



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

“Who you are tomorrow begins with what
you do today.” ~Tim Fargo



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.”

2020 Highlights

- ✓ **Census:** Delaware Opportunities, in partnership with the Census Bureau and Delaware County, participated in coordinated outreach activities-even amidst COVID-to raise awareness of and assist people in completing their Census.
- ✓ **ACES and Trauma-Informed Care:** Agency staff have been trained as trainers and have participated in a multitude of trainings related to ACES and Trauma-Informed Care. Better understanding these topics have not only allowed DO to focus on the delivery of quality services to clients but also has benefitted staff in the way in which they interact with one other, their staff, and even those in their personal lives. Agency trainers have provided several trainings to the community on these topics as well.
- ✓ **CCAP:** 2020 marked the first year of the very first Certified Community Action Professional at Delaware Opportunities. Congratulations to Demetra Alberti for participating in the rigorous program and earning her CCAP.
- ✓ **Leadership Institute:** In 2020, ten agency up and coming leaders participated in the first ever “Leadership Institute”. This six-month program introduced staff to information related to management skills, leadership styles and philosophies, finances, Community Action, development of mission statements, organizational standards, understanding the role of the Board, and so much more. Participants also had an opportunity to develop a new idea, aligning with the mission, that would be implemented within the agency/community. Helga Newman and Janelle Hartwell’s project-Our Community Cares- was selected and has since been implemented in the Walton and Sidney CSD’s.

- ✓ **CARES Funding:** One of the great things to come out of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the receipt of CARES funding via many of our agency contracts. Delaware Opportunities received hundreds of thousands of dollars in CARES or other special funding to support the increase in need and demand for services during the 2020 year. Many of these funds still remain and can and will be utilized throughout 2021. These funds supported things like day care subsidies and day care scholarships; security deposit assistance; emergency relief for unexpected emergency expenses; food insecurity needs; increased transportation needs; support to local farmers; Head Start; senior meals for an increased number of seniors needing home delivered meals; rental, utility, and other types of emergency assistance; and additional assistance for victims of domestic violence.

- ✓ **Nourish NY:** 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. Almost \$150,000 was spent on coordinating distributions that distributed local dairy products directly to the community. Some events saw as many as 400 families picking up dairy products.

- ✓ **Delivery of Food and Other Essential Household Items:** Through the generous contributions of many individuals as well as several local foundations, DO was able to not only coordinate the delivery of items to people's houses (especially to those quarantined) but was also able to provide and keep on hand other non-food essential items. Things like soap, detergent, feminine products, cleaning supplies, pet food, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and so much more was available to those in need. DO also coordinate prescription pick-up and delivery for those who were home bound or otherwise unable to pick it up themselves.

- ✓ **Upgraded Phone System:** Delaware Opportunities was in great need of a telephone upgrade in its Hamden office. Working with Delhi Telephone Company, the agency now has new phones that allow for direct calls in to staff providing services, caller ID, message to voicemail (which is great for the teleworkers) and other great features that are making people's communication with others much easier and much more streamlined.

- ✓ **Establishment of Emergency Relief Fund:** While many of the contributions support food and other non-food essential items that people desperately needed, thousands of dollars were also

received to create and sustain the development and administration of an Emergency Relief Fund. This fund allowed DO to support individual's needs that might not otherwise be able to be covered due to grant restrictions, eligibility requirements, etc. People received assistance with car payments, car insurance payments, child care expenses, utilities and internet expenses, and more.

