



EVERYBODY MATTERS



ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Mission Statement

SMOC's mission is to improve the quality of life of low-income and disadvantaged individuals and families by advocating for their needs and rights; providing services; educating the community; building a community of support; participating in coalitions with other advocates and searching for new resources and partnerships.

Message from the President and Executive Director

Dear Friends:

In 2017, SMOC celebrated its 52nd year of operation. The agency has grown from its humble beginning as a provider of Head Start and Child Care Services in 1965 to a large comprehensive health, human services and housing organization that annually serves nearly 50,000 people in four regions of Massachusetts. Within this growth are scores of stories of the people who have been helped in so many different ways by this tremendous organization whose mission and values underscore our driving force – Everybody Matters.

Highlights of 2017 include the recruitment of our superb Chief Financial Officer, Gayle Harrold who is off to a great start, our new Voices Against Violence Director, Patricia Hohl who has brought her impressive field experience to her new role, and the installation of new Directors at Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC) and the Greater Worcester Housing Connection (GWHC) - congratulations to Jayde Campbell and Amaryllis Chaves.

At the beginning of the year we and our sister human service agencies celebrated Unity Day that brought together diverse people from all walks of life and backgrounds to support each other in the notion that respect must be the hallmark of the way we treat and serve others. We were delighted to help find a new home for Framingham's Community Kiln program which lost its home when the old Danforth Museum building was forced to close. Today, the program is well and thriving. We launched our long-term real estate planning project with the sale of some non-core properties in order to better utilize our resources for capital development and improvement. We express our gratitude to Bob Fields and his extremely generous donation of 345 Union Avenue, a graceful building that now houses some of our important programs such as Head Start and SMOC Financial Services. We also held solemn remembrances to say goodbye to two of our beloved staff, Louis Miller and Sarah Shorey, each of whom boldly, beautifully and selflessly embodied the spirit and energy of SMOC.

We look forward to the year ahead. We are grateful to both Board and Staff for the tremendous dedication and energy they put into our work day after day.

Sincerely,

Bruce Hulme
President,
SMOC Board of Directors

Jim Cuddy
Executive Director,
SMOC



SOUTH MIDDLESEX OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

3032

Individuals served in our emergency shelters in FY17



Individuals obtained jobs from our various career programs

448

300+

Volunteers donated 5807 hours of volunteer work to this agency to improve the lives of low income people in FY17



Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low income individuals*

661

462

Households received emergency fuel and utility assistance



Individuals received emergency services through our Voices Against Violence program

1765

1000+

Children were enrolled in our Headstart/Childcare program



Women, infants and children were served through our WIC program

7817

243

Income tax returns prepared at no cost resulting in \$371,827 in return



People served by SMOC in FY17

47600

*including 187 non-profit and 239 for-profit organizations

HIGHLIGHTS



Empowering Women in Clean Energy

For the second time, SMOC proudly celebrated the graduation of 12 women who completed the five-week “Successful Women in Clean Energy” training program in the growing clean energy sector. The program was made possible by the generous support of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC).

Participants studied environmental literacy, solar energy, and energy conservation and participated in mock interviews and customer service training to prepare them for future employment. Upon completion, the graduates were enrolled in a 6 month fellowship with a goal of full time permanent positions.



Build Bridges Not Walls

On March 22nd 2017, a unity event held at SMOC headquarters provided a chance for staff and board members to come together to celebrate our diverse cultures and common mission. The “Build Bridges Not Walls” event was a call for love and tolerance during the time of uncertainty and change.

Many attendees prepared and shared a dish unique to his or her heritage.

A few speakers were invited to share their stories and cultural experiences with the audience. Beyond just entertainment, the knowledge shared was inspirational. Participants left the event feeling more unified and optimistic.

HIGHLIGHTS



Launch of Community Kiln

Community Kiln was established in 2016, at 46 Park Street in Framingham.

Community Kiln offers pottery classes and workshops for those looking to immerse themselves in the celebration and therapeutic qualities of working with clay. Community Kiln is dedicated to providing access to ceramic arts education and resources for MetroWest artists of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Over the past year, Community Kiln has helped people, both clients of SMOC and residents of MetroWest, build creativity, self-assurance, and new relationships.

Art is an enjoyable, meditative, and creative activity that has documented health benefits and can increase one's sense of self-efficacy and esteem. Research has shown that participants in art programs are more likely to engage in other communities or civic affairs. Community Kiln is a natural extension of SMOC's mission to help people become involved and engaged members of our community.



