



BLESSINGS

OUR LADY OF MERCY COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES, INC.

Spring 2008

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OLM Outreach Receives Kresge Challenge Grant

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The new Wellness Building has been under construction since January 2008, and progress on the approximately 4,600 sq ft building is moving rapidly along. Each day staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to Our Lady of Mercy Outreach comment on its amazing development.

The Outreach undertook a \$3.5 million Capital Campaign to secure funds for the replacement of the trailer that currently serves as the Wellness House with a more spacious,



Clearing the way (Wellness House trailer in background).

permanent facility. We have raised \$3.2 million to date and were notified in December that we have been approved to receive a Challenge Grant of \$500,000 from The Kresge Foundation toward the construction of the new Wellness House. The challenge grant is designed to assist non-profit organizations as they work to strengthen leadership and financial support for capital building projects.

“We are very excited and grateful to have received this prestigious challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation.”, says Sister Mary

Joseph, Director. “As per the guidelines of the challenge grant, the Outreach now needs to raise



Raising the roof.

a total of \$4 million dollars by June 30th, and if we are successful, the Kresge Foundation will grant us \$500,000. “The Kresge Foundation is a private foundation that supports communities by building the capacity of non-profit organizations in six fields, including health. In 2006, the foundation approved 230 grants throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and South Africa, totaling \$152 million. Our Lady of Mercy Outreach was the only organization in South Carolina to receive this challenge grant.

The capital expansion effort of the Outreach will allow for greater pre-natal and women’s health



Laying a strong foundation.

services and dental care capacity. During the fiscal year 2006-2007, the present modular trailer which serves as the Wellness House provided 1338 prenatal visits and 1556 dental procedures. The new facility will provide much needed space for increased women’s health and education programs and dental services to the residents of the Sea Islands.

LETTER FROM THE Director



Hammers are pounding, walls are secured and roof trusses are in place! Excitement is everywhere as the new Wellness House building takes physical shape.

“We are right on schedule,” proudly announces the building site supervisor.

A long-awaited dream is coming true. Almost two years ago, after an extensive long-range planning process, the Board of Directors and Staff set out on a journey to build a new Wellness House. Growing numbers of residents seeking dental care coupled with the limited space of the current trailer meant that appointments were stretched out several months.

Women’s health concerns and the need for pre natal care often created a very crowded waiting room. By the fall of 2008, a new building, added state of the art equipment and adequate staffing will be in place as the Outreach embraces its mission of health and wellness.

The Capital Campaign moves steadily to its goal of \$4 million thanks to many generous contributors and the outstanding philanthropic spirit of this community. As Director, I am deeply grateful to the leadership of our Campaign Cabinet, the committee members who have dedicated many hours to the Campaign’s success, the foundations who support the provision of health services in the new building and the Outreach staff’s untiring efforts to bring this project to completion. May God’s special blessings be with you!

Sister Mary Joseph

• THE WELLNESS HOUSE •

Dental Patient Caters Outreach Luncheon

The Wellness House has touched the lives of many residents of Johns, James and Wadmalaw Islands. Residents who take advantage of the services provided are extremely grateful. We are always excited when recipients of our services are able to give back to the Outreach.

Don Glover is one such resident. He is receiving comprehensive dental care at the Wellness House. Don lives on Johns Island and works as a Banquet Chef at the Yacht Club located downtown. One day he walked in and asked

Sister Mary Joseph, “What can I do to help? I think there is so much I can do and I want to give back...as much as I have time for.” Don offered to cater the meal for the Auction Luncheon that was held



Don Glover discusses his dental history with volunteer dentist, Dr. Douglas Stalb.

on March 7, 2008. The luncheon was to thank the wonderful volunteers who donated time and energy to making the 2008 Auction such a terrific success.

Attendees of the luncheon were pleased with the meal and Don was thrilled at the opportunity he was given to donate his talents to the Outreach.

Don believes that we have everything we need in this life here with us. He believes that everyone was given a special talent that he or she can use. He hopes to offer his “cooking talents” for a future Outreach fund-raising event.

The Wellness House Welcomes NEW STAFF

April Knotts came to the Outreach after receiving information from an instructor at Trident Technical College. She applied for the position of dental assistant, and has been enjoying herself in that role ever since.

