



**SANTA
MARIA**
COMMUNITY SERVICES™



SANTA MARIA COMMUNITY SERVICES

FROM THE CEO



One of the first things we do at Santa Maria each New Year is look back to evaluate our accomplishments from the previous year and build on our results going forward. As we looked back at 2018, we saw some amazing results:

- In our work to stabilize families and help them on a path out of poverty, 224 people completed a job readiness program with 145 of them securing employment.
- Of the 59 families we worked most closely with toward self-sufficiency, 73% increased their net income for their family.
- Forty-seven of these families started with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level, but over the past year, 13 families increased their income above the poverty level!
- Beyond that, families had many other successes: more than 200 preschoolers improved in social and emotional skills toward being ready for kindergarten, 198 adults improved their literacy skills with 35 of them earning their high school equivalency diploma, and 564 individual identified a regular place to go for their healthcare needs.

These results are not possible without your financial support. Santa Maria lost nearly \$250,000 dollars when United Way made across-the-board reductions. And while we had our most successful year ever in our own fundraising efforts—contributions from you and other individual supporters rose significantly!—your support is critically needed in 2019 more than ever before. Please consider a significant gift of cash or stock as an investment in our work to help families help themselves. Thank you so much!

H. A. Musser, Jr.
President and CEO

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ON THE COVER

Isabella, 16, was born and raised on the West Side of Cincinnati in Lower Price Hill – a neighborhood often recognized as unsafe. “Growing up in Lower Price Hill, there’s a lot of gun violence and drug activity around here,” says Isabella. Lower Price Hill also houses Santa Maria Community Services’ Joe Williams Family Center where Santa Maria’s Youth Development Program takes place. “Coming up to the Center has really helped because you get away from all that,” she adds. In addition to environmental challenges, Isabella and her family have faced many personal struggles as well. At just eight years old, Isabella’s father passed away. “Growing up fatherless was a challenge,” she says. “It was, financially, a struggle.”

The Joe Williams Family Center was a welcoming place for Isabella and children in the area, and still continues to be. As a child, Isabella was first connected to the Family Center through Youth Development Program Director, Jim Holmstrom. “My dad was in Jim’s youth program group. When I started growing up, I started getting involved with that,” says Isabella. The Family Center offers youth of all ages the opportunity to develop life skills, build character, and participate in healthy recreational activities. “Santa Maria’s been there to help me because they’re understanding,” she explains. “They’re also there to help with homework, school, or if you haven’t eaten that day.”

Isabella says that while all the staff members at the Center have had a positive influence on her, Youth Development Program Coordinator Jessica Polzin has been the most impactful. Isabella has known Jessica for nine years. “Jessica has been there, she drives me home, she talks to me, she takes me places if I need it,” says Isabella. “Love” and “affection” were words she used to describe Jessica and the staff at Santa Maria. She mentions Santa Maria is “affecting my life big time right now cause they’re loving on me and I feel accepted.”

Isabella credits Santa Maria and the Joe Williams Family Center with keeping her out of trouble. “If Santa Maria was not in my life I would be on the streets, getting in trouble, or not going to school every day,” she says. “They are like a second family to me.” In addition to Santa Maria, Isabella’s aunt and step-father have also provided much support in her life.

As an adult, Isabella plans to return to Santa Maria as a volunteer. “I want to give kids who are growing up, who are younger than me, the same opportunities I had,” she says. Isabella plans to go to college and study to be a physical therapist and hopes to one day start a family of her own.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING HEALTH FAIR

April 13, 2019 | 12:00 - 3:00 pm
Price Hill Recreation Center



Access free health screenings and enjoy refreshments, raffles, and activities for the entire family at the annual Spring Health Fair! Local health organizations will provide health education and resources. Thank you Cincy-Cinco and Ohio Commission on Minority Health for your support.

THE SHARING TABLE

April 26, 2019 | 6:00 - 9:00 pm | Union Hall, OTR

Take part in our community-focused fundraiser and help raise awareness of childhood poverty! Enjoy food, drinks, live music, and purchase hand-crafted bowls designed by local Clay Alliance artists!

PRICE HILL PACER 5K

September 7, 2019 | 7:00 - 11:00 am | Elder High School

Celebrate Price Hill at the 14th annual Price Hill Pacer benefitting the programs of Santa Maria and Price Hill Will! The Price Hill Pacer takes place in Cincinnati’s historic Price Hill neighborhoods.

Santa Maria Community Services

THE SHARING TABLE

celebrate community and raise awareness of childhood poverty in our region

FRIDAY, APRIL 26TH
6 - 9PM
UNION HALL, OTR
CINCINNATI

register at:
www.santamaria-cincy.org/sharing-table



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PARENTS ON POINT

Last fall, Santa Maria Community Services partnered with Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center to bring *Parents on Point* to Price Hill. Established in Chicago under the name *Chicago Parent Program*, the 12-week program was brought to Santa Maria after its success in two of Cincinnati's Avondale communities in 2017.

