

2019 Annual Report



IHSP

**Interfaith Human
Services of Putnam
An All Volunteer Organization.**



President's Message

PROACTIVE or REACTIVE?

As President of IHSP, I am often asked whether we are proactive or reactive. My answer is always the same...both. When challenges and new situations are presented to us, we must act as best we can with the best interest of those we serve in our hearts and our decisions. It's easy to be complacent because "we've always done it this way". But at IHSP our Board of Directors, volunteers and yes, even our clients are always striving to change things for the better. Some of our greatest accomplishments started with "did you know" or "what if". Our Diaper Bank was born because one woman saw a need and wanted to help mothers care for their children. Our Nourishing Neighbor Program was created because a board member didn't like canned foods and thought fresh alternatives were healthier. Pathways 2 Success was a dream to help individuals and families work towards self-sufficiency. We started our new Senior Resources program because someone asked for our help. We provide snacks for school children because teachers and school personnel told us about the lack they witness every day. We supplement the Summer Food Program for children because if a child is food insecure so is the entire household and it was important to us that not only children eat but that families break bread together and engage in table conversation. We participate in The Northern NECT Homeless Charrette because we witness homelessness firsthand through our food pantry and someone said we can do more. So back to the original question of proactive or reactive? Yes, we are both, but what is really important is that we take action.



HOMELINESS

Homelessness comes in all sizes and shapes and can be found in the nooks and crannies of NECT. A homeless person may be couch-surfing with friends, living in a car, or camping. They may stay in a homeless shelter or under a bridge. Many homeless people have jobs but don't earn enough to maintain basic living expenses. Some people suffer from mental health issues and addictions. A devastating event, like job loss, accident or health crisis, can turn a life upside down quickly.

Homeless individuals' needs include: Affordable housing, Steady employment, Income that meets basic living expenses, and Transportation.

Keeping families and individuals from becoming homeless is one of the ways we can help by providing financial support for rent. Joining us in this journey with grant funding is Eversource, the New London Telephone Employees CSF and the Town of Putnam.

We participate in **The Northern NECT Homeless Charrette**, along with TEEG and other service providers. The group has been working together to educate, inform and provide solutions that address the issue of homelessness in NECT. As part of this group we participated in a homeless count in January to determine the degree of homelessness in NECT. We are working on the development of a Landlord Liaison Project that will help us connect clients with affordable housing.

Working together with The Access Agency, TEEG, and other service providers and individuals, we established **The Cold Weather Overnight Shelter** that was able to house up to 20 people during the 2019-2020 Winter season.

According to CT Mirror, "Housing is healthcare. Like food and water, it is a basic human need that no one can thrive without".



SENIOR RESOURCES



In 2019, Interfaith Human Services of Putnam became the Putnam's Municipal Agent for the Elderly. As we embark on this journey we will be offering assistance with food, fuel (home heating), paperwork, housing, other needs that may be identified in conversation, and referral to other services.

Our initial action was to survey 75 seniors to determine their greatest need. From that survey we were able to identify how we might be able to provide assistance.

One of the needs identified was Affordable Housing. Many pay out more than one half of their monthly income for rent leaving very little for other expenses.

Many struggle to pay their utility and gas bills. Others needed prescription assistance and home heating support. And some needed help with food and transportation.

As an emerging program, we've started this journey with food support. Additional assistance will be provided as individual needs are identified.

As we age, eating well can make a positive difference in how we feel. To support seniors, who qualify, we participate in the **Commodity Supplemental Food Program** that provides a monthly food package tailored for older adults. For senior adults who are served by our Food Pantry we are able to offer them fresh fruits/vegetables as part of our Nourishing Neighbors program.

HEALTHY EATING, NUTRITION & HUNGER

Good Health, Proper Nutrition and Hunger go hand in hand. According to Feeding America, feeding people who are hungry is more than simply providing food, it's about providing wellness, nourishment and strength. That's why their goal and its network of food distribution programs, including the **IHSP-Daily Bread Food Pantry**, is to provide the most nutritious food possible to improve people's health and well-being. Besides meeting basic needs we continue to work at improving the nutritional value of foods that we offer our clients. How are we doing that?

Our **Nourishing Neighbors Program** offers fresh produce from Big Y and Price Chopper. We also receive and distribute fruit and produce from local farmers/growers. It's one way we can help clients make a small shift in their daily eating habits in order to improve their long term health. But it doesn't end here.

With funding support from the Putnam Bank Foundation, Hanover Insurance Group and International Paper, we gave our clients more than **7500 Coupons** that were redeemable for fresh fruits/vegetables at two local Supermarkets. During the summer months we also offer the option of receiving coupons to the Putnam Farmer's Market.

We support the **Putnam Board of Education's Summer Food Program** so adult caregivers can eat with their children. In 2019 we fed 1372 adults. With funding from the Joy In Childhood Foundation we provided, through the school system, nutritious snacks for children and families who are unable to provide them for themselves.

Lastly, we held a **"Pot to Table" Event** to show its participants how easy it is to grow vegetables in a pot.

According to Everyday Power, "Maintaining a healthful diet is one of the best choices to make. Eating healthy provides the necessary nutrients that our bodies need, and helps prevent future diseases such as diabetes and cancer."



OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE PRICELESS



Photo: Robert E. Hall

Area food insecure people are getting a helping hand, thanks to a combined three-week collection effort by **Putnam Boy Scout Troop 21 and Knights of Columbus Cargill Council 64**, with support from four local churches and the public. Their eleventh annual food drive collected \$1,761 and 3,034 pounds – almost a ton-and-a-half – of non-perishable food from people in the community for the IHSP-Daily Bread Food Pantry.



