



# OBERLIN COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 1998-99

Oberlin Community Services, now entering its 44th year, continued to carry out its essential social services from temporary quarters last year. Those services range from surplus food distribution to planning for tutoring in the public schools. The site on South Main Street is also a hive of activity for other projects: it is a locale for a variety of meetings, for giving flu shots, for tai chi classes and is used as a place of worship.

Although the rented site has served adequately, it will not last and we need to find a permanent place for our center. This challenge remains for us in the coming year.

The major programs of the agency are Emergency Assistance for low-income persons and Math Tutoring for public school youth. These programs involve collaboration with many local and county organizations. OCS also supplies office space and serves as fiscal agent for the Oberlin Interagency Council and serves as an umbrella for various grassroots groups.

This year we expanded our activities to include third grade reading tutoring, backyard gardens for low-income clients, and a collaboration with the City of Oberlin on the Community Housing Improvement Program.

Financial support for agency operations comes from a variety of public and private sources. United Way of Greater Lorain County provides major funding for our programs. The breadth of services offered could not be maintained, however, without additional contributions. Second Harvest Food Bank supplies an extensive amount of food. The Oberlin Area Cooperating Ministries created the "Churches Helping Others" Fund for emergency assistance. The Rotary Club established an emergency fund. The continuing financial support of so many groups, churches, and individuals shows their concern about the welfare of all members of the Oberlin community. Our gratitude goes to all of them.

The Board of Directors wishes once again to express its deep appreciation to the staff, the college work-study students, and the many faithful volunteers whose dedicated efforts have made it possible to provide these services.

## BOARD

Deborah Cocco, President  
Ann Findlan, Vice-President  
Diane Vreuls, Secretary  
Sue Simonson, Treasurer

Gary Kornblith, Richard Ninde, Elaine Orr,  
Patty Peacock, Linda Slocum, David Taylor.

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Ann L. Fuller Ph.D.,  
Executive Director  
Ann Longsworth Orr,  
Daniel Longsworth Orr,  
Client Services Coordinators  
Annemarie Helm, (until 12/98)  
Doris Zbornik, Director,  
Oberlin Interagency Council

### **Oberlin College Student Workers:**

Allison Duwe, Rachel Fessenden, Anya Hankin-Rappaport, Patricia Hehir, Danielle Hirsch, Kerry Lowe, Marilou Marcelo, Sara Nemitz, Luke Shaefer, June Seu, Emily Silverman, Gladys Springborn, Anthony Stratton, Simona Supekar, Melissa Wright, Nicole Craig, Anne Grenon, Rachel Mills, Elizabeth Echlin.

### **Oberlin Community Services**

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## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE REPORT

Oberlin Community Services is a responsive community based organization which helps residents of Oberlin and Southern Lorain County meet their basic needs. The Client Services Coordinator assesses the client's situation and decides how to help them. If we cannot assist the client at OCS, we refer them to other agencies.

The food program consists of daily emergency food assistance and monthly mass distribution of government surplus commodities. Food for emergency bags is furnished by the Second Harvest Food Bank in Lorain, and through donations from churches, organizations, families, and individuals.

OCS also operates a utility assistance program, helping eligible residents with heat, water, and electric bills in order to avert utility disconnections. Support for utility assistance is provided by F.E.M.A., the City Caring Fund, the "Churches Helping Others" and Rotary Funds, and the Salvation Army. This year, we also subsidized the purchase of energy conservation kits for ten clients. Installation of these kits will help reduce clients' electric and water bills in the long term.

The agency distributes a limited number of vouchers for public transportation and gasoline to clients in need of transportation to medical, legal, job, or social service appointments.

OCS provides occasional assistance with medical prescriptions, either through the American Red Cross prescription assistance program or one of our own funds. We also coordinate Meals on Wheels, a collaborative project with Allen Memorial Hospital. Now in its twenty-seventh year, Meals on Wheels

provides nutritious meals to Oberlin residents who cannot shop or cook on their own.

