



OUR

PIECE

OF THE

PIE

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

## DEAR FRIENDS:

Another amazing year has passed at Our Piece of the Pie® (OPP®). More than ever, young people are coming through our front doors and finding themselves quickly on a path to success—to finishing high school, to getting into college, to graduating from college, and to entering the workforce.

Perhaps the most impressive thing here at OPP has been our ability to streamline our services over the last five years to truly hone in on providing important services to underserved youth, ages 14 to 24. This allows us to directly address the challenges facing these young people and allows us to get them on that path to success, one person at a time.

Standing now on the solid ground we have gained from these past five years of progress, there is a new watchword that will guide us through the next few years.

### GROWTH

OPP is poised to grow in ways never thought possible a few years ago. A prime example is the high school we opened this year in partnership with Hartford Public Schools, Opportunity High School. This is a school that serves those who have not been able to make it in other high schools. Currently, 90 students are enrolled and the results so far are very promising. Many students, who

might otherwise be out of school if it weren't for Opportunity High School, are flourishing in the classroom, demonstrating leadership skills, and mentoring younger students.

OPP's continued growth is based on a strong foundation established by our Pathways to Success program. The strength of this proven youth development model ensures that each OPP participant has a caring adult in their lives to help them set a plan for the future. Every program at OPP is rooted in Pathways to Success. The program's success allows us to look to the future and find more ways to improve the lives of young people.

The work that our great staff is able to do every day improving the lives of our young people is inspiring. With their efforts and our eyes set on the future, we are now prepared to grow and help even more youth become successful adults.

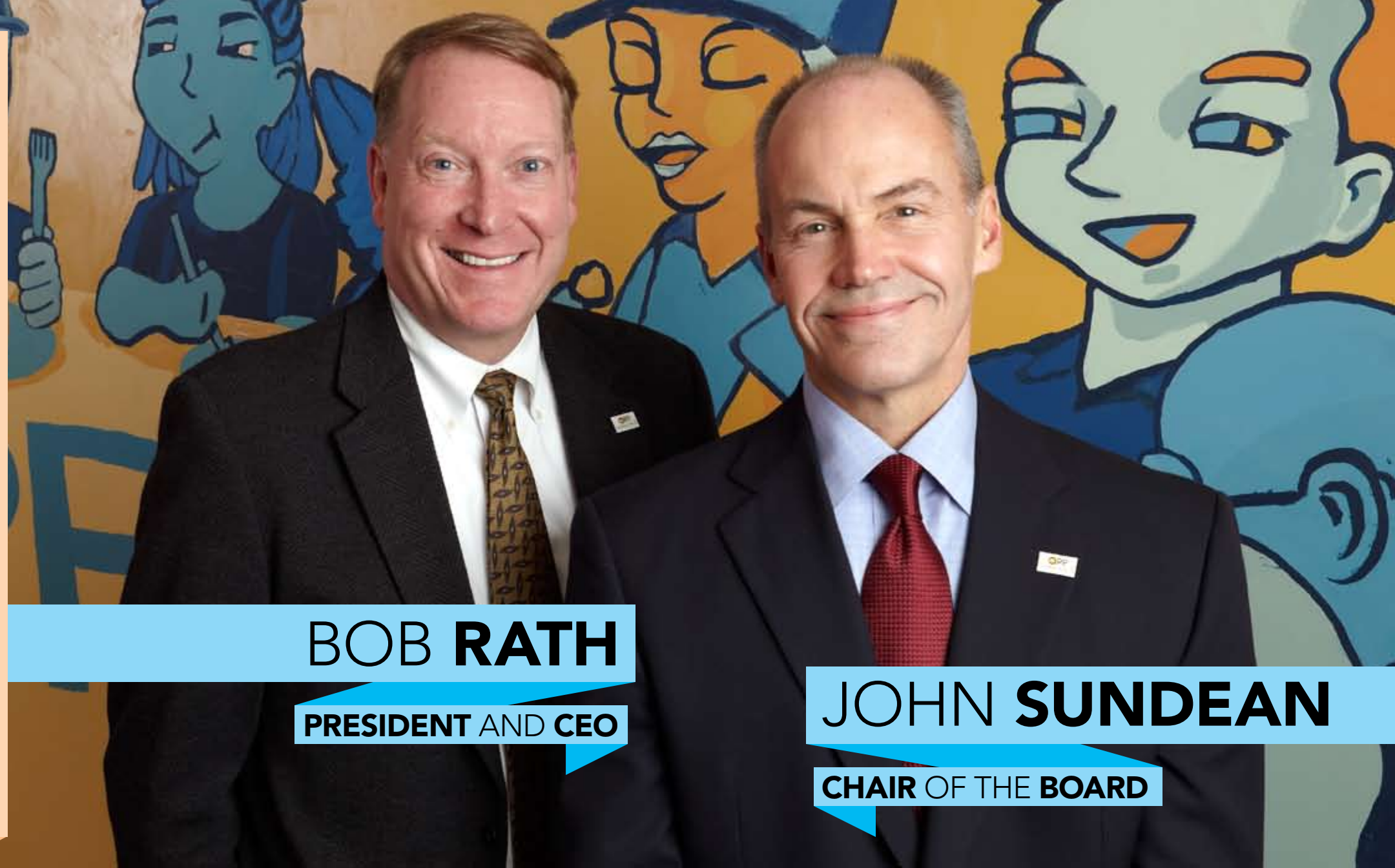
Please join us on the journey.