SMOC Receives Competitive Project Reinvest Grant

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, and partners have been awarded a grant from the "Project Reinvest" program in the amount of \$500,000 for revitalization efforts in Three Rivers Village of Palmer, Massachusetts. Project partners include the Town of Palmer, Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation, Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce and Palmer Historical and Cultural Center.

Project activities include the rehabilitation of a Main Street mixed use property; the installation of a new roof on the Palmer Historical & Cultural Center; the creation of a new fitness trail at Palmer's Lavolette Field; and the hosting of multiple Three Rivers cultural activities for families and children.

The grant was awarded in June of 2017. The project is underway and will be completed by November of 2018.



HIGHLIGHTS



First Literacy Grant

The Joan Brack Adult Learning Center (JBALC) provides free daytime English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults. ESL classes give non-native English speakers the tools they need to enter the education and workforce systems and fully use their talents and abilities.

Upon gaining command of the English language, students are better equipped to financially support themselves and their families and contribute to the community to their fullest potential.

This June, the JBALC won a grant from First Literacy Lab to fund a pilot program that will provide basic computer skills for our JBALC students who are on our waitlist, prior to entering classes. With computer skills, ESL students can fully engage in online learning and increase their learning efficiency and JBALC can increase the capacity of the ESL classes and overall program.



Nutrition Services

In FY2017 SMOC piloted the Food Security and Nutrition Education Program for homeless families. The program was funded through BNY Mellon to provide individual nutrition counseling and group nutrition and cooking workshops to homeless families. A Registered Dietitian was hired to run the program. She created a 4-part nutrition and cooking workshop series that was delivered to more than 100 residents of five congregate shelters and Sage House.

The nutritionist also helped to form the Greater Framingham Hunger Network, a group of community agencies working to address food insecurity in the area.

This year nutrition programming will expand to offer nutrition education to formerly homeless single adults and kitchen support services to foodservice staff in single adult shelters. Learning how to feed oneself in a healthful way, even during difficult times, is just one step towards reaching the overall goal and mission of SMOC to help clients become self-sufficient.

HIGHLIGHTS



Common Ground Resource Center Community Response Team

Funded by the MetroWest Health Foundation, the Community Response Team (CRT) partners with the Framingham Police Department and other community based service providers to develop relationships with homeless and at-risk individuals in order to connect them with resources and to reduce high-risk and nuisance behaviors in the community.

The program outreach activities are co-located in Framingham in the downtown area and at the Drop-In Center operated by SMOC on Kendall St.

The program focuses on helping clients connect to services and resources that will help them to obtain and retain housing.

Once housed, formerly homeless individuals have a safe, stable place to live and no longer have to focus their energy on basic survival. In the first eighteen months of the program, 30 individuals were assisted in moving from homelessness to housing.



Peer Recovery Coach Program

The Opioid Peer Recovery Coach Program is funded by the MetroWest Health Foundation with a goal to reduce the number of opioid re-overdoses by recoverees in the program; decrease the time it takes them to engage in treatment and increase their participation in self-help activities.

Recovery Coaches are assigned to recoverees and are there to help them to remove personal and environmental obstacles to recovery, link the newly recovered person to the recovering community, and serve as a personal guide and mentor for people seeking or in recovery.

The program also utilizes Trigr Health Technology, a mobile app designed to give support to people in recovery whenever the need is there, no matter the time or place.

HIGHLIGHTS



The Stars Program

Open Pantry's Loaves & Fishes Community Kitchen guests are the recent recipients of the STARS program, "Start Taking Action to Revitalize Society," founded by licensed barber/hairstylist Rostin Lee.

Rostin, who has dedicated himself to helping those who are less fortunate, has started giving free haircuts and grooming to people in need. Rostin is a Seattle native and Veteran and lives in Springfield. He initiated the program to help folks feel good about themselves, their appearance and to help them prepare for job interviews in order to find employment.

The STARS Hair Styling program is located at South Congregational Church in Springfield and is held twice a month: once a month for women and once a month for men. Children are also welcome and eligible to receive free haircuts. Rostin says he was inspired by other barbers across the country that have started similar programs for disadvantaged individuals and families.