During our annual holiday food program in December, OCS provided food to 495 Oberlinians: 102 families (including 223 children) and 100 single people. Over 100 volunteers helped sort and pack 446 bags of food. These bags, filled with canned and dried goods, government surplus commodities, and meat, were distributed to families based on household size. The Food Bank provided 202 ten lbs. bags of boneless chicken and a basic food bag through special funding from the Burger King/WOBL "Holiday Cheer" Program. Extra items were provided through private donations to the agency.

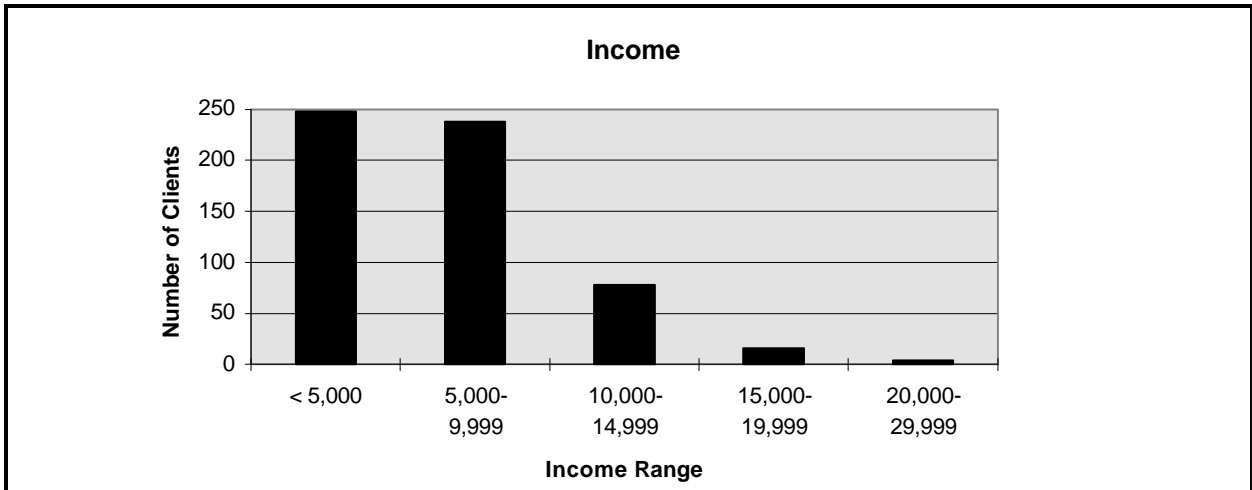
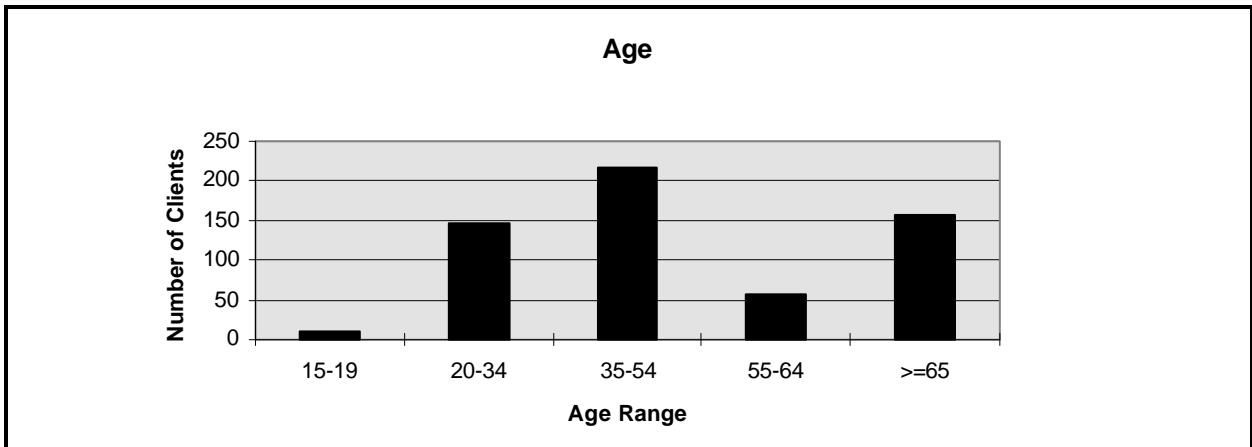
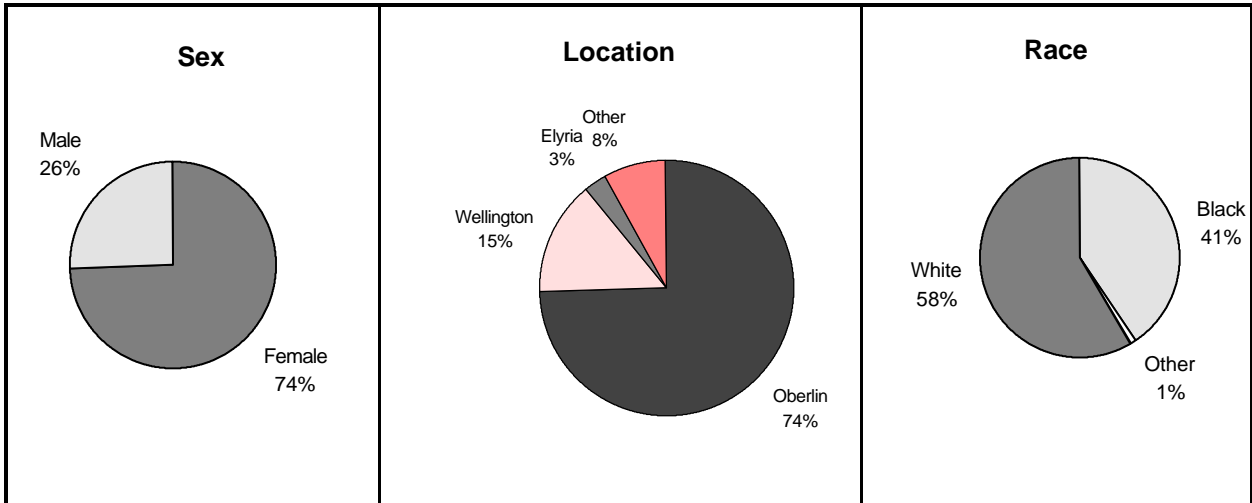
OCS coordinated a holiday adoption program in which 28 businesses, groups and individuals from the college and town gave 88 families and individuals toys, clothing, and other gifts that met their specific needs. We served as a clearinghouse for donations from various community groups, churches, and individuals who provided clothing, toys, books, and food vouchers.

