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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Blake (Our Piece of the Pie)
(860)761-7370

Lauren.Blake@opp.org

OPP WELCOMES NEW RESEARCHER TO EVALUATION TEAM



Hartford, CT... Non-profit, Our Piece of the Pie®, Inc. (OPP®) welcomes Sean Seepersad, Ph.D. as the newest member of its agency filling the role of Researcher. OPP hired Seepersad as part of a grant provided by The Grossman Family Foundation for OPP to build on its reputation of being at the forefront in fostering successful youth. This effort is extremely important in that it will give hard numbers to results achieved through agency programs. By quantifying the value of services in leading to a variety of successful youth outcomes, this

evaluation effort will allow OPP to enhance its services and have supporters see the return on their investment in the agency.

Seepersad has had a focused interest in youth development and evaluative research as reflected through his Ph.D. in Human and Community Development at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and his previous work as Assistant Professor at California State University, Fresno (CSUF). While at the University of Illinois, he conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the Champaign County Operation Snowball, a teen problem-prevention program. In his last position at CSUF, Seepersad worked with a number of community agencies including Stone Soup Fresno, an organization working for positive change with Southeast Asian families.

Seepersad's other main area of work and research is concerned with intimacy and loneliness among adolescents and young adults. In addition to hosting the Web of Loneliness website, a top-ranked website providing information about loneliness, he has conducted several research studies focused on loneliness, and just recently published a book entitled, "The Lonely Screams: Understanding the Complex World of the Lonely."

In his new role as Researcher at OPP, Seepersad sees this as an opportunity to combine his previous work and interests into a challenging, new endeavor. "This is an exciting opportunity for me," said Seepersad "I have the ability to create something and give it a direction to improve an organization and a community."

Seepersad joins OPP as part of the agency's evaluative initiative funded by The Grossman Family Foundation in early June 2011. The grant funds the establishment of an Evaluation Advisory Committee, the hiring of Seepersad, and allows OPP to retain a third party evaluator.

These experts will help to integrate rigorous program evaluation into the culture of the agency, so that OPP can continue to serve urban youth in the most effective ways possible. An external evaluation of the Pathways model will allow OPP to further prove the measurable impact of its services with its youth.

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