Lowell Smoothie Program

Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC) launched the Farm to Shelter program in June of 2016 and partnered with Life Alive, an organic restaurant and good health haven in Lowell, to design the first healthy smoothie recipe.

The big question was: how would the clients react? Would they drink something thick, green, and presented by a group of cheery nutrition interns and kitchen volunteers? And the answer was, YES!... eventually. After many tests, some not quite sweet enough, some a little too chunky, there were winners like triple berry protein, maple apple, and anything with peanut butter. By mid-July people were asking "When is smoothie day?" "Is today a smoothie day?"

To keep the produce coming, LTLC partnered with Mill City Grows, Merrimack Valley Food Bank, UMass Lowell, Life Alive, Verrill Farm, Gaining Ground, and Whole Food and volunteers continue to stop by to whip some up. Smoothies are now served at lunchtime a few days a week, helping to bring health awareness, better nutrition, and just something fun and special to our clients.

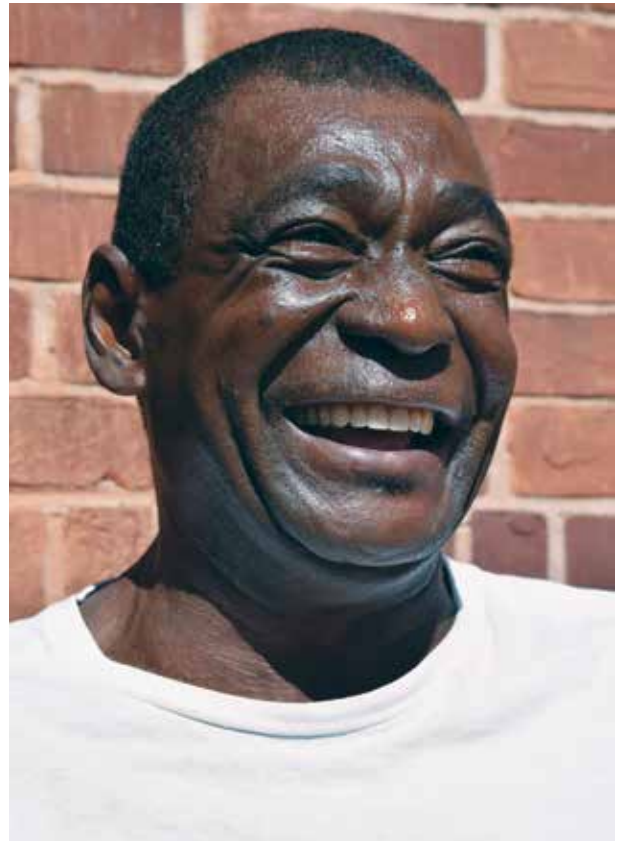
HIGHLIGHTS



Behavioral Health Partnership

Behavioral Health Partners of MetroWest (BHPMW) is an exciting new initiative that provides a single point of entry for individuals, families and health care providers to access a continuum of high quality behavioral health, community development and social services offered by our four partner agencies in MetroWest.

The BHPMW will operate a referral phone line and employ care coordinators to respond to callers seeking behavioral health and social services. The partnership draws on the long-standing mutual respect and clinical strengths of the four participating agencies: Advocates, South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), Spectrum Health Systems, and Wayside Youth & Family Support Network. Collectively, the partners encompass expertise in mental health, substance use, housing, and other social supports for people of all ages.





Family Success Story

“Without SMOC, I wouldn’t have been able to move forward and get ahead.”

Maria was 19 years old, living in her car and pregnant with her daughter when she first came to SMOC for help. She was placed in a family shelter, where she worked with staff on a plan for permanent housing and eventually she found housing through the Natick Housing Authority and had a place to call home.

Maria describes her childhood as “disruptive.” Her mother suffered from mental illness and addiction and her father was in the army, and when he got out, he was distant. Maria has struggled with anxiety and depression for as long as she can remember and she reports self-medicating with marijuana.

“Disruption” was a theme that repeated itself throughout Maria’s life. She gave up her Section 8 voucher to move her family in with a friend, but the housing fell through and Maria and her family were once again without a home. Over the next two decades, Maria moved her family more than a dozen times. Maria worked hard – she took jobs driving

and as a Home Health Aide, but the Marijuana abuse, anxiety and depression resulted in financial and housing problems.