This year, we joined the City of Oberlin in promoting and co-ordinating the Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP). CHIP tries to improve housing for low and moderate income families in Oberlin by providing downpayment assistance for the purchase of homes as well as loans and/or grants for emergency repair or rehabilitation of homes to meet state standards. OCS oversees the application process, providing assistance to applicants who need help completing the application form, and verifies income, assets, and household composition information. Completed applications are then forwarded to the city of Oberlin.

### DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS 1998-99

<b>BOXED FOOD:</b>		<b>OTHER SERVICES:</b>	
# Assistances	561	Utility payments	116
# Individuals	1,435	Gasoline/Bus Tickets	66
# Bags	1,619	Housing payments	28
<b>MASS DISTRIBUTION:</b>		Prescriptions	38
# Assistances	2,132	Formula/diapers	26
<b>TOTAL LBS. OF FOOD</b>	<b>55,846</b>	Taxables/Miscellaneous	119

**CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
**1998-99**



## **SUPPLEMENTARY FOOD PROGRAMS**

In addition to providing emergency food to community members, OCS is involved in three supplementary food programs.

The Meals on Wheels program has been serving the Oberlin community since 1973. Volunteers deliver hot or cold meals every day, including Christmas, to those who cannot shop or cook on their own. With some daily variation, about 30 people receive meals each day. The service has proven to be especially important to elderly Oberlin residents.

