



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Ohio Valley Opportunities, Inc.

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OUR MISSION:

Opening doors through individualized, comprehensive services and community partnerships that empower low-income individuals and families to improve their quality of life.

OUR VISION:

To provide quality services that empower low-income individuals and families to become financially stable, realize their full potential and become participating citizens and leaders in the community in which they live.

OUR VALUES:

OVO strives to be a model organization. We embrace the diversity of our employees, volunteers, clients, stakeholders, and community partners and are committed to building strong organizational ties with families and community partners. Through good stewardship of the financial resources entrusted to us, we provide outcome-based quality services.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Strategic Highlights

Meeting community needs and providing value-added services to our clients is always our main focus. To further this effort, we created the Housing Services and Supports Unit by combining our Energy Assistance Program and our Housing Choice Voucher Program. This resulted in improved efficiency and enhanced opportunities for case coordination. We also brought all of our services together under one roof and now all of our programs are housed in our Administrative office to support ease of client access to services and supports. Finally, we developed a Strategic Alignment Implementation Plan for our Head Start program. This allowed us to initiate a full-year Early Childhood Education program model with all children receiving 1,020 hours of educational instruction. All Head Start program positions became full-time and we were able to enact a more competitive wage scale that reflects the professionalism, skills, and qualifications of our highly trained staff.

Financial Highlights

We have high standards for accountability of federal, state, and local funds as evidenced by our consistent designation as a low-risk auditee by independent auditing firms. In 2019, we once again received this designation with zero audit findings. This signifies that we are adept at adhering to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines, are skilled at ensuring that all funds entrusted to us are handled appropriately, and that we are in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

Operating Highlights

As a Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) sub-grantee for the State of Indiana, we have an in-depth, on-site Comprehensive Administrative Review conducted every three years by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA). IHCDA monitors us to ensure that the goals of the CSBG program – reducing poverty and revitalizing communities by helping low-income individuals and families become self-sufficient – are being furthered. This review covered 15 categories, with a point value assigned for each of the more than 100 standards. We were scored on Organizational Management which evaluates operational performance, vision and direction, and operations and accountability; Organizational Analysis which evaluates fiscal performance and solvency; and Beyond Compliance which evaluates best business practices. As a result of this review, we scored 94% placing us in good standing with the state of Indiana.

Looking Ahead

There are so many exciting things happening at OVO and I invite you to get involved in 2020! I welcome you to follow us on social media, tell a friend or family member about us, share our website with others, make a charitable contribution, explore serving in a governance capacity or volunteering in one of our program areas. Contact information is listed within this report. Feel free to call us for more information on how you can become a part of Community Action.

“The incredible work accomplished by OVO is made possible by our highly trained, certified, and dedicated staff, through the wise governance of our Board of Directors, with the secure backing of our funders, and by the gracious support of the communities in which we are honored to serve.”

Sincerely,

Elaina Freeman

Executive Director

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Angela Spurgeon, Director of Community Services

The Energy Assistance Program provides financial assistance to low-income households to maintain utility services during the winter heating season.

Year in Review:

- 2,995 households served
- 6,139 individuals served
- 441 households received crisis assistance
- 2,363 families received Energy Education and an Energy Conservation Kit
- 767 families avoided disconnection of their heating utility or had services restored
- 22 inoperable furnaces were repaired or replaced
- 65 at-risk households received an air conditioning unit

Betty's Story: Warm in the winter and cool in the summer

Betty's furnace was broken and she had no heat for the winter. Since Betty owns her home and also has a disability, she qualified for our Emergency Repair and Replace Program which began in 2019. We were pleased to be able to replace her gas furnace with a new, energy efficient model. Plus, in the long-term, Betty's gas utility bill will be more affordable. Additionally, this summer, Betty was able to receive a new air conditioning unit. She couldn't be happier and now her home is warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Betty said, "It's nice to wake up every day and not worry if I'll be too hot or freezing."