- ✓ **Youth Engagement, Baby Bundle, STOP VAWA, and Advantage After School:** Despite being in the middle of a pandemic, DO has been busy applying for and developing new contracts and services as well. In 2020, DO, in partnership with DSS, developed the Youth Engagement program, a mentoring program that connects a professional staff with an at-risk referred youth. Brand new grant opportunities also were awarded to DO and included, but were not limited to: Baby Bundle, STOP VAWA, and Advantage After School.
- ✓ **Summer Kits, Back to School Supplies, and Holiday Giveaways:** The one thing that was a certainty was that people were going to need a little extra help throughout the year. Knowing that, DO continued to provide and expand its back to school supply giveaway and holiday giveaways, including Toys for Tots (giving out more toys than the last two years combined). Additionally, DO also provided summer kits to 140 income-eligible families to help provide safe and educational activities for youth at home during the summer due to the lack of other types of summer programming. Individual programs such as Healthy Families and Big Buddy also provided activity kits to families throughout the summer and fall months.
- ✓ **607 CSA Project:** One of the coolest new initiatives to kick-off in 2020 was a partnership with the 607 CSA, a group of local farmers who sell shares of their product to individuals. Partnering with them, the agency created a monthly share program where income-eligible families can qualify to receive a monthly box containing local produce, meats and dairy for an entire year. Fundraising efforts are still underway, as we speak, to raise additional funds to support even more families through this project.
- ✓ **New Hobart Head Start Center:** After finding out that the Grand Gorge Head Start location was no longer going to be, Head Start quickly moved to secure an alternative location, ultimately landing at the Hobart Activity Center. Licensing is still underway but the program hopes to be able to start-up soon.

- ✓ **Family Resource Center:** In partnership with DSS, DO also developed a concept for a Family Resource Center. This center would house information for families, a space for interviewing and specifically forensic interviewing, as well as space for families and parents for supervised visits, coaching and education. The agency currently is working to secure a location for this center to kick-off.
- ✓ **All Things COVID:** Who knew this time last year that 50% of our staff would be working from home on a daily basis and that we would need to rethink how we connect with families and individuals? Despite the challenges of 2020, staff are able to telework, accessing agency resources from offsite locations. Staff are able to meet with families virtually and provide services via Zoom, Facebook, and other communication channels. Despite quarantines and positive cases, DO has never had to shut its doors for services that people needed during the pandemic. In fact, except for a brief four day period where ten staff had to be laid off, no other agency staff have lost work or work hours during this time. DO is proud of the role it has played in the community during this time and looks forward to continuing to provide these much needed services to the community---albeit a little differently than we have in the past.

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” ~Socrates

Looking Ahead To 2021

WOW! I think that about sums up 2020. No one could have expected that in March 2020 that we would be still be faced with the challenges COVID has presented almost a year later. I often say to the staff at DO, that while it is obvious that COVID has presented challenges, it has also offered up some a “silver lining” and that is what we choose to focus on. What is this silver lining I speak of? Here are the things we are grateful for during 2020:

- ✓ The need to go remote forced staff to learn how to use tools such as remote servers and Zoom. It provided opportunities to upgrade technology. It provided opportunities to bring more people

together and more often than ever before. Something we will continue to do even after this is over.

- ✓ New program and service opportunities. More funding for new and creative services to support individuals. Some of these services are permanent as we move forward into the future, some will just stick around for as long as we are dealing with COVID. Not only did these opportunities create more services but they also created more jobs and allowed staff to be creative and innovative in their thinking about service delivery.
- ✓ More training opportunities. All the conferences and workshops that a handful of people normally would have attended were cancelled. Instead, the virtual platforms that became so popular so quickly made it possible for even more staff than ever to participate in workshops, trainings, conferences, committees, etc. These are things that in the past would have either cost too much money or would have been too time intensive for some staff to be able to participate.
- ✓ Most importantly, we learned that we can rise to the occasion when things get tough. It was hard and there were bumps along the way, our staff are battered and bruised, but we have remained steady and we have continued to provide the services we are so very proud of to the communities we serve, never stopping, throughout the entire COVID-19 pandemic. We often joke, “if we can handle a pandemic, we can handle anything.”

Regardless of what 2021 has in store for us....we are ready! Bring it on!



Dr. Shelly L. Bartow
Executive Director
February 2021

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

March 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 (information through 2/9/2021)

Total Available Budget-\$14,605,114

Large Revenue Streams

Federal Funds-7,733,608 (including funds that pass through NYS and DSS)

New York State Funds-1,300,606

County and Local Contracts/Cash-453,868

Administrative Income-125,571

Contributions-95,137

In-Kind-410,147

Miscellaneous-119,875

Foundations-52,888

Large Agency Expenses

Salaries and Fringe-7,077,731

Consultants-61,564

Administrative Overhead (i.e. rent, utilities, maintenance and repair, etc.)-383,005