Bob Rath  
President and CEO



John Sundean  
Chair of the Board



**BOB RATH**

**PRESIDENT AND CEO**

**JOHN SUNDEAN**

**CHAIR OF THE BOARD**



## READY FOR THE FUTURE

**ASHLEY SMITH** had a close friend who was heavily involved in Our Piece of the Pie and spent much of her time here, and before too long Ashley was coming with her to various events and activities.

Today, just three years later, Ashley is the proud graduate of OPP's Office Procedures and Technologies (OPT) program. In OPT, students earn certification in the Microsoft Office Suite of programs including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

"I wasn't working, so I took the opportunity to learn more skills," Ashley says. She is now certified in Microsoft Office, not only building her resume but also gaining an advantage in the job market. Thanks to OPP's employment program, Ashley was able to secure an internship at Aetna and put her new skills into practice.

Ashley developed strong relationships with her OPT instructors and her Youth Development Specialist (YDS), who assisted in her transition from high school to college.

Now in her second year at Capital Community College and majoring in Social Work, she is looking forward to working with children and families in her professional career.

"My YDS and OPT instructor gave me life advice," Ashley says. "They really do point you in the right direction."

**ASHLEY SMITH**

**203** *Pathways to Success youth maintained employment for one year or more*

## GETTING A FRESH START

**FOR A STUDENT AND TEACHER,** Josh Gotay and Pam Lizotte have a great rapport. It was born out of working so well together at OPP.

Earlier this year, 18-year-old Josh was without direction. He was forced to leave his high school for disciplinary reasons and wasn't sure what would happen next. That's when he came to OPP, connected with a Youth Development Specialist and enrolled in the Penn Foster program as an alternative to getting his high school diploma.

Penn Foster, administered and funded locally by OPP, aims to put young people ages 18 to 24 back on track to earn their high school diploma on-line.

