



*2016 annual report
of*

Delaware Opportunities Inc.

*helping people, changing lives
making a difference for today and tomorrow
for 51 years*

1965-2016

From the Executive Director:

2016 was a year of continued community service for Delaware Opportunities. We began new grant programs including an elderly emergency home repair program, a county-wide housing rehabilitation program, a homeownership program, and two local housing rehabilitation grant programs. For those unfamiliar with Delaware Opportunities, I will begin this report with the following:

Delaware Opportunities is governed by a Board of Directors, one third of whom are elected officials or their delegates, one third are representatives from the community, and one third are democratically elected by low income residents of the county. The mission of the agency, simply stated, is to identify people in need as well as the causes and consequences of poverty and then to find ways to address the needs and to find ways to mitigate the causes and consequences.

And this is how we proceeded in 2016 in pursuit of this mission.

Children from low income families can be better prepared for kindergarten if they have an early learning, child development experience. We provided the Head Start program for 234 children in 12 classrooms.



Keeping senior citizens engaged in socialization and recreation, and providing adequate nutrition through a hot noon time meal leads to an extended and improved quality of life. We provided the Senior Dining Congregate Meal program serving 505 people in 440 households.



And to keep seniors in their own homes when they were homebound and unable to feed themselves we provided home delivered meals to 515 senior citizens in 440 households.

For people lacking the skills to successfully gain employment we partnered with the Delaware County Department of Social Services and provided both a work experience program and the "Better Employment Skills Training (BEST)" program helping 343 people in 2016. We helped 80 unemployed people find work and we helped them keep a job providing support and case management services.



People with children under the age of 12 need child care if they are to work. We recruited and supported a network of 46 family and group family day care providers providing 340 children with appropriate care fostering positive child development and allowing parents to work. We provided training to improve the quality of care for children and we provided small grant amounts to help people become day care providers.



And we partnered with the Department of Social Services to provide lower income families with a subsidy for the cost of day care so that 125 lower income households could work and have their wages cover much more than child care.

People with limited incomes needed car seats to keep children safe. Working with the Delaware County Public Health Service we provided seats for 263 children in 173 households and we trained parents on the proper installation and use of the seats.

Pregnant, and breastfeeding women and children 0 to 5 years of age with proper nutrition can result in positive child development. We offered the Women, Infant, and Children program, commonly referred to as WIC, serving 671 households and 1,088 people.



Doctors say that breastfeeding infants is best for their immune systems and for early childhood development. We encouraged this practice and held a Breastfeeding Awareness Walk.



Lower income households spend a disproportionate amount of household income on heating their homes, in some cases facing the “heat or eat” dilemma. We provided the Weatherization Assistance Program, conserving fuel and reducing home heating costs by approximately 25% for each of 52 households.

And, we also identified the need for outreach and application assistance for the Home Energy Assistance Program, known as HEAP, and we provided assistance to 1,240 households with assistance in obtaining a cash benefit to assure the availability of heat during the winter.

To address the issue of the county's aging and in some cases deteriorating housing stock we completed repair programs in three communities and started a county-wide program bringing 42 substandard single family homes to standard condition. And we provided emergency home repairs for 11 elderly households.



People with low to moderate incomes wanted to become homeowners. In response, we operated three homeownership programs providing grants to reduce the cost of the mortgage to an affordable level. We provided housing counseling to these and other households and we helped those with foreclosure notices or delinquencies to retain their homes.

We found that people could not afford to rent a decent, safe and sanitary home for their family. We operated the rental assistance program and assisted 893 households with 1937 people limit their 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 operated 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 37 children during 2016. The program also offered group activities including one which also involved foster children making cards and gifts for homebound senior citizens.



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.

We found families at risk of, or indicated for, child abuse and neglect and we instituted a Parent Education program, working with approximately 80 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.

Unfortunately, domestic violence is prevalent in the community; we continued to offer a safe shelter...a place for victims and their dependent children to escape violence and to plan for a future without such violence. We offered 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. And we partnered with SUNY Delhi to raise consciousness around the issue, dancing to the theme of "One Billion Rising" recognizing the world's abused population.



