



END OF CALENDAR YEAR REPORT FOR FRIENDS OF INSPIRICA

DECEMBER 2018



This is a bittersweet note to write, as this is my final End of Calendar Year Report as Inspirica's Chief Executive Officer. Over the past nine years, I have had the incredible privilege of coming to know - and, in many cases, work alongside you - to achieve Inspirica's mission to break the cycle of homelessness. Together, we have transformed the lives of thousands of men, women, and children who turned to us at their most desperate time of need, moving them from the streets to health, jobs, homes, and - most importantly - dignity.

This month marks the end of yet another successful calendar year, with record results across the board, including our most important outcome: the number of men, women, and children we moved into permanent housing. The pages that follow provide highlights from the past calendar year, including our results, as well as a few notes on upcoming projects.

With our nation's affordable housing crisis and economic factors changing the face of homelessness, the mission continues. As always, thank you for your investment in Inspirica and the clients that we serve.

JASON SHAPLEN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The coming months will be a time of transition here at Inspirica. As many of you know, long-time CEO Jason Shaplen notified the Board of Directors on November 1 that he decided to resign his position, effective January 2, 2019.

In one way, this came as surprising news, especially as Jason has led the creation of groundbreaking, transformative programs that have made Inspirica the effective, results-driven powerhouse that it is today. In another way, for those who have come to know Jason well, it comes as no surprise at all. Jason has never been one to be complacent, always looking to apply his considerable talents to the most challenging problems. It is fitting, then, that once he leaves Inspirica, he will tackle homelessness in Los Angeles, which has 58,000 people living on the streets, including 17,500 chronically homeless. I am certain that he will make an indelible impact in one of our country's epicenters of homelessness, just as he has done at Inspirica and in our community. Below are a few highlights of what we have accomplished with Jason's leadership:

- Increasing the number of job placements Inspirica makes per year by almost 12x
- Increasing the number of housing placements Inspirica makes per year by over 7x
- Creating groundbreaking, transformative programs that go to the core of our mission to break the cycle of homelessness, including:
 - Jumpstart Vocational Training
 - Jumpstart Education
 - Jumpstart Employment
 - Early Childhood & Parenting
 - Children's Services
 - Job & Housing Retention
- Creating an entirely new concept of housing - Deeply Affordable Housing - that is gaining national attention
- Purchasing two new buildings (24 and 26 Woodland Place)
- Building two new buildings (992 Summer Street and 72 Franklin Street)
- Creating a system to rigorously track and report on key metrics
- ...and more!

While transitions can be unsettling, Jason and the Board are committed to ensuring a smooth, effective transition to a new CEO. To this end, following January 2, Jason will remain on staff in a limited capacity through the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2019) so that he might provide context, institutional knowledge, and counsel to his successor once he or she has been identified. The Board has already engaged an executive search firm to bring on an interim CEO while we conduct a full search for a permanent CEO.

Finally, I can assure you that the team that remains in place at Inspirica is best-in-class and exceptionally talented. They will carry the torch forward with great skill and grace. As Jason has mentioned time and again, among the many numbers-oriented achievements under his tenure, what he is most proud of over the past nine years is the professionalism, can-do spirit, and compassion of the Inspirica team - each and every one of them. They are the true heroes - and heart - of the organization. They remain ready to serve, as always. With your steadfast support, the Inspirica team will continue to fulfill our mission to break the cycle of homelessness and move more individuals *from homeless to home*.

BRUCE HELLER
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

OUR RESULTS

We track outcomes rigorously and in myriad ways. Given the difficult economic environment, we are especially proud of our 2018 calendar year results.