Supplies-523,993

Food-461,606

Grants to Individuals-167,322

Payments to Providers-194,752

Insurance-166,356

Printing/Copies/Subscriptions/Recruitment and Advertising-111,719

Data Processing-44,015

Equipment Maintenance-15,395

Travel/Vehicles-287,427

Rent/Mortgage Assistance-123,270

Energy Assistance-17,718

Haps Payments-1,147,828

In-Kind-239,121

Administrative Expense-141,168

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 | Lauren Weingates, Arkville |
| Brittany Davis, Community Rep | Ashley Cilento, Arkville |
| Nerissa Craig, Community Rep | Kayla Kenyon, Delhi |
| Miranda Hitt, Delhi | Alysia Johnson, Franklin |
| Priscilla Scutt, Sidney | Tiffany Ito, Walton |
| William Harrington, Walton | |

OUR STAFF

| Senior Staff and Program Directors |
|---|
| Shelly Bartow, Executive Director |
| Demetra Alberti, Deputy Director (& Community Services/Personnel Director) |
| Hope Lambrecht, Fiscal Officer |
| 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 |
| Danielle Morrell, 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 |
| Stacy Osborn, Safe Against Violence Director |

Number of Volunteers: 250

Volunteer Hours: 45,000 on average in a normal year (about one third of this during COVID)

Current Number of Full-Time Staff: 178

Current Number of Part-Time Staff: 17

OUR PROGRAMS, BY THE NUMBERS

**All statistics pulled from CSBG Fourth Quarter Report (this funding and reporting reflects a period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020)*

Employment and Training:

- Provided intake for 44 public assistance applicants who were without a job
- 37 of those individuals were placed in a work experience
- 15 of those were placed in a job readiness training
- 8 obtained employment

Emergency Food and Shelter:

- Provided intake for 162 families
- 42 families paid utility arrears to avoid utility shutoffs
- 54 received support to pay back rent to avoid eviction
- 4 received support to pay back mortgages to avoid foreclosure

No Heat Emergencies:

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

HEAP:

- Accepted and processed 1,662 applications for HEAP assistance from those not receiving public assistance or SNAP
- 1,593 of those applications were determined to be income eligible and utility payments were made on their behalf
- 474 received emergency LIHEAP assistance

Access to Home for Medicaid:

- Provided outreach and accepted 6 applications from Medicaid eligible households with a disabled member for structural accessibility repairs
- Established eligibility for all 6 of the applicants
- Prepared a work scope for repairs and established contracts with private contractors to complete work on all 6 properties

Solutions to End Homelessness:

- 24 homeless families enrolled in the program and were determined eligible for assistance
- 11 were provided with re-housing assistance for immediate housing by providing first month's rent and security deposits to maintain safe and affordable housing
- 7 will receive ongoing rental assistance to maintain affordable housing for 90 days
- 4 will receive ongoing rental assistance to maintain affordable housing for 180 days
- 44 near homeless households were enrolled in the program and be determined eligible for assistance
- 27 of those 44 households received assistance to remain in their home or relocate via payment of back rent or first month's rent
- 27 of those 44 households received assistance to relocate via payment of a security deposit
- 23 of the 44 households maintained safe and affordable housing for 90 days
- 16 of the 44 households maintained safe and affordable housing for 180 days

Weatherization:

- Conducted intake of 69 households interested in applying for the Weatherization Assistance program
- Of the 69 intakes, 28 housing units in Delaware County and 16 units in Sullivan County were the recipient of Weatherization activities
- Of the 69 intakes, 19 were referred to NYSERDA for assistance through the Empower program
- Of the 19 applications referred to NYSERDA, 19 received energy saving measures on their homes

Rental Assistance:

- Performed client intake and maintained client files for 698 households
- Provided rental subsidies for 698 households to limit rent and utility costs to 30% of income to make decent housing affordable
- Placed 178 households on the waiting list to receive assistance when available

Housing Counseling:

- Provided pre-purchase counseling for 46 households
- Of the 46 households, developed sustainable budgets with all 46 who were counseled
- Of the 46 households, seven of those who developed sustainable budgets secured resources to achieve homeownership

Head Start:

- 168 children participated in pre-school activities to develop school readiness skills
- Of the 168, all children obtained age-appropriate immunizations and medical care

