



FRESH off the *STEPS*

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

A place for help, a place for hope, a place for healing...



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2211 Fulton Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45206
www.firststephome.org

PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIR

Twenty-five years ago, an empowered and visionary group of women opened the doors of First Step Home and were the front runners in removing a major barrier to women who had to choose between residential drug and alcohol treatment and proper care for their children. First Step Home removed that barrier and met that unfilled need. While we continue to provide residential drug and alcohol treatment services for women and women with children, up to the age of twelve, we have also met the demands of our evolving communities and clients by enhancing our continuum of care and have expanded to include housing with treatment, outpatient services and specialized care for pregnant and postpartum moms. Additionally, due to the high health risk of many of our clients, we have also integrated physical health services on-site and psychiatric support. We pride ourselves in providing a specialized, effective safe and sober environment for women. But our work does not stop on short-term rehabilitation and trauma treatment success stories – we invest in the whole individual and help ensure their success as contributing members of society, and as mothers, through job training, parenting skills curricula and life skills.

We are fortunate that many of our original founders, community partners and volunteers at First Step Home have remained actively involved in our success and we are happy to report that our support continues to broaden and include many new friends. Please enjoy reading this year's annual report and discover how we've continued to offer client and family-centered care and empower those we serve.

Sincerely,

JESSICA WALTHER

Board Chair



MARGO SPENCE

President & CEO



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HOUSING

First Step Home currently owns eleven buildings, which includes our Residential Treatment home and the 23 unit apartment building where we will soon begin renovation. Women typically begin their treatment in the Residential Facility, which has capacity for 18 women and their children and then ‘step down’ to Campus Housing, with greater freedoms and responsibilities, while continuing to work on their recovery. When women have successfully completed this program, often taking about six months, if housing is still a barrier, they move to Sober Living homes, while working with their case managers with the goal of finding permanent supportive housing.

Our housing goal is to create a new home environment which includes living options in both single and multiple family units. Within these units the women can live in a group setting and support each other in their recovery.

In 2017/2018 due to the Behavioral Health Redesign we saw a slight decrease in the percentage of vacancies that we had in all of the different types of housing across the board. For last year that percentage was about 16%.

Renovation will soon begin at the 23 unit apartment building known as the Lillie Lee, with the help of an award from the City of Cincinnati in the amount of \$250,000, along with a grant of \$100,000 from SAMAD (Substance Abuse Management and Development). HUD has now approved the project and will support site-based vouchers for the apartments.

OHMAS (Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services) has approved an award of \$350,000 to be used to renovate our Residential Housing. These funds will be utilized for projects at the Residential Home which will include a new elevator and roof, along with carpeting, painting, electrical and new furnishings for the 8 bedrooms located in that building.

HUMAN RESOURCES

First Step Home currently has 45 staff, employing therapists with advanced degrees and licensure. Training dollars are allotted each year to staff to allow them the opportunity to continue to learn the latest Best Practices for the work they do each day.

This past year, a part-time Registered Nurse was hired to provide oversight for the pregnant and postpartum mothers and their newborn infants living in the Terry Schoenling Home for Mothers and Infants. In most cases, this additional medical oversight provides a significant safety measure that allows the mother and her newborn baby to leave the hospital and return to First Step Home together as a family unit.

Additionally, this past year, we have hired a full-time Registered Nurse to provide medical support to our residential and campus clients. The services she is providing have become invaluable to the welfare of our clients and their children. She will also be providing services to our staff such as American Red Cross First Aid and CPR/AED training and administering required annual TB tests.

As we look to the future, our staff's focus will be continuous improved client care, improved trauma-informed care and the implementation of a formalized family therapy curriculum.



DEVELOPMENT

During our second year of having a Development Department, we had quite a successful year. Taking over the leadership for the Development Committee of the Board is Sara Breiel, who has been a wonderful partner. Our Advisory Board was also active, bringing us needed funding, grants and even a new van! We continue to work to ensure we have an engaged Board and Advisory Board during this critical period at First Step Home. This year we doubled the anticipated income we received, gathering more than \$865,000 in grants, individual contributions and corporate contributions.

Our largest grants included a \$150,000 grant from bi3, an Impact 100 grant for \$101,000, \$65,000 from the George B. Riley Trust, \$50,000 from Interact for Health, \$40,000 from the Difference Makers Legacy Fund, \$35,000 from the Rosenthal Family Foundation, \$25,000 from the Joseph A. & Laura L. Klunk Family Foundation, \$20,000 from the Scripps Howard Foundation and \$20,000 from the Daniel and Susan Pfau Foundation. We've been delighted to have some return foundation grants such as the Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation, the Louis and Melba Schott Foundation and from the Williams Foundation.