Maria returned to SMOC, this time with her four children including her daughter, who was now pregnant. The family was placed in a scattered site unit at Bethany Hill Place and things started to fall in place. Maria and her daughter took advantage of their parenting classes and other supports. Maria’s daughter enrolled in GED classes at SMOC’s Joan Brack Adult Learning Center and received her GED.

The family tackled their behavioral health issues with help from SMOC Behavioral Health, Wayside and Advocates. Maria also attends AA and NA meetings. Through individual and family therapy, the family gained the support and tools they needed to heal.

After many years of struggle and hard work, Maria was ready to start working on her credit and paying off her debt. Once on her way to financial and emotional wellness, Maria began working full time for SMOC’s Facilities Department through the Ready, Willing and Able program. Today she still holds that job and is an asset to the department. Next up, she set her sights on purchasing a house. Maria signed up for SMOC’s First Time Home Buyer Class and recently purchased a home with her girlfriend where they live today with their blended family.



Single Adult Success Story

Lorraine was ready to put her homelessness behind her when she came to SMOC's Common Ground Opportunity Center...

Lorraine became homeless due to financial issues and struggles with symptoms of mental illness. She slept outside in the woods of Framingham and under the stairs of buildings in the downtown. For money she collected cans and sold her crocheted hats and scarfs to collect a little income that paid for her meals.

She was ready to put her homelessness behind her when she came to SMOC's Common Ground Opportunity Center, a resource center for homeless and at-risk adults. Eventually she entered SMOC's Shadows Women's shelter in Ashland and became part of the CSPECH program, a program for clients with chronic homelessness and mental health challenges. Together with the staff from these programs, a treatment plan was established and she was on her way to a safer and healthier lifestyle.

In addition to obtaining MassHealth medical insurance and SNAP food assistance, Lorraine began participating in regular meetings with outpatient medical and behavioral health providers. She now can prevent crises and manage symptoms using the support system that was carefully tailored to her needs.

Today, Lorraine resides at a MASH house (Massachusetts Association of Sober Housing) and her days are full of meaningful activities. She enjoys singing in the church choir, reading workshops at the public library, and simply cooking meals in her home. When she was homeless, her relationship with family members, particularly her daughter, suffered greatly. Once estranged, they have now begun spending more time together.

To this day she continues to use a daily planner, given to her during her stay at the shelter. She marks off her goals off as she completes them and experiences joy with each goal she completes. Lorraine is deeply grateful to all who have helped her through these difficult times.

AWARDS



EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

Brittany Raposa - Senior Employment Specialist
Cheryl Mehlman - Case Manager, Housing Stabilization

MANAGERS OF THE YEAR

Tania Diduca - Program Director, Rental Assistance
Katherine Michaud - Program Director, Fuel Assistance

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Kathy Brough - Lowell Transitional Living Center
David Ierardi - Lowell Transitional Living Center
Kathy Donahue - Scattered Sites

SPIRIT OF SMOC/MARGARET DAVITT AWARD

Sharon McCollum - Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)

TEAM OF THE YEAR

Western MA Housing Team

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Lovin' Spoonfuls

ANNIE BRADFORD FRIEND OF SMOC

Michael Gondek
Terrance Mahoney

BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Dorothy Kennedy

FINANCIALS

SMOC Consolidated Statement of Activities - Core Operations

FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

REVENUES:

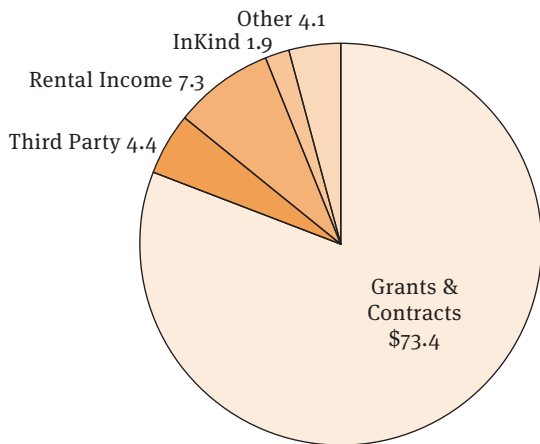
Grants & Contracts	\$ 73,403,000
Third Party	4,352,000
Rental Income	7,332,000
In Kind Revenue	1,863,000
Other	4,076,000
<hr/>	
Total Revenues	\$ 91,026,000

EXPENSES:

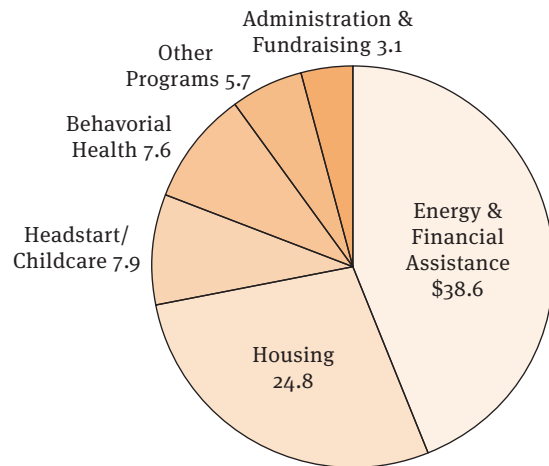
Energy & Financial Assistance	\$ 38,568,000
Housing	24,756,000
Headstart/Childcare	7,981,000
Behavioral Health	7,630,000
Other Programs	5,685,000
Administration & Fundraising	3,123,000
<hr/>	
Total Expenses	\$ 87,743,000

Change in Net Assets Before Depreciation	\$ 3,283,000
Depreciation	\$ 2,908,000
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 375,000

SMOC FY17 Revenue
IN MILLIONS



SMOC FY17 Expenses
IN MILLIONS



DONORS

MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SUPPORTED SMOC IN FY17

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDERS

MA Department of Children and Families
MA Department of Correction
MA Department of Early Education & Care
MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
MA Department of Housing & Community Development
MA Department of Mental Health
MA Department of Public Health
MA Department of Transitional Assistance
MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services
MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
MA Office for Victim Assistance
MA Medicaid
MA Medicare
MA Parole Board
MA Rehabilitation Commission
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs



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Alliance Of UUAC
AmazonSmile Foundation
Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund
Auto Bright Car
Bank Of America Charitable Foundation
Baystone Development
Belcher's Appliance
Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School
Blue Cross Blue Shield Of Massachusetts Foundation
BNY Mellon
Bowditch & Dewey
Brendon Properties
Church Of The Nazarene At Edgebrook
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares
Commonwealth Creative Associates
Commonwealth Of MA Employees Charitable Campaign
Community Software Group
Congregation Bethel
Country Bank
Cummings Properties, LLC
Davis Square Architects
DCU For Kids
DeWolfe Contracting
Digital Federal Credit Union
Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation
EEG, Inc.
Enstrat Inc.
Episcopal Church Of The Advent
European Wax Center
F&W Pest Control
First Baptist Church Framingham
First Congregational Church Of Rutland
First Giving
First Parish In Needham
FITTS Insurance
Fleming Enterprises LLC
Focus Optimal
Focus Optimal LLC
Foundation For MetroWest
Framingham Interfaith Clergy
Framingham Union Aid Association Inc.
Franklin Caterers
Fred C Church Insurance
French Family Trust
Fuller Foundation United Way Central Of Central Massachusetts
Gentili & Rossini Associates
Gerry Leone

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INSTITUTIONAL DONORS CONT.

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GFWC Blackstone Valley Women's Club
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Grace Congregational, UCC
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Tufts Health Plan Foundation
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United Mechanical Contracting, Inc.
United Way Of Tri-County, Inc.
Universal Home Improvement
VOYA
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Wel-Design Alarms
Wells Fargo Foundation
We're All In This Together
Willis Towers Watson
Worcester County Food Bank
Worcester Envelope Company
Yankee Candle



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Judith Peach Warren, Hopedale
Pamula Zicko, Holliston

Contact Information

FRAMINGHAM MAIN NUMBER 508.872.4853

Child Care and Head Start	508.820.8380
SMOC Behavioral Healthcare	508.879.2250
Fuel Assistance/LIHEAP	508.620.1230
WIC	508.620.1445
SMOC Housing Corporation	508.879.6691
Housing Service Center/Housing Consumer Education Center	508.872.0765

OPPORTUNITY CENTER

Common Ground Resource Center	508.620.2690
Career Center	508.620.2677



ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

SMOC Financial Services	844-766-2737
Marlborough Main Number	508.460.9699
Greater Worcester Housing Connection	508.757.0103
Martin Luther King, Jr. Center	508.756.6330
Lowell Transitional Living Center	978.458.9888
Open Pantry Community Services (Springfield)	413.737.5354



EVERYBODY MATTERS

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