JOB AND HOUSING PLACEMENT RESULTS

Trailing twelve months

Job placements: 195
Housing placements: 190

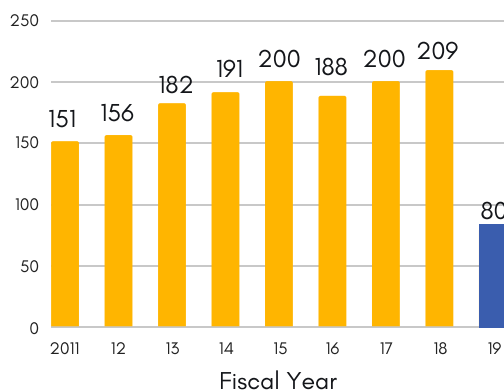
Average wage: \$12.48 per hour (24% over minimum wage)
Average hours worked per week: 30

**1,557 job placements over the past 8 fiscal years
 and first five months of current fiscal year**

1,388 men, women, and children placed in housing during the same time period

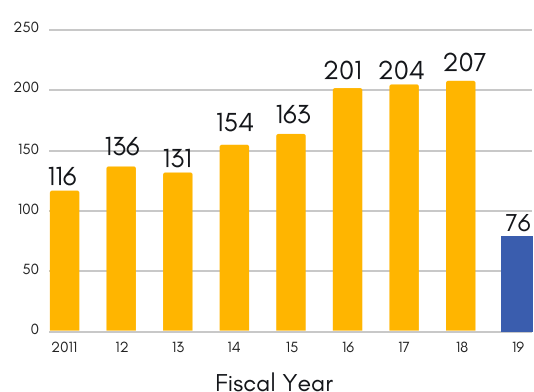
JOB PLACEMENTS

Over the past eight years + five months: 1,557



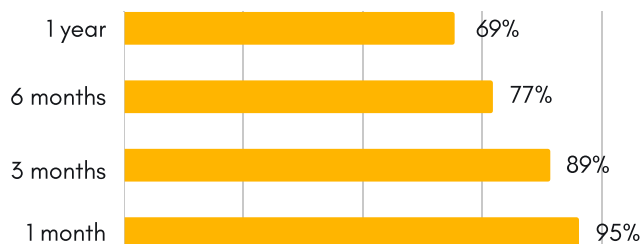
HOUSING PLACEMENTS

Over the past eight years + five months: 1,388



HOUSING RETENTION

When we place people in housing, they stay housed and break the cycle of homelessness.



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We ensure that the children in our care perform well relative to their peers who are not homeless.

100% graduated to the next grade level

Average grade B- or higher

100% offered full scholarships
to summer camps

HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE

Rising costs of living and lack of affordable housing driving uptick in homelessness

Each year the Department of Housing and Urban Development releases its *Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. This year's report was published last week (December 17, 2018). The news is sobering. It estimates that across the United States, over half a million people are homeless - roughly 553,000 individuals. This figure represents a slight rise in homelessness, increasing 0.3 percent between 2017 and 2018. After seven straight years of a *decline* in homelessness, however, even a small uptick indicates a problem - and it is particularly alarming in areas like ours. Homelessness is rising in high-cost-of-living areas. The working poor are becoming the working homeless.

The following statistics about our community are especially concerning:

- In Connecticut, approximately 3,976 people were homeless (based on a Point-in-Time survey conducted on a single night in January 2018)
- Of all 50 states, we saw the second largest percentage increase of people experiencing homelessness (17%)
- We are one of only 12 states where family homelessness increased, growing 44% to 1,696 people in families with children
- In our community (Fairfield County), 735 individuals are experiencing homelessness, including 184 children

All of the above underscore the critical need not only for affordable housing, but *deeply* affordable housing, so that we can prevent individuals from falling into homelessness.

In fact, Inspirica has led the charge in developing the concept of deeply affordable housing nationally, filling a devastating gap. We created our own Deeply Affordable Housing Program five years ago with the purchase of 24 and 26 Woodland Place.

Soon we will complete a new building (72 Franklin), which will provide deeply affordable housing to approximately 125 people, with an on-site pre-school that offers critical early childhood education to 48 infants and toddlers.