The food is provided by Allen Memorial Hospital with the help of hospital staff members Sharon Bailey and Mary Ann Dietrick. Meals can be prepared according to dietary restrictions or under the supervision of a dietician or physician.

Hot meals cost clients \$2.25; cold meals, \$1.25. These fees cover only the cost of food. The volunteer drivers have delivered 10,141 nutritionally balanced meals to over 100 Oberlinians in the past twelve months.

Volunteer Coordinators Mary Carlson and Chrissa Clark retired this past year, so OCS staff now recruits and organizes the 40 or so drivers. We owe the program's success to those who volunteer their time, energy, gasoline, and friendly concern to see that their neighbors have nutritious, appropriate, and delicious food daily.

Since September 1995, Oberlin Community Services has collaborated with Christ Temple Apostolic Church, to serve as a host site for the S.H.A.R.E. food program. S.H.A.R.E. (Self-Help And Resource Exchange) is a nationwide community development organization that began in San Diego in 1983.

In exchange for two hours of community service, participants receive a \$30-\$35 grocery package for only \$14. A grant from Nordson Corporation helps to defray the transportation costs. Since there are no eligibility requirements for S.H.A.R.E., the program is open to people of all income levels.

S.H.A.R.E. combines community service with smart shopping by pooling participants' money to purchase foods at wholesale prices directly from manufacturers. The savings are passed directly to participants who fulfill their community service pledge. Each grocery package contains meat, fresh fruits, vegetables, and several staple items such as potatoes, pasta, or rice. The package is designed to supplement a family's food budget at prices 60% lower than retail prices.

The program continues to be well-received in Oberlin. Participants in Oberlin ordered 518 packages over the past year.

### **THE GARDENERS' PROJECT**

Our third supplementary food program, the Gardeners' Project, was started last fall by OCS to help community residents set up vegetable gardens. The project's goal was to help start ten productive and beautiful new gardens, helping residents become gardeners in the process. We have achieved this goal. In fact, an elderly neighbor of one of our gardeners told us that even his father had not grown a garden as lush as this new one.

Originally we were concerned that first-time gardeners may forget to give their gardens consistent care, but instead the gardens have filled the need for companionship and also sparked healthy interaction with neighbors.

Our sponsors are racially diverse, as are our

garden recipients, and genuine relationships have emerged between and amongst them. In July, twenty people attended a cook-out we organized for gardeners and sponsors. Afterwards, one gardener wrote to us, "[T]here was a little of all of us there Saturday, and at no time was race, nor color mentioned, or acted upon...we were there as a community of people sharing, and enjoying one another's presence, thoughts and ideas."

In total, we double-dug half an acre of ground, composted 15 tons of manure, matched up six gardeners with seasoned sponsors, and distributed seeds, tools, and plants as needed. 34 individuals and/or companies donated supplies. Volunteers have put in more than 300 hours on the project so far.

## **TUTORING REPORT**

In 1992 Oberlin Community Services began an ongoing collaboration with the Oberlin School District to provide high-quality math tutoring services to both high school and elementary school students.

High school summer tutoring offers help to teenagers preparing for the Ninth Grade Proficiency Test. OCS organizes a three-week workshop for students who have failed the math portion of the exam. All Ohio students must pass this test in order to receive a high school diploma. Since 1996, students have had the opportunity to retake the test for credit after the three-week session. In 1998, seventeen tutors, consisting of community volunteers, OCS staff, and Oberlin College students, instructed thirty-one high school students. 36% of these students, some of whom have failed the state proficiency test multiple times, passed it at the end of the workshop.

OCS also sponsors an after-school tutoring program for fourth-graders at Prospect School. It not only prepares students for the Fourth Grade Proficiency Test, and intervenes to prevent future math difficulties, but also encourages students to be more active in their community. This year's tutoring program also gave instruction in citizenship in addition to basic arithmetic. Tutors were recruited from a wide variety of sources:

some were paid under the Oberlin College "America Reads" program; some got academic credit; and others volunteered.

