



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” ~Abraham Lincoln

Delaware Opportunities Inc.

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TO OUR PARTNERS, CLIENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Our Mission

The mission of Delaware Opportunities is to “help people achieve self sufficiency and attain a better quality of life.”

2021 Highlights

- ✓ **Hiring of Two New Homeless Advocates:** With the addition of new homelessness prevention monies through CARES and ARPA, Delaware Opportunities added two new homeless advocates to work with and assist individuals who were homeless or facing homelessness.
- ✓ **Creation of a CAC Coordinator Position:** With an increased demand for Child Advocacy services, as well as a looming build for a physical location, Delaware Opportunities has brought on staff a designated CAC Coordinator to assist with and oversee the Child Advocacy aspects of the Safe Against Violence program (under the guidance of the SAV Director).
- ✓ **New Home Care Services Program:** In collaboration with the Department of Social Services, Delaware Opportunities has developed and will be implementing a new Home Care Services program, to address gaps in service needs related to Medicaid redesign. This program will put professionals into the homes of elderly and disabled clients, assisting them with everyday needs and connecting them to other potential services and supports.
- ✓ **Leadership Institute:** For the third year in a row, Delaware Opportunities leadership has hosted a Leadership Institute for agency staff interested in learning more about Community Action, management, leadership and much more. Participants volunteer at community events, attend a Board meeting, and develop a new project/service idea for the agency. To-date, over 30 agency staff have participated in this unique opportunity.
- ✓ **Staff Safety Committee:** Brought back from the days of the past, DO has reestablished its staff safety committee as part of the NYS Hero Act. Agency staff meet monthly to discuss agency safety needs, reevaluate and revise policies and procedures, update supplies, offer recommendations and much more.
- ✓ **More CARES Funding:** Delaware Opportunities saw a large influx of CARES and ARPA dollars coming into the agency to assist clients impacted, in some way, by COVID. Some of the new ways that DO was able to assist clients during COVID included: CSA boxes, non-food essential items, gas cards, clothing and bedding, hotel/motel vouchers, security deposits,

COVID emergency relief fund (helped with a variety of things), increased food supply, day care subsidies, increased and longer-term rental assistance, funds to support local child care providers as well as scholarships for essential workers, and domestic violence and safe housing related programs and services.

- ✓ **Nourish NY:** For the past couple of years Delaware Opportunities, via the Northeast Regional Food Bank, provided local dairy products to the county via dairy distributions both at the Hamden Food Bank location as well as in many communities all around the county. Just now entering into Round 5 and 6 of funding, Delaware Opportunities is excited to be able to continue to provide dairy products to the county while at the same time also supporting local farmers.
- ✓ **Delaware Opportunities Takes on Legal Aid Contract:** Delaware Opportunities, for several years, has been a part of an OVS contract coordinated by Opportunities for Otsego to support legal aid services for domestic violence victims in Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties. In 2021, Delaware Opportunities took over that contract, bringing additional funds and services to support Delaware county clients. DO looks forward to continuing to support legal aid services for both Delaware and Otsego counties in a new funding cycle to start in October 2022.
- ✓ **Back to School Supplies and Holiday Giveaways:** Delaware Opportunities continued to support families with one-time opportunities such as back to school supplies and holiday giveaways. These opportunities have become annual events that families rely on to support their family's needs. DO hopes to continue these and other one-time initiatives into the future.
- ✓ **DO Says Goodbye to Long-Time Employee and DO Deputy Director:** Demetra Alberti, long-time DO employee and Deputy Director, said goodbye to DO in December 2021 as she embarked on her new journey as the Deputy Director for the Albany Community Action Partnership. DO wishes Demetra the best of luck in her new journey.
- ✓ **DO Welcomes Its First Full-Time HR Director:** With the departure of the agency's long-time Personnel Director (Demetra), DO decided to bring on a 100% dedicated HR Director. In doing so, DO has welcomed Mercedes Newkerk, who started in her new role in early January 2022.
- ✓ **Increased Use of Social Media for Marketing and Advertising:** As people have spent the last two years on their devices, Zooming, doing things remotely, DO took advantage of that to utilize social media to boost and target advertising and posts to targeted communities within the county. This has helped broaden the reach about opportunities and services for those residing in Delaware County.