While we know that our Deeply Affordable Housing Program cannot on its own solve the entire nation's dearth of affordable housing, we are proud to be offering innovative solutions to the affordability crisis rearing its head around the country. In turn, we will help end homelessness in our community.

OUR PROGRAMS

The core of our success is our programs, many of which are groundbreaking in their approach to addressing homelessness. It would be impossible to describe all of them in this report, but what follows are some highlights from the past calendar year.

EARLY CHILDHOOD & PARENTING PROGRAM



Graduates from the "Circle of Security" Curriculum, an 8-week course that helps parents and caregivers better understand their children's emotional world by learning how to read their emotional needs, support their ability to manage their emotions, and enhance the development of their self-esteem - all contributing to their children's sense of security.

Homelessness is devastating to everyone it impacts. No group is more adversely affected than children whose lives are uprooted. Adults who are homeless often speak of feeling "stuck." For children, the experience is more like a free-fall. With each passing month, they typically slip further back in every category known to predict long-term well-being.

Birth to age 5 is a critical time - perhaps the most critical time - in a child's development. Early childhood experiences are essential to providing the foundation for cognitive development, brain development, motor skill development, and literacy/social skills - all of which impact future learning and success. The statistics surrounding literacy (the foundation of which must be laid at ages 0-5) are sobering:

- As high as 80% of children in homeless shelters don't read at level
- 66% of students who cannot read proficiently by 4th grade will end up in jail or on welfare
- 46%-51% of adults live below poverty because they can't read
- By the age of 4, children living in poverty have heard almost 20% fewer words than their peers, impacting their ability to understand tone, regulate emotions, and ultimately, find employment

Our Early Childhood & Parenting Program (ECP) prevents serious issues for our children before they happen.

ECPP combines crucial early childhood learning/development and a pre-literacy program for children with essential parenting skills classes for their parents. Children participate in verbal and written activities, movement games, exploration, music, art, science, stories and songs, all designed to promote school-readiness. Parents participate in classes that cover areas such as socialization, communication, boundaries, behavior/discipline, nutrition, reading, writing, child development, and advocating for children.

To ensure we do not duplicate services or recreate the wheel, we have developed strategic partnerships with Childcare Learning Centers of Fairfield County and The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center, allowing us to tap into their rich expertise and curricula. Each organization hires and assigns to Inspirica a part-time staff member with Inspirica paying the full costs for such personnel.

The program operates five days a week, providing counseling each day. Additionally it holds weekday evening sessions (every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) as follows:

- 5:30 to 7:00pm: Foundational development/learning activities for children; parenting skills for parents
- 7:00 to 7:30pm: Family dinner and activity

In addition to the above, this year we launched several new initiatives with ECPP, including:

- **Baby & Me Classes:** Held twice each week, Baby & Me explores music, reading, movement, etc. in a parent-child group setting. Classes, which are primarily for parents who are not yet working, have three core objectives: i) to teach parents the importance of providing essential developmental activities for their children; ii) to ensure their infants/toddlers receive the verbal and physical stimulation they require; and iii) to create an important social dynamic that is often missing in homeless families.
- **Mom/Dad Support Groups:** In May, we also launched another new component of ECPP: support groups for mothers and fathers. Held 2x to 4x per month, Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms provide a critical outlet for mothers and fathers to talk with and learn from each other, while also building a support network that, almost by definition of being homeless, they do not have.
- **One-on-One Counselling:** Finally, to ensure our children are advancing within appropriate developmental range, in March, we launched a new intensive one-on-one counseling component for children. Based on our monthly testing of children (using the ASQ evaluation tool), ECPP now provides significant one-on-one counseling to children who are not testing within the appropriate developmental range for their age, as well as their parents. This intensive one-on-one approach allows us to address potential deficits in development in real time.

JUMPSTART VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM



Proud mom and graduate Eloisa D., with her certificate of completion from Jumpstart Vocational Training's Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program.