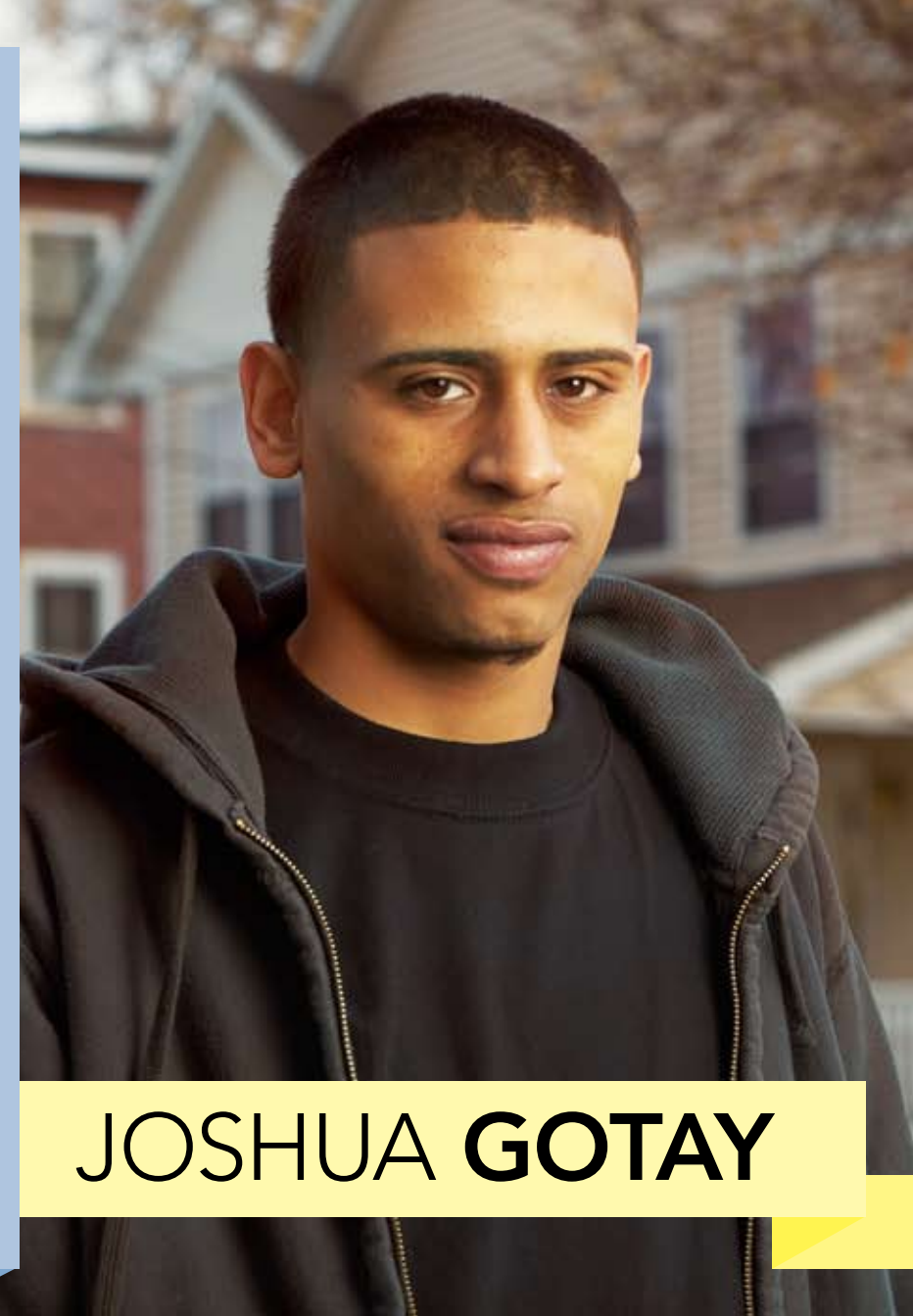
"Students are given a two-year window to complete their degree through Penn Foster; he completed the program in just two-and-a-half months with a 3.6 GPA," Pam says proudly. "Josh is the most motivated youth I have ever met."

"I didn't like staying home, waiting for things to come to me," Josh says. "OPP showed me how to be an adult, how to be responsible."

Now a high school graduate, Josh hopes to continue to work towards an Associate's Degree.

"OPP kept me motivated and kept me running," Josh says. "When you're motivated, nothing else gets in the way."

**61** *Pathways to Success youth earned a post-secondary degree or certification*



**JOSHUA GOTAY**



RASHANI **HALL**

# FINDING THE RIGHT PATH

**THE TRUE “SUCCESS” OF** Pathways to Success, the underlying model for all of Our Piece of the Pie’s youth services, is seen in the stories of Alberto Rosado and Rashani Hall.

Pathways to Success matches each OPP participant with a Youth Development Specialist (YDS) who helps them develop a concrete plan for the future. Each participant works toward the long-term goals of a college degree or vocational certification and/or employment in their chosen fields. Each student experiences a unique journey as they work toward their goals.

Alberto and Rashani are shining examples of how well that model works.

Alberto is 20 and a sophomore Biology major at the University of Connecticut. He also works part-time at T.J. Maxx. Rashani is 22 and a 2008 graduate of Trinity College who hopes to attend law school in the fall of 2010. She now works at Otis Elevator.

**107** Pathways to Success youth were placed in internships, or full or part-time employment

Alberto came to OPP while he was still in high school, hoping for help in finding a job. He found that and much, much more.

“I heard there was a program that could help youth get a job, so I came to OPP. It helped a lot. They helped with my resume, career-training, and job readiness,” Alberto says. “When it came time to apply to college, they helped there too.”