What Our Clients Are Saying About Us:

Our Energy Assistance Program received a perfect score for client satisfaction in 2019! Additionally, 99% of clients said that they would recommend the program to their friends and family. And 100% of clients found staff to be friendly and courteous. 100% of clients said that the application process was easy.

- "Very pleased by the service I received. Thank you very much. I really appreciate all the help you provided. I LOVE my new furnace!"
- "This veteran appreciates and is thankful for everything, everyone who helps the people who need it."

What's Next in 2020:

Looking forward, we will continue to conduct outreach so that more eligible households are able to receive help with home heating costs. We will continue to provide Energy Conservation Kits to all clients and provide information on ways to reduce energy consumption and improve energy efficiency in order to reduce utility costs. We anticipate that there will be no summer assistance program based on information that we have received from the state. However, we are grateful to be able to continue to offer the Emergency Repair and Replace Program to at-risk households.



WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Jeff Rowlett, Weatherization Assistance Program Manager

The Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, while ensuring their health and safety.

Year in Review:

- \$11,500 spent per home, on average, for weatherization measures to improve energy efficiency
- 54 homes weatherized
- 107 individuals served
- 23 homes were rehabilitated under the Healthy Homes Program
- 137 hours of Continuing Education completed by staff and contractors

Chuck's Story: It's never too late to have a great day

While filling out the Energy Assistance Program application for help with an electric bill, Chuck simply checked the box on the form indicating that he was interested in Weatherization services and his home was placed on a waiting list. Subsequently, through our Weatherization program we insulated his home, installed a new heat pump, put in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and more. Chuck said, "It had probably been 30+ years since I had applied for assistance and was not sure if I even qualified. This came at a very difficult time in my life when things were not going so well. It feels like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders. OVO has amazing programs and is a great asset to our community."

What Our Clients Are Saying About Us:

Our Weatherization program received a perfect score for client satisfaction in 2019! Additionally, 100% of clients said that they would recommend the program to their friends and family. And 100% of clients felt that we make a difference for individuals, families, and the community.

- "Everyone associated with this project were very professional and friendly. I will refer them."
- "All the work was done very good and all of the contractors were very polite and did a wonderful job."

What's Next in 2020:

Historically, our program has been #1 in the state for improving energy consumption and reducing energy costs for homes that are fueled by natural gas. Moving forward, we want to achieve this high standard with homes that are heated by total electric. To further this goal, we are looking at alternative options for water heaters, outdoor lighting, heat pumps, and continuous run exhaust fans to enhance air sealing techniques. We will continue to educate all clients about energy conservation and measures to increase the comfort of their home.



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Angela Spurgeon, Director of Community Services

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent housing in the private market.

Year in Review:

- 326 families remained in stable and affordable housing
- 125 elderly citizens remained in stable and affordable housing
- 243 disabled people remained in stable and affordable housing
- 523 rental unit inspections were conducted by certified staff
- 91 new rental subsidy vouchers were issued

Mary Katherine's Story: It's a family affair

Mary Katherine is 67 years old and her monthly income is \$1,040. Although she was reluctant, a friend encouraged her to apply for Section 8 housing assistance. She applied for our subsidized housing program and was placed on a waiting list. When her son became unable to properly care for his child, Mary Katherine became the custodial grandparent rather than have her 4-year-old granddaughter placed into foster care. Shortly thereafter, she also took guardianship of her newborn grandson so that the children could remain together. Mary Katherine didn't know how she would make ends meet but she had faith that it would somehow work out. That same week, we called to let her know that a voucher was available to her. She and her two grandchildren were able to move into an apartment and the rental subsidy she receives allows her to make sure that they all have a nice place to call home. Mary Katherine said, "We are all doing well. I no longer have to worry about having to separate these children or becoming homeless. We all have a warm, safe place to sleep at night."

What Our Clients Are Saying About Us:

Our Section 8 program received a perfect score for client satisfaction in 2019! Additionally, 99% of clients said that they would recommend the program to their friends and family. And 100% of clients found staff to be friendly and courteous. 99% of clients agreed that they were offered useful information when finding a home.