At Inspirica, we aim to address all of the reasons that someone becomes homeless. To that end, we provide the Jumpstart Career Program to help our clients develop the core skills they need to:

- Prepare for, find, maintain, and advance in employment;
- Earn the income required to move into permanent housing in the community; and
- Lead independent, healthy, and stable lives.

The program has three distinct components: Jumpstart Education, Jumpstart Vocational Training, and Jumpstart Employment Agency. This year was an exciting one for our Jumpstart Vocational Training Program. In addition to continuing our Home Health Aide Training Program, we added two new initiatives: a Certified Nurse's Assistant Training Program and Food Handler/ServSafe Training Program. Both provide official certifications that allow graduates to secure jobs in two of the fastest growing segments of the economy: health care and hospitality/food. More details below:

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training. In partnership with Excel Academy, a local affiliate of DanielCare, this program provides training that is accredited and recognized by the State of Connecticut and Department of Health. DanielCare hires our clients upon graduation and matches them with its customers. Importantly, DanielCare has a partnership with Stamford Hospital, thus increasing employment opportunities for our clients.

ServSafe Certification. Administered by the National Restaurant Association, ServSafe is a food and beverage safety instruction and certification program. Through a partnership with the city of Stamford, our clients can obtain a ServSafe Food Handler certificate, required for employment by a growing number of restaurants. As many restaurant employees do not have ServSafe credentials, our clients who do are more competitive candidates, able to command higher salaries and able to enjoy greater job security.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Our special events allow us to bring together our extended community in service to our clients and those in need in our community. We are pleased that our end-of-year events delivered holiday cheer to those who might otherwise find it challenging to celebrate this time of year.



THANKSGIVING DRIVE AND GIVEAWAY

We held our annual Thanksgiving Giveaway on November 20 in Stamford's South End community, the culmination of a weeks-long Thanksgiving Drive. With thanks to our volunteers and incredible support from the community, we provided nearly 800 turkeys and baskets of fixings for a cozy Thanksgiving meal to those in need. We are especially thankful to the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County for their contribution of hundreds of turkeys. Likewise, we'd like to thank our other important supporters for their contributions, including local supermarkets, schools, companies, and those in the faith-based community. Their support - and yours - makes this possible!



HOLIDAY GIFT COLLECTION

With the help of nearly 350 elves in our Toy Workshop, we wrapped over 5,600 gifts at The Big Wrap, our annual wrapping party for our Holiday Gift Collection. All gifts go to families in need, delivering to children who receive the gifts the magic of the holiday season and giving their parents the pride of being able to provide for their family. We count ourselves lucky to lead this special initiative, which this year serves 2,815 children from 35+ non-profits and social services agencies across greater Fairfield County.



We are grateful to presenting sponsor Eversource for their support, and to the hundreds of volunteers, wish card sponsors, and all who brighten up the holidays of families in need.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Some of the things we did this year were less public, but they go to the heart of our values: to provide safe, stable, dignified places to house people, including those who are homeless and transitioning to permanent housing as well as those who are living in our own permanent supportive and deeply affordable housing. Maintaining our 11 facilities – and building our 12th! – is an ongoing project. While it is impossible to outline everything we do, below are two highlights.



72 FRANKLIN

Forthcoming deeply affordable housing development

Across the country, we are facing an affordable housing and homelessness crisis – in America's most affluent areas, it is only getting worse. The need not just for affordable housing, but deeply affordable housing is clear. We led the charge in developing the concept of deeply affordable housing five years ago, and are pleased to see it gaining national traction.

Our forthcoming property, 72 Franklin, is slated to open the first half of 2019. When completed, this 47,000-square-foot building will provide deeply affordable housing to approximately 125 people, with an on-site pre-school that will provide critical early childhood education to 48 infants and toddlers.



WOODLAND CAMPUS

8 Woodland Place

We completed a \$300,000 project to replace the roof of the residential part of 8 Woodland Place, home to our emergency shelter for single women and some of our support programs, as well as the location for our Thanksgiving Giveaway. Because the building is on the National Register of Historic Places, any updates must be exacting – and thus requires the use of very specific materials, which in turn drives up the cost.