- ✓ **Many Open and New Positions:** Delaware Opportunities continues to fill open positions in many of its programs, including a significant need in its Head Start program. Additionally, as new programs and services emerge (i.e. Home Care Services), new positions are being added. Stay tuned by watching DO's website, Indeed and social media profiles to see what the current job openings may be.
- ✓ **Updated Community Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan:** Delaware Opportunities, as a Community Action Agency, conducts a Community Needs Assessment every three years. The newly updated Community Needs Assessment will be made available to the community in early 2022 along with the agencies new three-year strategic plan, which has a strong emphasis on trauma-informed care and the social determinants of health.
- ✓ **Delaware Opportunities Gears up for its Triennial Review (TRACS):** As a Community Action Agency, Delaware Opportunities takes part in an annual review of federal organizational standards. Every third year, it takes part in a more comprehensive review that looks at standards and various indicators set by both the Federal and state governments. DO is gearing up for its next Triennial review, scheduled for Spring 2022.
- ✓ **Supplies for Life:** Certified Peer Recovery Coach and Harm Reduction Specialist, Jen Cutting, and Delaware Opportunities have joined forces to bring Jen's vision for "Supplies for Life" to scale in Delaware County. Providing much needed supplies, support and referral to those in recovery and/or living in active addiction has allowed Jen and DO Staff to work together to bridge the gap to other much-needed and sometimes life-saving services.
- ✓ **All Things COVID:** What to say about this??? COVID has dominated our lives for almost two full years now. Delaware Opportunities is most proud of its ability to stay open, providing critical services to the community, while navigating illness and changing guidance and protocols. While COVID has been frustrating, it has also taught staff about working remotely, utilizing technology to interface with each other and clients, and has encouraged the agency to think creatively about programs and services. With that said, DO looks forwards to an upcoming year of the COVID pandemic winding down.

***"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."
~Mahatma Gandhi***

Looking Ahead To 2022

WOW! That was my sentiment last year at this time and is my sentiment again this year. WOW! What other way to sum up our second year of living in a global pandemic and dealing with all of the things associated with its impact. 2020 saw new technology, new and creative ideas and programming, and staff coming together to assist the community. While all of those things remain true in 2021, staff also have grown tired of the pandemic and having to work remotely and deal with missed work days and children being out of school. As we enter into 2022, DO remains committed to assisting people in the community, which also includes its own staff. DO has established several committees that will be staff-led and focus on aspects of organizational culture and safety. The committees include: Safety Committee; Wellness Committee; Staff Book Club; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Workgroup; ACEs Workgroup; and an Events Committee. All of these opportunities coupled with a host of new in-service opportunities will hopefully continue to provide outlets and venues for staff to share together, vent, and rebuild those self-care strategies that will help sustain them into and throughout 2022 as we continue to tackle the pandemic and all that comes with it. DO is nothing if not resilient and that is a true testament to the staff that work tirelessly each and every day to provide all that they can to those living in and around Delaware County and will continue to do so into the future!

Regardless of what 2022 has in store for us...we are ready! Bring it on!

Dr. Shelly L. Bartow
Executive Director
February 2022



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

March 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022 (information through 2/7/2022)

Total Available Budget-\$14,234,377

Large Revenue Streams

Federal Funds-8,991,103 (including funds that pass through NYS and DSS)

New York State Funds-1,393,170

County and Local Contracts/Cash-575,608

Other County Revenue-60,831

Contributions-64,533

In-Kind-444,697

Miscellaneous-129,437

Foundations-47,963

Large Agency Expenses

Salaries and Fringe-7,464,758

Consultants-100,819

Administrative Overhead (i.e. rent, utilities, maintenance and repair, etc.)-493,341

Supplies-390,303

Food-505,976

Grants to Individuals-151,904

Payments to Providers-116,600

Insurance-185,842

Printing/Copies/Subscriptions/Recruitment and Advertising-109,195

Data Processing-30,476

Equipment Maintenance-9,543

Travel/Vehicles-294,529

Rent/Mortgage Assistance-215,769

Energy Assistance-26,934

Haps Payments-990,775

In-Kind-444,697

Administrative Expense-160,759

AGENCY GOVERNANCE

Delaware Opportunities Board of Directors	
Arthur Edel, President	Frank Bachler, Vice President
Wayne Marshfield, Treasurer	Jeff Staples, Secretary
Andrew Flach	Jean Krzyston
Ann LePinnet	Steve McKeegan
Charlene Gregory (Delegate for Joe Cetta)	Shirley Niebanck (Delegate for Jim Ellis)
Tom Schimmerling	Mark Tuthill
Polly DellaCrosse	Margaret Hilson
Wayland Gladstone	

Delaware Opportunities Head Start Policy Council Members	
Polly DellaCrosse, Chair, Community Rep	Sheila Biruk, Arkville
Kayla Kenyon, Community Rep	Stefanie Cassese, Davenport
Nerissa Craig, Community Rep	Autumn Hanley, Delhi (alternate)
Miranda Hitt, Delhi	Alysia Johnson, Franklin
Liz Shaver, Deposit	Jenny Felter, Fishs Eddy
Michele Grigoli-Sparacio, Fishs Eddy (alternate)	Nalya Jimenez, Sidney
Samantha Savino, Sidney	Desiree Pryor, Walton
Shannon Connelly, Walton	Christina Johnson, Walton (alternate)