We operated a rape crisis and sexual assault program. We offered preventive education as well as support for victims. We maintained a hotline staffed by volunteers and we provided counselors to assure that victims received necessary services. We entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with SUNY Delhi to focus attention on sexual assault in New York State universities.

We found people were without either resources or food. We assured that parents and children would not go to bed hungry by supporting a county-wide food pantry network consisting of food pantries in nearly every town in the county, created by or at least encouraged to be in existence by the agency. These local pantries were staffed by volunteers and generated local donations which we were able to supplement from a central food pantry. We directly served about 794 people in 363 households. The network served an average of 587 households a month and 1,652 people. To expand food available we obtained donations of fresh produce and we grew vegetables in our own garden. The network served over 10,000 people and provided approximately 205,000 meals.



We also provided mass food distributions on a monthly basis from March to October.

Some people did not have appropriate clothes to apply for work or to go to school so we obtained donations and provided almost 7,000 articles of clothing.



Some people were homeless or about to become homeless. We provided rental assistance or help with electric bills for 11 homeless families and 29 near-homeless households.

Children in foster care were being moved from one foster family to another because of behavior issues. To keep the children from being institutionalized we placed them in 4 Agency Operated Foster Homes, our staff provided appropriate levels of care for 6 to 12 children each month.

Children who were aging out of foster care needed independent living skills. We helped 20 kids get driver's licenses, learn how to shop and cook, establish checking accounts, and other activities necessary to live on their own.

Families with developmentally disabled members needed some time away from caregiving to keep the family intact. We provided aides to care for 86 disabled people freeing primary caregivers so that they could work, shop, or have some personal time to themselves.

We joined the New York State Healthy Family Network and provided case management staff to work with 58 families with newborns so that they would provide for the appropriate development of the children.

We did not do this alone. We were helped by approximately 400 volunteers this 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.

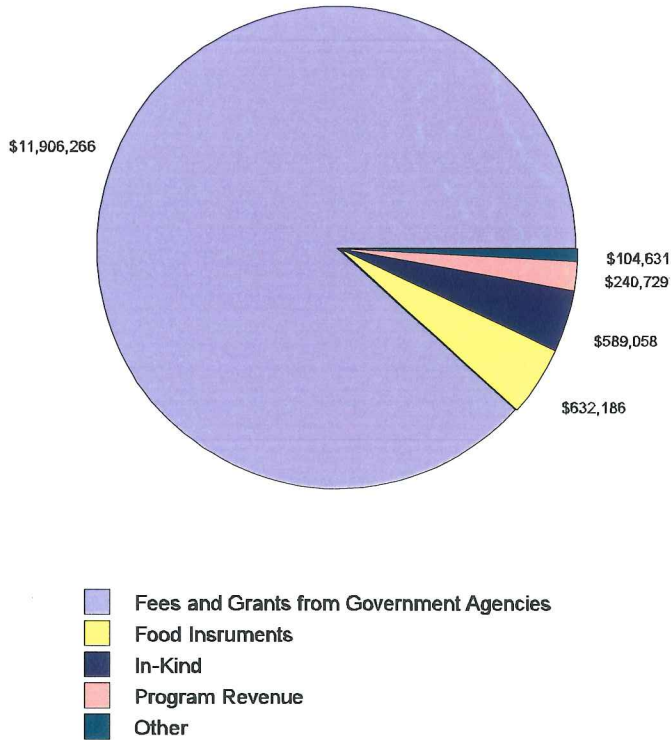
*We need a Delaware County where jobs that pay a livable wage are available, where people have the training and skills to fill those jobs, where our children can grow in a safe and healthy environment, where they can dream of better and greater things for the future, and where they can see their dreams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

I'm looking forward to working with a dedicated staff and a committed Board of Directors in 2017 as we continue to meet the needs of residents of Delaware County.

Sincerely,

*John M. Eberhard
Executive Director*

2015 Revenues
Funding Sources



Delaware Opportunities is a multi-funded not for profit agency and in 2015 had 88% 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.