The project was funded by two government-led initiatives, one offered at the state level and another at the federal level: the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit Program, which helps provide funding for municipal and tax exempt organizations by providing a tax credit to businesses who make cash contributions to such entities; and (2) the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, CDBG provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

DAWN T.

FROM STRUGGLES WITH MENTAL HEALTH TO EMPLOYMENT AND INDEPENDENT LIVING



Dawn's story is a common one amongst our clients - she fell on difficult times and lacked a strong support system she could call on, either to help her financially or to house her for an extended period of time. Reeling from a divorce and lacking the income to sustain herself independently, Dawn became homeless after she could no longer stay with family members. As her mental health deteriorated, she lost her job and started sleeping on the streets.

Dawn's luck started to turn around once she found her way to our Women's Housing Program, our emergency shelter for women and the only one of its kind in the area. The shelter provides emergency housing and support services for 25 single women for up to two months. The women living here participate in a boarding house structure with shared bedrooms, bathrooms, and a common TV/computer room. Each client is assigned to a case manager who helps develop a path to success and ensures that the client receives all of the help she needs to permanently exit homelessness.

"I thank
Inspirica from
the bottom of
my heart...
without them,
there would be
no place for me
to turn."

When Dawn came to Inspirica, she sought to apply for disability, believing that she did not have the ability to work. We connected her with local mental health providers and later determined that she could, indeed, work and live independently in the community. To that end, Dawn completed Jumpstart Education, an 13-week program that promotes self-sufficiency and provides clients the skills they need to obtain and keep employment. Dawn also utilized Inspirica's Jumpstart Employment Agency.

As a result, she secured a job at Target and has remained employed for over one year! She currently lives in permanent supportive housing designed for chronically homeless individuals managing mental health.

Reflecting on her experience, Dawn notes: "Inspirica is full of very welcoming and wonderful people... they encourage you to look inside yourself to see your own worth. Inspirica helped me build myself to a great place I thought I couldn't get to, where I have a job. Inspirica had hope for me."



VOLUNTEER WITH US

We cannot do what we do without you! We invite you to join us in our efforts to break the cycle of homelessness by becoming a volunteer. Each year, 2,000+ volunteers from across Fairfield County support Inspirica's mission by donating their time and talent.



AFTER-SCHOOL YOUTH CENTER

Adults needed afternoons | Monday through Friday, 4:00 - 6:00pm

Our Youth Center operates every day after school during the academic year, and is a dedicated space for the children in our care to achieve. Assist with homework and supervise recreational activities at our on-site gymnasium, library, and educational game room, which includes chess, an electronic drum set, and more. Appropriate for adults with experience working with children, as well as mature youth volunteers (15+).



YOUTH TUTORING

Adults needed afternoons | Monday through Friday, 4:00 - 6:00pm

We want to ensure that the children in our care develop in line with their peers who are not homeless. To accomplish this, we call on volunteers to tutor children on a one-on-one basis. Tutors cover a variety of subjects, with a focus on reading and math skills. Appropriate for adults with experience working with children, former teachers, and mature youth volunteers (15+).



EARLY CHILDHOOD PARENTING PROGRAM (ECPP)

Adults needed afternoons | Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 5:30 - 7:00pm

Volunteer Classroom Assistant: We have two separate classrooms, one for ages 0 - 2.5, and one for ages 2.6 - 5 years. The volunteer assists with the children under the supervision of the teacher. We ask volunteers to commit to one or more regular time slots so the children have consistency with the same assistants.

Meal Provision: Each program session closes with a meal for children and their parents, served at 7:00pm. Volunteers may prepare meals by either: (1) cooking in our on-site kitchen, or (2) preparing the meal beforehand and serving on-site.