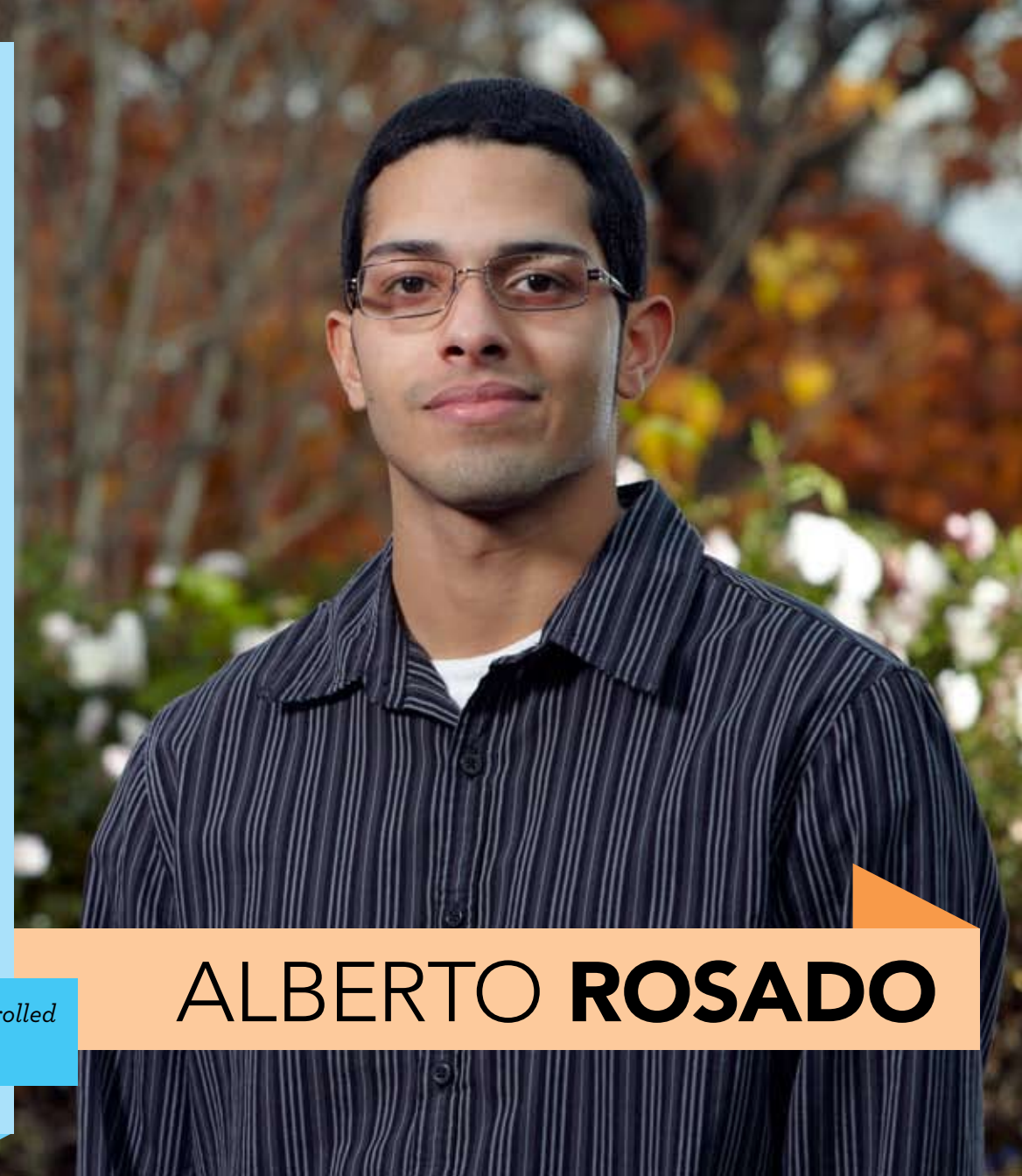
For Rashani, she arrived at OPP in 2001 as a 14-year-old enrolling in a peer mediation course. She was impressed almost immediately—the warm, small group setting felt like a family to her.

In her junior year of high school, Rashani began to utilize many OPP services including College Prep and Retention Services. With the help of her YDS, Rashani was able to gain admission to Trinity, successfully make the transition from high school to college, and flourish in the classroom.

“OPP was so welcoming and so encouraging. They always stayed positive—it was definitely an alternative for me to staying home or being on the streets,” Rashani recalls. “OPP made me feel like someone cares, like someone knew I wanted to excel in life.”

Both realize today that their futures are bright, and both thank OPP for that.

**220** Pathways to Success youth were enrolled in a post-secondary program



ALBERTO **ROSADO**

# A SECOND CHANCE AT SUCCESS

**OPPORTUNITY HIGH SCHOOL (OHS)** is the first of its kind in Connecticut: a partnership school between Our Piece of the Pie and Hartford Public Schools aimed at helping high school dropouts and those in danger of dropping out earn their diplomas. OHS opened its doors in August 2009.