“Everybody at the Wellness House cares

about the patients,” said April. “I love the atmosphere and everyone has been very nice to me.”

Along with the rest of the Wellness House staff members, April looks forward to moving to the new building. “We hope more dentists will volunteer because of our new building and equipment.”

April received her degree in Dental Assisting in August of 2007 from Florence-Darlington Technical College.



April Knotts serves as Dental Assistant.

“We hope more dentists will volunteer because of our new building and equipment.”

Prenatal Care *at the Wellness House*



Svitlana Osadtsa, a previous patient of the Wellness House, takes a moment to play with her baby girl.

The staff and volunteers of Our Lady of Mercy are always willing to go beyond the necessary requirements to help patients of the Wellness House. They are there for emotional and physical support.

Many patients reap the benefits of the “above and beyond care” provided by the Wellness House Staff. While all patients are special, some stand out a little more than others. One such patient is Jennifer. Jennifer has come to the Wellness House for her care during her pregnancies. Her first pregnancy was very problematic. Her baby’s cranium was not fully formed and death was an unfortunate certainty for the baby. Despite doctor’s predictions, Jennifer was able to care for her first child for fifteen months before her baby passed away.

She visited the Wellness House many times to share her fears and concerns.

As the staff helped her to understand her baby’s condition, they became like a second family to her.

Many patients reap the benefits of the “above and beyond care” provided by the Wellness House Staff.

Jennifer is pregnant now with her second child and comes to the Wellness House for her prenatal care. Often she would wear uncomfortable clothing to her appointments. One day the staff provided Jennifer with a couple of maternity outfits from the Outreach’s clothing room. She now wears the clothing she received to every visit. The staff discovered that she did not own any maternity clothing. Now she is comfortable and her new baby has lots of room to grow!

“When I first came from Mexico, I was six months pregnant and in a lot of pain from all of the walking I had done,” said Maria. “A friend told me about Our Lady of Mercy Outreach and I came to ask for help.”

That was in 2006. Now, Maria has chosen to return to the Wellness House for her prenatal care as she and her husband prepare for their new baby.

“They treat you right and they help you with different things, like with my children,” said Maria. “And it’s free.”

Unfortunately, Maria has been less compliant with this pregnancy as compared to the last, due to a lack of adequate transportation.

Maria’s husband drops her and their children off before clinic hours and she and the children remain at the Outreach until late in the evening, when her husband returns from work. When he is unable to take her, she begs for a ride from a friend. The important thing for her is that she comes to as many visits as possible.

Maria and her family have also taken advantage of the English as a Second Language program. They have attended the Tuesday and Thursday evening classes to improve their English.

“The English classes help a lot, said Maria. “And in the child learning program, the teachers take care of your children while you learn.”



Special Delivery Baskets



The Outreach Staff and those who participate in the services are always grateful for our many volunteers. Some have recently embarked on the wondrous experience of being a volunteer, while others have been volunteering at the Outreach for many years. Kay Sweeny is one of the faithful long-term volunteers.



Kay Sweeney, long time volunteer, sits among the "Special Delivery" baskets.

Delivery" basket. The project was to serve as incentive for pregnant women to attend all scheduled prenatal appointments.

Annette Maranville, Director of the Wellness House, and Kay continue presenting new mothers with gift baskets. Kay uses the baby blankets donated from individuals and the Frierson Elementary School Sewing Club and creates gift baskets for the mothers of the prenatal program at the Wellness House. Also included in the baskets are disposable and cloth diapers, gowns, undershirts, a stuffed animal, lotion, bibs, bottles, hats, baby powder and sometimes more, depending on donations received.

"It's nice for them to have something new for their baby," said Kay, "Whether it's their first or third child." You can contribute to this project by donating items for the "Special Delivery Baskets." Many church groups and civic clubs organize their own "Baby Shower" and donate the gifts to this Wellness House project.

"I have been volunteering at the Outreach since they first came to the island," said Kay.

