$694,661 was spent on travel, most of which related to the Medicaid Transportation Program; and \$545,069 was in kind, \$280,232 was occupancy, \$127,200 was for insurance, \$112,154 for contractual/consultants, and depreciation was \$270,106, and the balance of \$272,597 for other direct costs.*

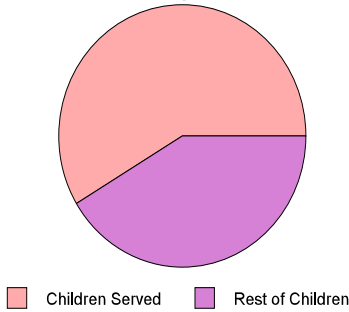


*In 2014, the agency served a total of 9,610 unduplicated persons in 4,666 households. This represents over 20 ½ percent of the population of Delaware County or over 23 ½ percent of the total households, virtually all of the low income households and many others.*

Served as % of Population



0 to 5 year Olds



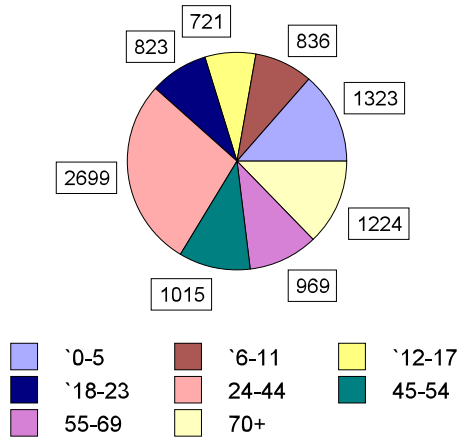
*The very young, 0 to 5 years of age made up almost 14% of those served. The entire population of Delaware County has an estimated population of 2,255 children in this age group. Delaware Opportunities served 1,323 of these or nearly 59%.*

*Statistics show that children and particularly young children are most vulnerable in terms of living in poverty.*

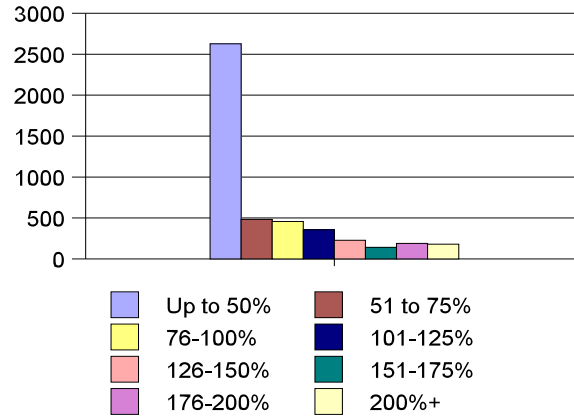
*Single family households have a particularly difficult time remaining above the poverty limits. Of those served in 2014, almost 45% of the families with children were single parent households.*

*In terms of ethnicity and race, those served by the agency were generally consistent with the population of the county. A little over 3% reported Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. 97.7% of those served were white. 109 were Black or African American, 20 were Asian, 34 were American Indian, and 57 reported other.*

AGES OF THOSE SERVED



# SERVED BY % OF POVERTY



Our 2015 Board of Directors

Arthur C. Edel, President  
Tina Molé, Vice President  
Jeffrey Staples, Secretary  
Wayne Marshfield, Treasurer

Frank Bachler, Delegate for Tom Hynes

Edward DuVall

Tom Schimmerling

Peggy Kearney

Regina Krzyston

Ann LePinnet

Steve McKeegan

Marjorie Miller

Nancy Olechnowicz

Shirley Niebanck, Delegate for Jim Ellis

(In December of 2014, the Board was saddened by the sudden death of the Vice President Vabina Meyers. Vabina was known for her commitment to the Walton Food Bank, her warm and generous heart, her generous help to those in need and for her years of service as a member of the Board of Directors)

Our Senior Staff and Program Directors

Linda Eskow, Deputy Director/Head Start Director

Janelle Montgomery, Child and Family Development Director

Demetra Alberti, Community Services and Personnel Director

Kathy Preston, Fiscal Officer

Joe Maggiore, Weatherization Director

Rick Angerer, Senior Dining Project Director

Lynda Hitt, Housing and Community Development Director

Rhonda Pinney, Executive Administrator

*Our 239 staff and 362 volunteers were dedicated to serving the residents of Delaware County, children, youth, families, and the elderly, regardless of ethnicity or race. We were committed to seeing those we served prosper and improve living circumstances. Our efforts were rewarded, successes were achieved. And yet much remains to be done. To learn more about Delaware Opportunities to volunteer or to serve, contact us at (607) 746-1600...35430 State Highway 10, Hamden, New York 13782, visit our web site at*

*[www.delawareopportunities.org](http://www.delawareopportunities.org), or email us at [delopp@delawareopportunities.org](mailto:delopp@delawareopportunities.org)*

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