This year, OCS established a third-grade reading program, expanding the after-school tutoring from two to four afternoons a week. As in the math programs, OCS was responsible for all aspects of operation. Unlike the math program, all tutors were hired under the "America Reads" program. OCS collaborated with the Center for Service and Learning to train and supervise these tutors. Oberlin College student assistants are key to the success of both after-school programs.

The after-school program was funded by a "Learn and Serve America" grant from the Ohio Department of Education. It integrates math, reading, and citizenship tutoring with community service in an attempt to expose students to "service-learning," a teaching method that stresses both hands-on, experiential learning and traditional, in-class learning. Funding also comes from a block grant through the Oberlin Schools and United Way.



During the 1998-99 school year, the Prospect program served 65 students. Sixty-one tutors, including OCS staff, Oberlin College students and community volunteers, provided over 2,400 hours of individual care and assistance.

### **OBERLIN COLLEGE STUDENTS**

OCS is a team effort, and Oberlin College student workers are an essential element. In addition to the Executive Director and the Client Services Coordinator, agency staff is composed of Oberlin College work-study students. Hard working and dedicated, these workers enable us to provide much needed services to the surrounding community.

This year student workers were especially vital to OCS. When the Client Services Coordinator resigned in February '98, student workers took on additional roles in order to meet the needs of clients and to maintain services.

Since 1983, student workers have been critical to the success of programs such as food

distribution, tutoring, and information/referral. Furthermore, the agency affords students the opportunity to engage in service-learning. By participating in various OCS programs or carrying out independent research projects, students can supplement their in-class learning with real life experience. This year, two sociology majors designed and carried out a client satisfaction survey.

Several of the Oberlin College students in the tutoring program spoke movingly about how wonderfully humbling their work was and how much pleasure they got from "giving something back to the community." Our tie with Oberlin College is vital and we hope to see it nurtured.

# OCS SCRAPBOOK



New OCS Client Services Coordinators and Executive Director.



An OCS staff member organizing food bags for mass distribution.



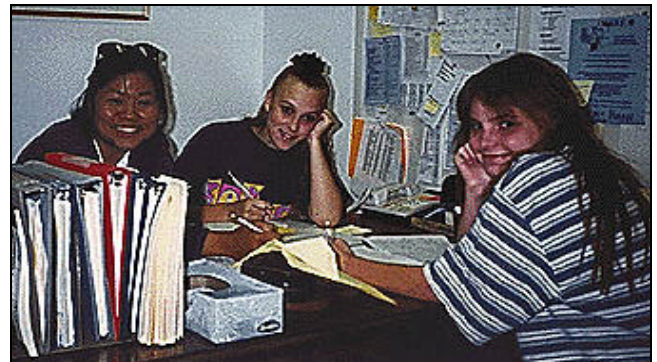
A gardener busy planting crops in her new vegetable garden.



When working with a fourth grader over a period of several months, bonds are often formed...



Five year old Abe lends a hand for mass distribution.



An OCS staff member works closely with two high school students in the summer proficiency workshop.

## YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT

4/1/98 - 3/31/99

	OCS	INTERAGENCY	
EXPENSES	FUND	FUND	TOTAL
Salaries/Benefits	95,741	35,664	131,405
Other Operating Expenses	49,708	13,107	62,815
Emergency Assistance	67,273		67,273
To cash flow reserve	24,039	3,872	27,911
<b>Total</b>	<b>236,761</b>	<b>52,643</b>	<b>289,404</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Contributions	42,491	7,645	50,136
Foundations	7,000	13,710	20,710
Associated Organizations		6,940	6,940
Unassociated Organizations	20,459		20,459
Government Grants	64,590	21,203	85,793
Service Fees	26,273		26,273
Investment Income	6,321		6,321
Miscellaneous	12,896	3,145	16,041
United Way	56,731		56,731
<b>Total</b>	<b>236,761</b>	<b>52,643</b>	<b>289,404</b>

### GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

**Oberlin Community Services would like to thank numerous individuals, many of whom wish to remain anonymous, for contributing to the success of OCS in the past year. We would also like to thank the following organizations, groups, businesses, and churches for their hard work and generous contributions.**

#### GRANTS

AEA, Allen Hospital Foundation, American Red Cross, Bill Long Foundation, City of Oberlin, Episcopal Community Services Foundation, F.E.M.A., Grassroots Leadership, Ohio Goals 2000, Learn and Serve America, Nord Family Foundation, Nordson Corporation, Oberlin College, Oberlin School District, Ohio Department of Agriculture, Rotaries Charities Foundation, Second Harvest Food Bank, United Way of Greater Lorain Co..

#### CASH DONATIONS

Clubs, Organizations, Businesses- American Legion Auxiliary Post #656, Campus Cleaners, Co-op Bookstore, Food Industry Crusade Against Hunger, Literary and Social Club, Lorain County Farm Bureau, Nineteenth Century Club, Oberlin City Club, Oberlin College Department of Athletics and Physical Education, Oberlin Consumers' Co-op, Oberlin Forum, Oberlin Rotary Memorial Fund, Senior Forum, Servicemaster, Sorosis.

Churches- Christ Episcopal Church, Christ Temple Apostolic Church, First Baptist Church, First Church, First United Methodist Church and Altar Guild, OACM, Rust United Methodist Church and Friends, Oberlin Friends Meeting, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Oberlin Unitarian Fellowship.

#### CHURCHES HELPING OTHERS FUND

Christ Episcopal Church, Christ Temple Apostolic Church, First Baptist Church, First Church, First United Methodist Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

#### FOOD and NON-FOOD ITEMS

Apollo Theater, Allen Memorial Hospital, Chiron Diagnostics Toastmasters' Club, Christ Episcopal Church, Christian Missionary Alliance, East Oberlin Community Church, First Baptist Church, First Church, First Church Sewing Group, First United Methodist Church, Foxgrape Restaurant, Grace Lutheran Church, Hot Meals, Misslers' SuperValue, Mt. Zion Church, OACM, Oberlin Exchange Club, OSAP, Oberlin High School, Postal workers, Prospect School, RAX employees, Rust United Methodist Church, Sacred Heart Church, Senior Forum.

#### HOLIDAY ADOPTIONS BY GROUPS

Christ Episcopal Church, Co-op Bookstore, First Church, Handle with Care, NACS/NACSCORP, Nineteenth Century Club, four Oberlin College offices: -Development Office, Office of College Relations, Student Academic Affairs, and Student Health -, Oberlin College UNITY, Roose, Birmingham and Lavender, Rotary Club, Servicemaster and 12 families. The First United Methodist Church provided mittens, caps, scarves, and children's clothing.. The Co-op Bookstore promoted a "book angels" program for customers to buy books for 61 children.

#### VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Boy Scout Troop #401, Christ Episcopal Church, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Firelands High School, First Baptist Church, First Church Hang-Out Group, Habitat for Humanity, LCBMR, John Frederick Oberlin Home, Oberlin Friends Meeting, Oberlin High School Student Council, Key Club, J.C. Penney, Rotary Club.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*Oberlin Community Services is a responsive community organization that provides direct assistance, referrals, and other services to Oberlin area residents and groups who need help meeting basic needs.*

**EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**

**Aid to area residents in need of:**

- Emergency Food
  - boxed food
  - baby food and formula
- Non-food Necessities
  - toiletries
  - detergents
- Monthly Mass Distribution of Government Surplus Food
- Utility/ Heating Assistance
- Prescriptions, Clothing, Housing, and Transportation Vouchers
- Holiday Assistance

**MATH TUTORING FOR YOUTH**

- After-School Fourth Grade Program
- After-School Sixth Grade Program
- Summer High School Proficiency Intervention Workshop

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

- Meals on Wheels
- CHIP Housing Program
- Information/Referral
- Medical Equipment Loans
- The Gardeners' Project



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