Originally, the Outreach and the March of Dimes partnered with church groups to provide a "basket" of special items for newborns as a gift to the mothers. When the baby was born, they would receive a gift basket called the "Special

Gifts from the "International Order of the King's Daughters and Sons"



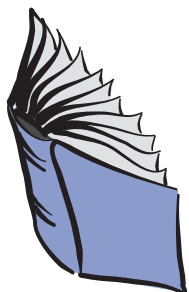
Edith Dixon of the International Order of the King's Daughters and Sons, reads to a student of the Child Learning Center.

Edith Dixon of "The International Order of The King's Daughters and Sons" has visited the Family Literacy program twice since fall classes began. She came to donate a much needed text book to the adults of the English as a Second Language program and more recently to donate several books to the Early Childhood Learning Center.

After discovering that Our Lady of Mercy Outreach had a literacy program, Edith suggested to the members of her organization, the "International Order of the King's Daughters and Sons", that the Outreach was a good place to start with their newest mission of increasing literacy.

"Reading is important for anybody," said Edith. "The earlier you teach a child to read and to appreciate a book; they will read for life."

The mothers and children appreciated receiving the books and now enjoy sharing reading time together.



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Medicaid Navigator Program *Comes to the Outreach Wellness House*

The Outreach and Roper St. Francis Hospital have once again teamed up to help the community. Since November, 2007, Kathryn Harrison, Coordinator for Community Activity and Education at Roper St. Francis Hospital, has been visiting the Outreach twice a month to increase the number of approved Medicaid applications.

“The purpose of this project is to ensure that citizens who qualify for Medicaid are able to successfully apply for and participate in the appropriate Medicaid programs,” said Kathryn.



Kathryn Harrison and Axia Alvarado review Medicaid appointments before Kathy's next visit to the Outreach.

“We want to reach out to the homeless, migrant families and the working poor who, when presented with healthcare options through

Medicaid, will have access to preventive care and treatment of chronic conditions, as well as coverage for acute conditions.”

The Medicaid Navigator Program not only assists with the Medicaid application process, but it also helps clients with the disability application process for both Social Security and Medicaid.

“Many of our older population are also eligible for other federal and state assistance programs,” said Kathryn. “We try to assist them with accessing those programs as well.”

• SEASONAL FARMWORKERS •



Dr. Marta Hampton, Dermatologist, explains the benefits of a topical cream to a farmworker.

The time for planting has arrived and many seasonal farmworkers are coming to the local farms. Each year the Outreach Staff visit with the farmers and the workers to learn how

physician who now volunteers at the Wellness House, first started the outreach to the Camps in 1993 when he served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Outreach.

to assist them. Two Health Screenings (June 3rd and June 10th) are planned for the workers. Many volunteer medical personnel will join with the Wellness House Staff to provide screenings and educational materials. The health needs of the residents in the migrant farming camps are numerous. Dr. Ralph Principe, retired OBGYN

The Outreach also brings recreational equipment for the young children and adults to enjoy when they return from the fields. Many generous donors continue to contribute basic toiletry items and health supplies, linens and food items for distribution to the migrant farmworkers and their families.

To learn more about this program, donate your time or to contribute materials for the farmworkers, contact Claire Bergstrom, Volunteer Coordinator.



Current & Upcoming EVENTS

Our Lady of Mercy Outreach's website has been updated!

Friends, family, volunteers and donors are now able to visit the Outreach without leaving the house. You can view current events, photo galleries, apply for volunteer opportunities and even offer donations all with the click of a button. Be sure to visit our website and add your name to our mailing list, so that you are always in the know!



Annual Golf Tournament

The date for the annual golf outing has been set! Our Lady of Mercy Outreach's 16th Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Wednesday October 1, 2008 at the beautiful Golf Club at Briar's Creek Golf Course. Call the Outreach for your registration form!

Volunteer Opportunity

Yes, I Can Summer Enrichment Program will be held July 7th-July 25th, 2008! In its 7th year, this educational program always provides a wide variety of activities for children in the surrounding neighborhoods. Each summer the Outreach is gifted with the presence of many volunteers who give their time and energy to this experience for the young children. Daily reading sessions, arts and crafts, math and science activities and exciting field trips make up the three week curriculum. "We welcome volunteers to join us for this fun-filled time," invites Sister Carol, Coordinator. To sign up as a "reading buddy" or general volunteer participant, please contact Sister Carol at the Outreach.



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