Parents on Point is a community-based support group for caregivers of children ages 2-5 and was created to empower and support participants in raising healthy and happy young children. The program brings caregivers in the community together to build connections, share ideas, and help each other problem-solve common parenting dilemmas. It supports families' ability to nurture and promote optimal emotional and behavioral development of their children by building upon parents' skills and increasing their confidence as caregivers. Furthermore, it promotes positive parent and child relationships and interactions.

During the 12-week program, the Parents on Point group served 27 Price Hill caregivers of 2-5-year-old children, and provided weekly meals, childcare, and transportation to participants. Six Santa Maria team members were trained to facilitate two groups split between English speakers and Spanish speakers. Staff included members from Santa Maria's Workforce Development Program, Education Program, and Early Childhood Development Programs, and support from Cincinnati Children's. Facilitators received comprehensive training to master skills needed to deliver program curriculum, facilitate group sessions and moderate group discussions, and organize resources that support parents' ability to participate in the program.

According to Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, the Chicago Parent Program has been shown to improve parenting skills and confidence and reduce behavioral problems in young



children 2-5 years old. The program is listed on the National Registry of Evidenced-based Programs and Practices and can be used as part of a comprehensive prevention or treatment program for helping parents of young children with or at risk for developing serious behavior problems.

In an evaluation of the Price Hill Parents on Point group, Cincinnati Children's stated that 97% of parents reported improvement in their child's behavior since participating in the program, and 99% of parents felt more confident in managing their child's behavior. "Parents on Point gave me the opportunity to be a better mother," said one parent. "We learned together, laughed together, even cried together someday but overall we cared together."

In January, caregivers celebrated their accomplishments at a graduation ceremony with family and staff from Santa Maria and Cincinnati Children's. Each received a graduation certificate and were capped to symbolize their success as "Super Parents."

FOUNDATIONS CORNER

Thank you to the many supporters of Santa Maria Community Services' programs! We have recently received support from the following foundations:

For Education Program -

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Maxwell C. Weaver Foundation

For Scripps Howard Communication Internship -

Scripps Howard Foundation

For Promoting Our Preschoolers Program -

SC Ministry Foundation

For Youth Development Program -

The Crosset Family Fund

50 FAMILIES PROJECT

According to the Ohio Development Services Agency's 2018 Ohio Poverty Report, one out of three Cincinnatians lives in poverty – that's more than 85,000 individuals. Santa Maria works with more than 3,000 individuals each year who live below the poverty line to help them attain self-sufficiency and reach their health, education, and financial goals. Because we understand poverty is the main barrier to why most are unable to achieve these goals, our family-centered services focus on bringing families out of poverty. In 2018, we set a goal of working closely with 50 families with young children to raise their income to move them on a path out of poverty.

Although an ongoing development, the 50 Families Project looked at families for one year, from January to December of 2018. The project focused on the entire family, assisting them with multiple services. Santa Maria recognizes that families enrolled in multiple programs are more successful and do better in the long-term than those who only receive a single service. An example of our family-centered approach includes home visitors working with caregivers and children to increase childhood development skills, while providing these caregivers and family members with resources to achieve housing and financial stability.

At the start of the project, families first set goals for themselves and their children, which included advanced education (especially for immigrant families with kids), better housing conditions, and neighborhood safety. "We've had to change

our attitudes toward families and be willing to accept what they see as a priority in their lives right now, not what we see as a priority. And it takes time; it did not happen overnight and will not be cured overnight," noted Susan Conrad, who oversees Santa Maria's preschool home-visitation program. "We were trying to impose our goals and we had to back down and let their goals be the driving force. When the family leads the way, they are more invested and more highly motivated to change."

Of the 57 families Santa Maria worked most closely with, 44 (77%) increased their income. One family was able to move above 200% of the federal poverty level, which means they are able to comfortably meet their family's financial needs. The average monthly income for these 44 families increased by \$713 a month. The project not only assisted families with earning more income but helped some families to receive an income for the very first time. Susan Conrad noted, "Moms started into the program with zero income and by connecting them to resources, we've been able to change that." Many families have increased their self-sufficiency, achieved stabilized housing, and have obtained and/or retained employment, factors which lead to stabilization of the school setting for children. Conrad says of one family, "They got to the place where they were more stable, started their business, and doubled their income." This year, Santa Maria has expanded the 50 Families Project to focus on 80 families and continues to move them on this path out of poverty.

THANK YOU TO DONORS

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations who supported Santa Maria Community Services in 2018. Your support helps us provide hundreds of families and thousands of individuals the means to step out of poverty and become self-sufficient. Should there be any error in the listing of your gift, please contact: DevelopmentTeam@santamara-cincy.org.

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