Another area of success has been a \$250,000 award announced from the City of Cincinnati and \$100,000 from SAMAD to be used for the renovation of 2160 Fulton Avenue. Additionally, we have been approved for a \$350,000 award from the State for renovations at 2203 Fulton Avenue.



2019 Rose Award Celebration

May 11th, 2019 for the Rose Award Celebration
at 330 Lafayette Avenue

Have you ever considered leaving a legacy gift to First Step Home?

For more information contact Rachel Lyon.
rachel.lyon@firststephome.org (513) 961-4663 Ext. 107

FINANCIAL

Fiscal year 2018 has been a year of tremendous change in several areas including financial staffing, billing processes as well as clinical processes. The State of Ohio, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services along with the Ohio State Department of Medicaid implemented their Behavioral Health Redesign program on January 1, 2018. This caused First Step Home as well as many non-profits across the state to test their cash flow skills. The State assisted by providing interest free loans to organizations through the first several months of the transition period. The loans were very helpful and were paid back quickly as our learning curve on billing within the new system improved month by month. Although these new processes under Behavioral Health Redesign are very challenging, there are opportunities to improve service delivery and how we bill for those services.

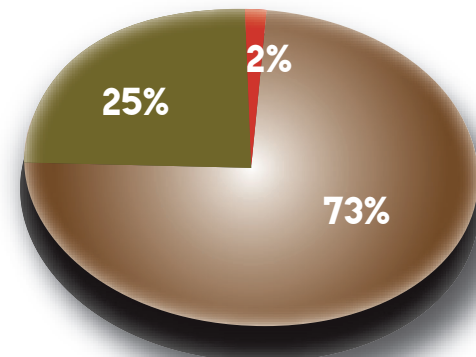
A real challenge for FY 2019 will be to get the Lillie Lee Apartments operational. Being vacant since March 2016 has created real concerns for First Step Home. During FY 2018 the vacancies created an \$80,000 expense for the organization with no revenue offset, yet we are still showing a positive bottom line for the organization overall.

The good news is that we made it through Fiscal Year 2018 even with all the challenges. The preliminary, unaudited financial statements show an approximate \$150,000 bottom line that is in the black, a significant turn-around from FY 2017 where First Step Home incurred a significant loss for the year. Major changes that have contributed to the positive bottom line are:

- Development/Fundraising – Although budgeted for \$428,000, the actual revenue for the year exceeded well over \$865,000.
- Government grants and fees exceeded FY 2017 by over \$100,000.
- Changes in several expense areas including wages, laboratory testing procedures and facility maintenance assisted First Step Home in producing a positive bottom line.

FY 2018 REVENUES

- Government Grants & Fees
\$2,581,546
- Contributions, Fundraising & Donations
\$865,000
- Other Operating Income
\$82,356



CLINICAL SERVICES

In a year where opioid use disorder has continued to increase among pregnant and non-pregnant women, our organization has recognized and faced the challenges of relapse, overdose and the sadness of death and loss that is occurring at an alarming rate. While the epidemic is being addressed at many different levels, much still needs to be done. Our clients are our central focus as we are forever mindful of the severity of the disease and lifelong struggles of their journey. We have striven this year to continue to grow our partnerships, strengthen and fortify our services and train our staff by honing their skills to meet the needs of our clients. In our community partnerships, all involved provide their expertise from a team approach, to meet clients' needs from a holistic prospective.

In the treatment of pregnant and postpartum women, our six-year old Maternal Addiction Program involves our relationships with Good Samaritan Hospital's HOPE Program, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Child Protective Services. We are able to engage and treat women with opioid use disorder by providing clients with the necessary supports that help them recognize the importance of recovery and care for their infants. With our new Terry Schoenling Home for Mothers and Infants, along with the Maternal Addiction Program, we have ongoing meetings with partnering providers that include Good Sam, Center for Addiction Treatment, and Crossroads, where all are instrumental in improving care and building a safety net for our clients. Our internal services have been strengthened by adding a Registered Nurse to assist with immediate medical concerns for brief intervention, referral for care and on-site education and training.

Our services are provided by a well-trained cadre of staff that includes therapists, case managers, Maternal Addiction staff, Treatment Service Providers (TSP), a Vocational Educator and Peer Support. Team building is an ongoing process for our staff as it takes the cooperation and collaboration of a team to meet our clients where they are and for a united front to support them in meeting their recovery goals. We focus on trauma-informed care and training to build on existing skills to meet the ongoing needs for clients in recovery. Our treatment team embraces our clients and celebrates their recovery with continued growth and resilience.