JUMPSTART BABY SITTING

Adults needed mornings | Monday through Thursday, 9:00am - 12:30pm, as needed

Babysit infants and toddlers while their parents attend Jumpstart Education, classes and workshops designed to help them move towards achieving a stable life. Parents are more likely to focus on the information in these classes when they know their children are being watched just down the hall by outstanding babysitters like you. Volunteers must be 18 or older; 15 to 17 year old mature teens are welcome with the supervision of an adult.



JOB SEARCH HELP

Adults needed, flexible schedule during work week; preferably 10:00am - 1:00pm

Jumpstart Education is a 13-week series that focuses on every aspect of the job search process, including how to navigate the job application process, tips for successful interviewing, and more. Volunteers help our clients search online job postings and coach program participants through their search and interview process. Computer and internet experience required.



CHILDREN'S RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Adults needed afternoons | Monday through Friday, 4:00 - 6:00pm

Provide a fun party (birthday or holiday-themed) for children and their families, including refreshments, games and/or art activities, and entertainment.

Appropriate for small groups of up to 12 volunteers, and can be led by mature youth volunteers accompanied by adults.



MEAL PROVISION

365 days per year, Sunday through Saturday, dinner is served at 6:00pm

Gather your family, friends, or colleagues to prepare and serve dinner in our Women's Shelter (approximately 25 women). On Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, we invite clients from McKinney and Gilead House, residential programs for men and women living with HIV/AIDS and recovering from mental illness, for a campus dinner (on average about 45 men and women). Great for groups of up to 10 volunteers. Dinner can be prepared beforehand or prepared on-site, and then served to our clients. There is also an opportunity to provide meals Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for our ECPP program.

We welcome individual and group volunteers, including corporations who wish to plan a day of giving.

For more information or to schedule your visit, please contact Sarah Kennedy at skennedy@InspiricaCT.org or 203-388-0109.

OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

We are one of only a handful of organizations (10 to 15) in the nation able to address the physical aspect of homelessness (residential services) and its underlying root causes (support services) on a single, powerful end-to-end platform. Our programs are fully integrated and leverage one another.

Residential Programs

EMERGENCY SHELTER

- Emergency shelter for single women - 25 beds
- Emergency shelter for families - 42 beds

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- Transitional housing for families - 63 beds
- McKinney House - 10 beds
- Gilead House - 16 beds

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- Colony Apartments - 29 beds
- Atlantic Park Apartments - 27 beds
- Metcalf House - 10 beds
- Rose Park Apartments - 6 beds
- McKinney House - 5 beds
- 992 Summer Street - 24 beds +

DEEPLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 24 Woodland Place - 18 beds
- 26 Woodland Place - 11 beds
- 992 Summer Street - 24 beds
- 72 Franklin Street - 125 beds (*forthcoming*)

RAPID REHOUSING

- Short- and long-term subsidies to rapidly rehouse individuals and families

Support Services

CHILDREN'S SERVICES & EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PARENTING

- Foundational support
- Educational support
- Psychological/developmental support
- After-school Youth Center
- Early Childhood and Parenting Program
In partnership with Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County and Saint Joseph Parenting Center

JUMPSTART CAREER PROGRAM

- Jumpstart Vocational Training - Home Health Aide Training Program, Certified Nurse's Assistant Training Program, and food handler/ServSafe Training Program
- Jumpstart Education - 13 weeks of workforce education
- Jumpstart Employment Agency

HOUSING PLACEMENT

JOB & HOUSING RETENTION

CLINIC @ WOODLAND - HEALTHCARE

In partnership with Optimus

CLINIC @ SUMMER PLACE - HEALTHCARE

In partnership with Optimus

We would love to have you join us for a tour. To schedule a visit, please call (203) 388-0187.

OUR IMPACT



350 people housed each night and 1,025 people served each year, including 250 children



1,388 men, women, and children placed into permanent housing in the past 8 ½ years



1,557 job placements in the past 8 ½ years



100% of the children in our care graduated to the next level