OUR STAFF

Senior Staff and Program Directors
Shelly Bartow, Executive Director
Hope Lambrecht, Fiscal Officer
Mercedes Newkerk, HR Director
Janelle Montgomery, Child and Family Development Director
Rose Cibelli, Head Start Director
Lynda Hitt, Housing and Community Development Director
David DelBalso, Weatherization Director
Rick Angerer, Senior Dining Project Director
Chris Nordberg, Technology Services Director
Janelle Hartwell, Community Services Director
Stacy Osborn, SAV Director
Danielle Morrell, Executive Administrator
Kathryn McAteer, Executive Administrator
Andrea Byrne, WIC Director
Tracie Hunt, Family Residences and Independent Living Skills (FRILS) Director
Amy Burdick, Developmental Disabilities Services Director
Maggie DelBalso, Parent Education Director
Laurie Kenny, Day Care Director

Number of Volunteers: 150

Volunteer Hours: 30,000 on average in a normal year

Current Number of Full-Time Staff: 179

Current Number of Part-Time Staff: 12

OUR PROGRAMS, BY THE NUMBERS

**All statistics pulled from CSBG Fourth Quarter Report (this funding and reporting reflects a period of October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021)*

Employment and Training:

- Provided intake for 18 public assistance applicants who were without a job
- 4 of those individuals were placed in a work experience

Emergency Food and Shelter:

- Provided intake for 226 families
- 30 families paid utility arrears to avoid utility shutoffs
- 100 received support to pay back rent to avoid eviction
- 5 received support to pay back mortgages to avoid foreclosure

No Heat Emergencies:

- 65 referrals were received from DSS for households without heat due to non-functioning furnaces
- 34 received furnace repairs or replacements
- 6 of those households will also be placed on the Weatherization waiting list

HEAP:

- Accepted and processed 2,515 applications for HEAP assistance from those not receiving public assistance or SNAP
- 1,661 of those applications were determined to be income eligible and utility payments were made on their behalf
- 331 received emergency LIHEAP assistance

Solutions to End Homelessness:

- 22 homeless families enrolled in the program and were determined eligible for assistance
- 12 were provided with re-housing assistance for immediate housing by providing first month's rent and security deposits to maintain safe and affordable housing
- 13 will receive ongoing rental assistance to maintain affordable housing for 90 days
- 8 will receive ongoing rental assistance to maintain affordable housing for 180 days
- 58 near homeless households were enrolled in the program and be determined eligible for assistance
- 22 of those 58 households received assistance to remain in their home or relocate via payment of back rent or first month's rent
- 26 of those 58 households received assistance to relocate via payment of a security deposit

- 27 of the 58 households maintained safe and affordable housing for 90 days
- 23 of the 58 households maintained safe and affordable housing for 180 days

Weatherization:

- Conducted intake of 93 households interested in applying for the Weatherization Assistance program
- Of the 93 intakes, 41 housing units in Delaware County and 12 units in Sullivan County were the recipient of Weatherization activities
- Of the 93 intakes, 4 were referred to NYSERDA for assistance through the Empower program
- Of the 4 applications referred to NYSERDA, 4 received energy saving measures on their homes

Rental Assistance:

- Performed client intake and maintained client files for 746 households
- Provided rental subsidies for 699 households to limit rent and utility costs to 30% of income to make decent housing affordable
- Placed 186 households on the waiting list to receive assistance when available

Housing Counseling:

- Provided pre-purchase counseling for 64 households
- Of the 64 households, developed sustainable budgets with all 64 who were counseled
- Of the 64 households, three of those who developed sustainable budgets secured resources to achieve homeownership

Housing Rehabilitation:

- Provided housing repairs for 20 units of single-family, owner-occupied homes totaling over \$500,000
- Rehabilitation was completed with Emergency Repairs to Elderly (Restore), Affordable Housing Corporation (Homebuyer and Rehabilitation) grants and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Colchester) funding

Head Start:

- 126 children participated in pre-school activities to develop school readiness skills
- Of the 126, all children obtained age-appropriate immunizations and medical care
- Of the 126, all received dental checkups, with 120 receiving dental care
- 126 of the 126 children have improved health and physical development as a result of adequate nutrition
- 85 of the 126 children are developmentally ready to enter kindergarten
- 126 of the 126 children demonstrated improved family functioning

- 11 parents engaged in parent group meetings and served on Policy Council
- One member of Policy Council served on the Delaware Opportunities Board of Directors

Child Care Resource and Referral:

- Maintained Standards of Excellence for CCR&R as issued by ECLC
- 139 referrals for providers were made to parents seeking child care
- 310 family, group family, and legally exempt child care slots were filled
- Technical assistance was provided to 32 family and group family day care providers
- 122 partnerships with day care providers were maintained

Day Care Registration:

- Approximately 75 inspections of family day care homes were conducted to assure positive approaches towards learning were being demonstrated
- Approximately 10 inspections of school day care programs were conducted to assure positive approaches towards learning were being demonstrated

Big Buddy:

- 57 at risk youth were identified as being willing to participate in the Big Buddy program
- 25 mentors were recruited, screened, trained and supported
- 13 of the 57 youth demonstrated and improved positive approach towards learning, including improved attention skills

SNAP Outreach:

- Provided SNAP benefit information in face to face contacts with 1,108 eligible households
- Of the 1,108 households, 180 were assisted with pre-screening
- 106 of those households were found to be eligible and received SNAP benefits
- 5 of those households needed assistance with recertifying for benefits

Car Seat Donation Program:

- Provided client intake for 130 households with young children who did not have a car safety seat
- 130 households received the resources to safely transport their child(ren)

Healthy Families:

- Provides assessments to prioritize the need for services and enrolled 68 families
- Of the 68 children enrolled in the program, 60 had all age appropriate immunizations

- 55 of the 68 enrolled children demonstrated age appropriate development
- 68 of the 68 children demonstrated improved skills related to the adult role of parents

Developmental Disability Services:

- Provided client intake for 39 developmentally disabled persons
- Provided respite, after school respite, day hab, and community hab services for 39 individuals

Senior Dining:

- Provided intake for 28 senior citizens to participate in the congregate meal setting
 - Provided intake for 523 senior citizens to participate in the home delivered portion of the program
 - Provided 523 home bound seniors with a home delivered meal to keep them healthy and independent
- **During COVID, thousands of additional home delivered meals were served to any senior, whether they had previously qualified for or had received home delivered meals in the past

Food Pantry Network:

- Maintained the Food Pantry Network, providing resources, food and expertise to 16 locally based food pantries
- Obtained \$79,795 in donations that were distributed to low income families
- Provided 26,610 bags of groceries to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met
- Provided 8,160 bags of groceries from the satellite sponsored food pantry (Delhi) to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met
- Provided 178,236 bags of groceries through the remainder of the food pantry network to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met.
- 86 food insecure households received food via the Hamden Food Bank

WIC:

- Processed applications to serve 608 women, infants, and children
- Provided benefits to 608 households

Independent Living Skills:

- Identified 14 children about to leave foster care due to aging out of the system and provided training via life skills coaching sessions to 24 individuals

Safe Against Violence:

- Provided client intake for 190 victims of domestic violence

- Provided information and referrals for 190 victims of domestic violence to help keep them safe from abuse
- Of the 190 victims, 22 were provided with shelter to keep them safe from abuse

Day Care Subsidies:

- Provided intake for 85 families seeking to obtain or retain affordable, quality child care
- Provided ongoing child care subsidies for 82 children so that parents can seek and maintain affordable child care
- Sponsored CACFP funds for providers assuring child health for 233 children as a result of adequate nutrition

Medicaid Transportation:

- Provided intake for 190 people seeking transportation to medical appointments
- Accepted referrals for medical appointments, dispatched vehicles, and provided transportation to 190 people for access to necessary health care

DSS Transportation:

- Accepted referrals from DSS and provided transportation to and from designated services for 42 low income people
- Provided transportation for 6 people for job training or to seek, obtain or maintain employment

Services Transportation:

- Provided intake and transportation for 27 households needing to access services

Safe Against Violence:

- Provided client intake for 91 victims of rape or sexual assault
- Of the 91 victims, provided information and referral to all 91 victims to assist them with recovering from the assault
- Provided legal accompaniment to 65 victims
- Provided case management for all 90 victims to assist them in their recovery

Family Residences-Agency Operated Foster Homes:

- Provided staffing for four agency operated foster homes
- Accepted referrals for 20 children from DS and provided caring, supportive services

Used Clothing and Household Goods:

- Accepted donations of clothing and household goods valued at \$79,795 to distribute to low-income households in need
- Provided 982 units of clothing to low-income households to assist those individuals in achieving and maintaining capacity to meet basic needs for 90 days
- Provided emergency clothing assistance 51 families
- Assisted 51 families in meeting the basic needs for 90 days by providing emergency clothing and household goods

Parent Education:

- 155 (out of a proposed 80) referrals were received from DSS for the improvement of parenting skills
- 52 of the referrals demonstrated improved skills related to the adult role of parents
- 25 of the referrals demonstrated increased sensitivity and responsiveness in their interactions with their children

Family Development:

- Provided intake for 37 families
- 17 of the 37 found employment
- 23 of the 37 obtained safe and affordable housing
- 30 of the 37 obtained health insurance

Youth Engagement Program:

- Provided services to 21 DSS-referred youth to receive mentoring and support in areas related to communication, coping skills, academic support, community engagement, age-appropriate socialization and personal responsibilities and growth.

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