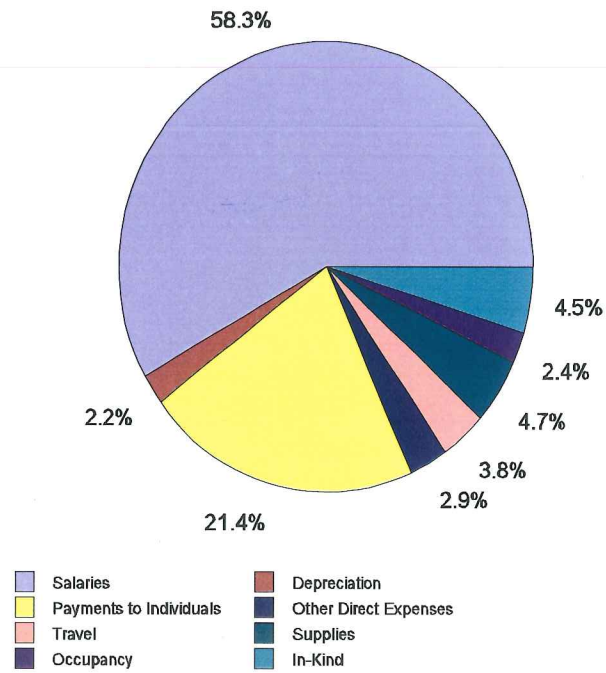
Approximately 4% of revenues were provided as “in-kind” valuated space, supplies, and volunteer time.

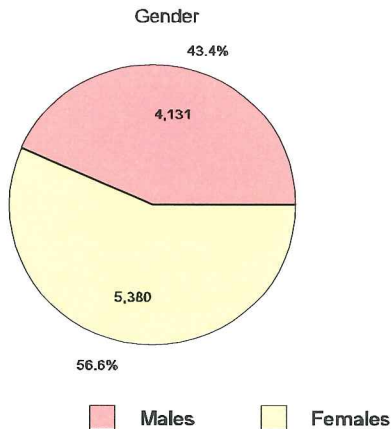
Program Income came largely from donations to the Senior Dining Program and earnings from Weatherization activities and accounted for 2% of the revenues.

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

Salaries and fringe benefits totaled \$7,700,948 and represent almost 59% of expenses. Payments to individuals include rental assistance, WIC vouchers, and other forms of assistance directly to eligible persons totaled \$2,826,641. This represents over 21% of the total expenses for the agency. Supplies totaled \$617,515 and include weatherization materials, and food for the Senior Dining and Head Start programs. Another \$496,009 was spent on travel, most of which related to the Medicaid Transportation Program; and \$589,058 was in kind, \$313,948 was occupancy, \$149,092 was for insurance, \$106,828 for contractual/consultants, and depreciation was \$295,467, and the balance was for other direct costs.

Expenses

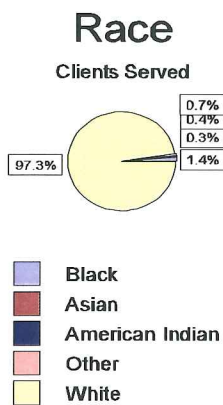
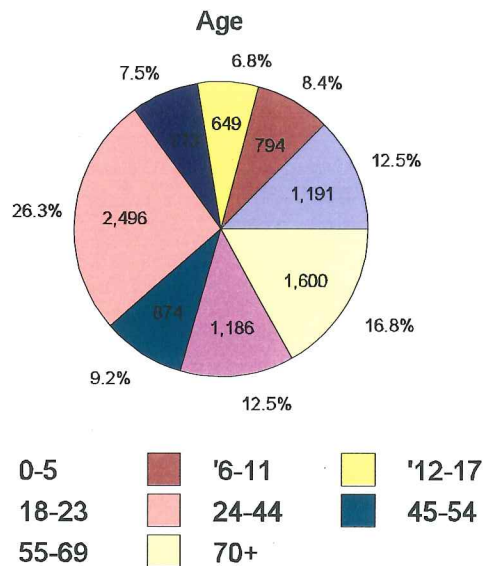




During 2016, Delaware Opportunities served 9,511 persons in 4,131 households. Most of these received more than one service from the agency (for example, WIC, Head Start, and Weatherization). Those served represent a little under 21% of the entire population of Delaware County.