- Of the 168, 133 received dental checkups, with 35 receiving dental care
- 161 of the 168 children have improve health and physical development as a result of adequate nutrition
- 70 of the 168 children are developmentally ready to enter kindergarten
- 150 of the 168 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 certification quality CCR&R as issued by the National Child Care Aware of American organization
- 152 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
- 78 partnerships with day care providers were maintained

Day Care Registration:

- 136 inspections of family day care homes were conducted to assure positive approaches towards learning were being demonstrated
- 74 inspections of school day care programs were conducted to assure positive approaches towards learning were being demonstrated

Big Buddy:

- 38 at risk youth were identified as being willing to participate in the Big Buddy program
- 27 mentors were recruited, screened, trained and supported
- 19 of the 38 youth demonstrated and improved positive approach towards learning, including improved attention skills

SNAP Outreach:

- Provided SNAP benefit information in face to face contacts with 721 eligible households
- Of the 721 households, 225 were assisted with pre-screening
- 161 of those households were found to be eligible and received SNAP benefits
- 44 of those households needed assistance with recertifying for benefits

Car Seat Donation Program:

- Provided client intake for 160 households with young children who did not have a car safety seat

- 160 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, 43 had all age appropriate immunizations
- 36 of the 68 enrolled children demonstrated age appropriate development
- 42 of the 68 children demonstrated improved skills related to the adult role of parents

Respite Care:

- Provided client intake for 43 developmentally disabled persons
- Provided respite, after school respite, day hab, and community hab services for 43 individuals

Senior Dining:

- Provided intake for 155 senior citizens to participate in the congregate meal setting
- Provided intake for 315 senior citizens to participate in the home delivered portion of the program
- Provided 155 senior citizens with a hot nutritious noon time meal and an opportunity for socialization and recreation
- Provided 315 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 \$35,563 in donations that were distributed to low income families
- Provided 38,412 bags of groceries to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met
- Provided 13,155 bags of groceries from the satellite sponsored food pantry (Delhi) to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met
- Provided 210,090 bags of groceries through the remainder of the food pantry network to assure that food insecure households nutritional needs were met.
- 218 food insecure households received food via the Hamden Food Bank

WIC:

- Processed applications to serve 777 women, infants, and children
- Provided benefits to 777 households

Independent Living Skills:

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

Safe Against Violence:

- Provided client intake for 177 victims of domestic violence
- Provided information and referrals for 177 victims of domestic violence to help keep them safe from abuse
- Of the 177 victims, 11 were provided with shelter to keep them safe from abuse

Day Care Subsidies:

- Provided intake for 128 families seeking to obtain or retain affordable, quality child care
- Provided ongoing child care subsidies for 128 children so that parents can seek and maintain affordable child care
- Sponsored CACFP funds for providers assuring child health for 266 children as a result of adequate nutrition

Medicaid Transportation:

- Provided intake for 153 people seeking transportation to medical appointments
- Accepted referrals for medical appointments, dispatched vehicles, and provided transportation to 153 people for access to necessary health care

DSS Transportation:

- Accepted referrals from DSS and provided transportation to and from designated services for 115 low income people
- Provided transportation for 30 people for job training or to seek, obtain or maintain employment

Services Transportation:

- Provided intake and transportation for 29 households needing to access services

Safe Against Violence:

- Provided client intake for 94 victims of rape or sexual assault
- Of the 94 victims, provided information and referral to all 94 victims to assist them with recovering from the assault
- Provided legal accompaniment to 10 victims
- Provided case management for all 94 victims to assist them in their recovery

Family Residences-Agency Operated Foster Homes:

- Provided staffing for four agency operated foster homes
- Accepted referrals for 14 children from DS and provided caring, supportive services

Use Clothing and Household Goods:

- Accepted donations of clothing and household goods valued at \$22,963 to distribute to low income households in need
- Provided 2,180 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 65 families
- Assisted 65 families in meeting the basic needs for 90 days by providing emergency clothing and household goods

Parent Education:

- 122 (out of a proposed 65) referrals were received from DSS for the improvement of parenting skills
- 51 of the referrals demonstrated improved skills related to the adult role of parents
- 23 of the referrals demonstrated increased sensitivity and responsiveness in their interactions with their children

Family Development:

- Provided intake for 40 families
- 24 of the 40 found employment
- 32 of the 40 obtained safe and affordable housing
- 38 of the 40 obtained health insurance

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