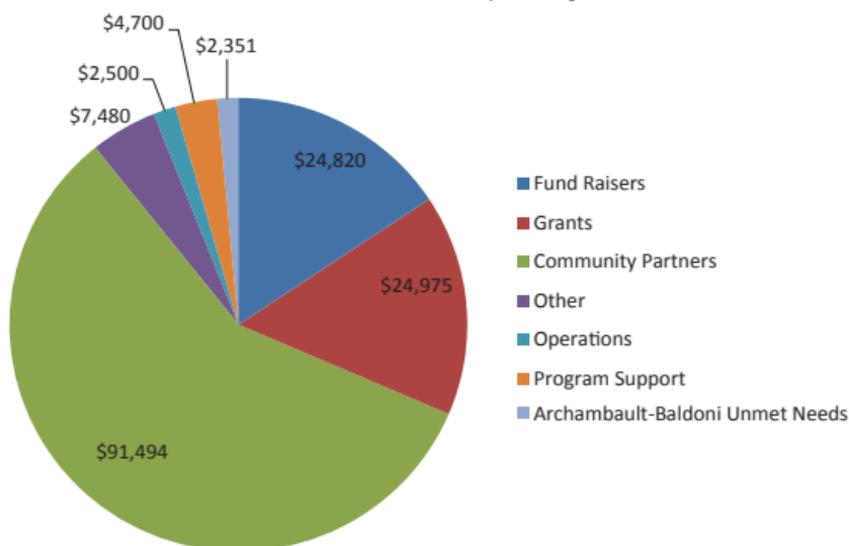
OUR GARDEN OF GIVERS

Foundations that help IHSP meet the needs of our clients

- Putnam Bank Foundation
- The Norwich Diocesan Bishop's Cradle Fund
- Jewett City Savings Bank Foundation
- Cranston Foundation
- Farm Credit East Cares CNY
- International Paper
- Joy of Childhood Foundation
- Newell D Hale Foundation
- New London Telephone Employees CSF
- Walmart
- CT BPOE Elks Association
- The Golub Foundation
- Stop n Shop (Ahold Foundation)
- Hanover Insurance Group
- Charter Oak Federal Credit Union
- Community Foundation of Eastern Conn

OUR FINANCIAL

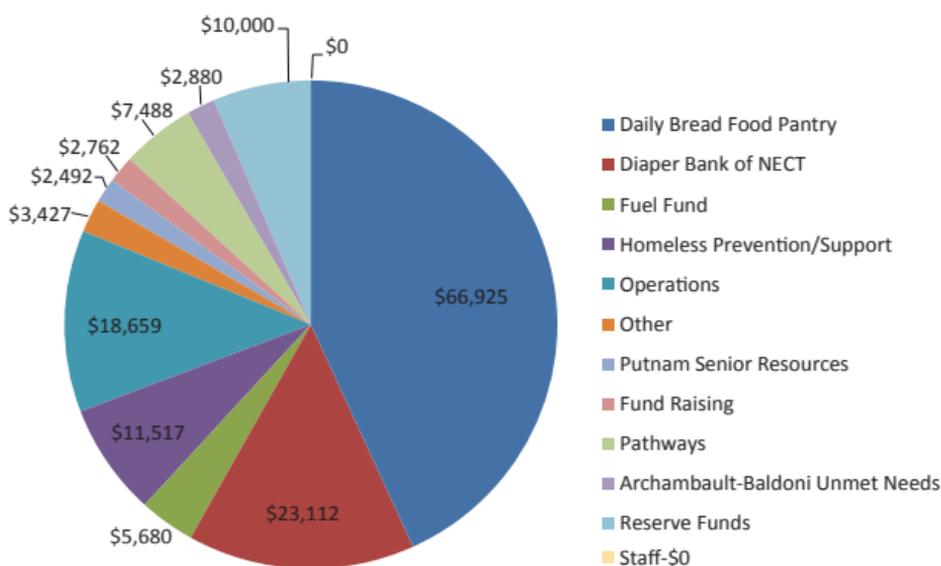
2019 INCOME \$158,320



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Fund Raisers	\$24,820
Grants.....	\$24,975
Community Partners	\$91,494
Other.....	\$7,480
Operations.....	\$2,500
Program Support.....	\$4,700
Archambault-Baldoni Unmet Needs	\$2,351

2019 EXPENSES \$154,942



2019 EXPENSES

Daily Bread Food Pantry	\$66,925
Diaper Bank of NECT.....	\$23,112
Fuel Fund	\$5,680
Homeless Prevention/Support.....	\$11,517
Operations.....	\$18,659
Other.....	\$3,427
Putnam Senior Resources.....	\$2,492
Fund Raising.....	\$2,762
Pathways.....	\$7,488
Archambault-Baldoni Unmet Needs	\$2,880
Reserve Funds	\$10,000
Staff-\$0.....	\$0

OUR MISSION

Interfaith Human Services of Putnam REACHES out to Restore lives through Education and Empowerment of individuals, to Actively respond to the needs in our Community, to be Compassionate towards others, and to Help those around us who are in need or in transition by sponsoring, funding and facilitating programs and projects that address these needs in Northeastern Connecticut.

OUR DIRECTORS

Karen Osbrey, President

Lori Wajer, Vice President

Emily Barnes, Secretary

Ann Kathi Peterson, Treasurer

Shawn Johnston,
Immediate Past President

Lysa Molnar, Volunteer Coordinator

Helen Ferland, Diaper Bank Coordinator

Debby King

Holly Ann Gilbert

Eileen Piotroski

Marge Guerin

Patricia Harrington

Lisa Mazzola

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