We are already seeing progress.

Three months in, Director Wanda Brown-Claitty and Principal Venitia Richardson, are encouraged by the numbers. Many students, who otherwise would not be enrolled in school, are flourishing in the classroom. Attendance is more than 80%. These are students who were going to class only 60% of the time in their previous high school.

“To see this progress from a group of young people with such challenging histories demonstrates how successful this type of school can be,” Wanda says.

OHS combines the proven youth development model of Pathways to Success with the academic rigor of Hartford Public Schools. The school equips students with a quality education, teaches leadership skills, personal responsibility, and job readiness.

The short-term goal at OHS is ambitious, but one both leaders believe is achievable.

“Two years from now,” Venitia says, “our goal is to have all 90 students walk across that stage at graduation.”

**63** Pathways to Success youth earned their high school diploma or GED



**WANDA BROWN-CLAITTY**  
DIRECTOR

**VENITIA RICHARDSON**  
PRINCIPAL



**981** Youth were served in OPP's Pathways to Success Program

DIRECTOR OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

**KIMBERLY WILLIAMS-RIVERA**

# TRACKING STATISTICS

**KIMBERLY WILLIAMS-RIVERA**, OPP's Director of Quality Assurance, is the person who gauges the success of the organization's programs.

“Effective collection and interpretation of data lead to the implementation of best practices,” Kimberly says.

Kimberly's role and the built-in layers of accountability—monitored by a software system known as Efforts to Outcomes®—has been a hallmark of OPP's strength as a leader in youth development.

In 2008, thanks in part to fierce monitoring of youth outcomes, OPP became one of only four social service agencies in the country to be awarded full accreditation from the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) for excellence in youth development. Also in 2008, a study by the University of Connecticut showed that OPP has established a strong foundation to consistently implement its youth development strategy.

To further enhance OPP programs, Kimberly has established a quality measurement system to evaluate the level of engagement of all Pathways youth. She says only 14% of Pathways youth have not improved their personal connection with their Youth Development Specialist (YDS). Because youth who are more connected tend to reach their long-term goals more frequently, this measurement system allows OPP to identify those who do not have a strong enough bond with their YDS, and make changes that will help them succeed.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the year ended June 30, 2009

### OPERATING REVENUES

Government Grants	\$3,871,887
Contributions from Corporations, Foundations and Individuals	\$1,468,833
United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut	\$257,117
Program Fees	\$51,765
Interest Income	\$3,624
Miscellaneous Income	\$2,495
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,655,721</b>

### OPERATING EXPENSES

Youth Development	\$1,550,006
Employment	\$1,161,356
Childcare	\$378,910
Opportunity High School	\$219,850
AmeriCorps	\$437,552
Education	\$467,792
Other Programs	\$341,992
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$4,557,458</b>
Administration	\$515,846
Development	\$579,524
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$1,095,370</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,652,828</b>

Change in Net Assets	\$2,893
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$1,413,494
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	<b>\$1,416,387</b>

# EXPENSES 2008-2009

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

EMPLOYMENT

CHILDCARE

OPPORTUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

AMERICORPS

EDUCATION

OTHER PROGRAMS

ADMINISTRATION

DEVELOPMENT

## FUNDING SOURCES 2008-2009

### FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATIONS

Anonymous  
Bank of America  
Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
Community Learning Project  
Community Partners in Action  
Edna McConnell Clark Foundation  
George A. and Grace L. Long Foundation  
Greater Hartford Arts Council  
H.A. Vance Foundation  
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
Hartford Steam Boiler  
John Hunt Scholarship Program at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
Lincoln Financial Foundation  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Nellie Mae Education Foundation  
NewAlliance Foundation  
Northeast Utilities Foundation  
Phoenix Foundation  
SBM Charitable Foundation  
State Farm Companies Foundation

TD Charitable Foundation  
The Tow Foundation  
Travelers Foundation  
United Way of Central & Northeastern Connecticut  
Walmart  
Webster Bank

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City of Hartford  
Connecticut Commission on Community Service  
Connecticut Department of Children & Families  
Connecticut Department of Education  
Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division  
Connecticut Office of Policy & Management  
Connecticut Office of Workforce Competitiveness  
United States Administration for Children and Families  
United States Corporation for National and Community Service  
United States Department of Labor

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United Way of Central  
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