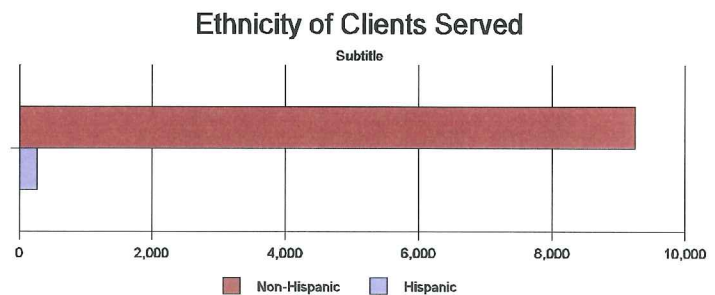
Of those served over half were females (56.6%).

The very young and the very old made up a significant segment of the population served. Those 0-5 years of age made up 12.5% of the total population. Typically, children in this age group are served through the Healthy Families, WIC, and Head Start programs. Those over the age of 70 made up 16.8% of the population. In 2013, 13.6% of those served were over the age of 70. The increase in the elderly is consistent with county demographics which have the elderly percent of the population growing rapidly..

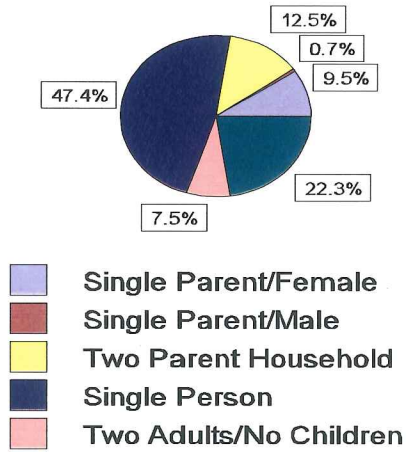


The population served is similar to the general population of Delaware County. 1.1% of the client population served is Black or African American as compared to 1.6% of the population. The remaining groups make up 1.1% of those served, which is exactly consistent with the percentage for these groups in the county's total population.

Approximately 2.8% of the clients served were Hispanic, slightly less than the 3.3% in the total county population.



Family Type



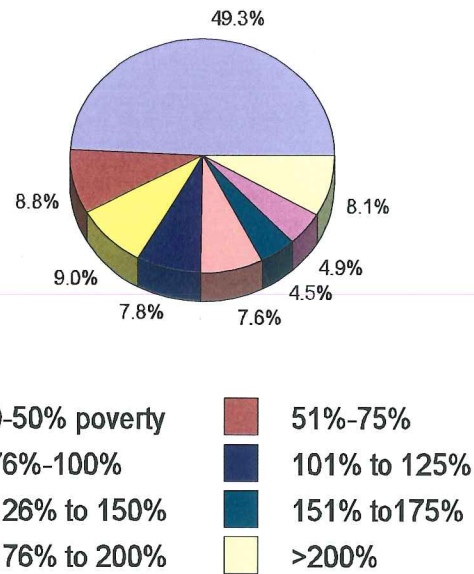
487 of the families served were single parent families (454 single parent female and 33 single parent male). This represents 13.2% of the families served where the type was identified. Single persons at 47.3% made up the largest segment of those served.

Only 12.5% of the families declaring family type were two parent households.

Delaware Opportunities devotes most of its resources to assisting those most in need. 2,395 of the 4,721 families assisted were living at or below 50% of poverty. Almost 72% were living below the poverty guidelines, and almost 80% were living below 125% of poverty.

Some programs operated by the agency have income guidelines, limiting assistance to a certain percentage of poverty, while others such as Senior Dining or Safe Against Violence have no income restrictions.

Family Poverty Levels



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Our Senior Staff and Program Directors

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Demetra Alberti, Community Services and Personnel Director

Kathy Preston, Fiscal Officer

Joe Maggiore, Weatherization Director

Rick Angerer, Senior Dining Project Director

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