- "Employees are very nice to customers. Thank you for being so kind."
- "Section 8 people are great! They are very nice, professional, and patient when I fill out paperwork."

What's Next in 2020:

Landlords that participate in the program are key to ensuring that safe and affordable housing is attainable. Therefore, we intend to hold a Landlord Appreciation Event in order to foster stronger relationships with our landlords, express our gratitude for their attentiveness to our requests, and to recognize their contributions to the success of the program. Moving forward, we will continue to provide exceptional customer service to the clients that we serve. We will continue to personalize our approach and provide assistance with the housing process.



HEAD START

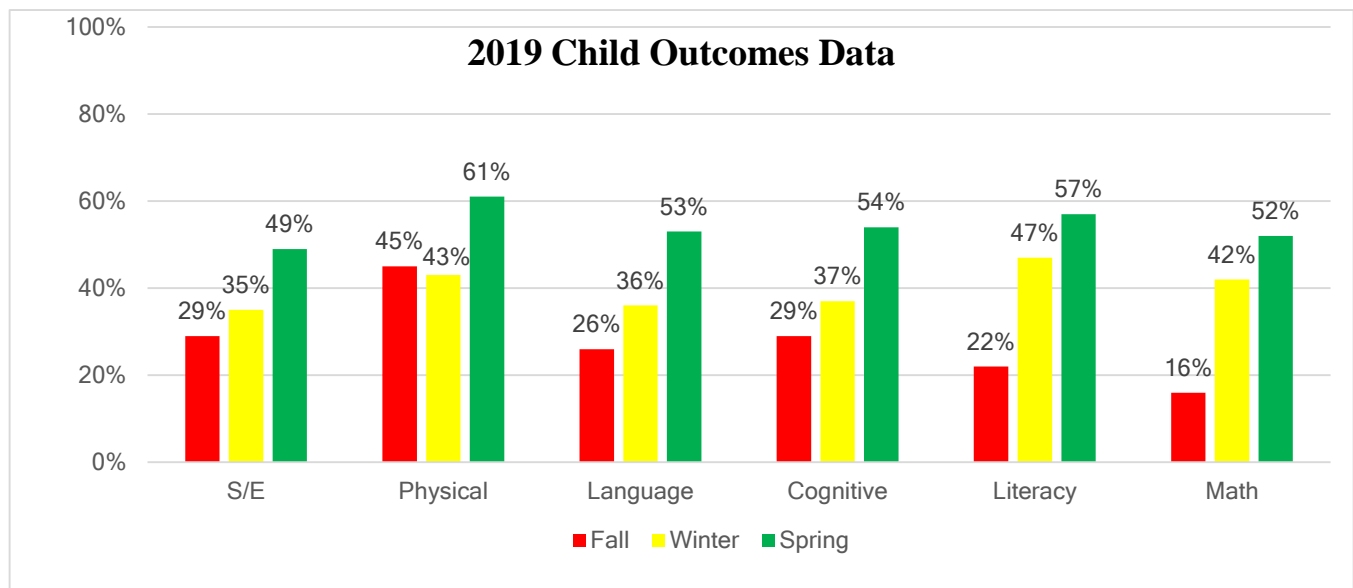
Melanie Harrell, Head Start Director

Head Start helps every child to be physically, emotionally, and cognitively prepared for kindergarten. Services are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills.

Year in Review: 244 Children and families served

- 97 Children transitioned to Kindergarten
- 99.6% Average Monthly Enrollment, 85% Average Monthly Attendance
- 97% of children received medical exams, 81% received dental exams, 17% received special services
- 100% of parents/guardians participated in a Parent/Teacher Conference
- 41% of eligible children served in our counties (U.S. Census Bureau)

OHS CLASS Stats 2018 - National Distribution of Grantee-Level Domain Scores				OVO Scores 4/18
Domain	Lowest 10%	Median (50%)	Highest 10%	
Emotional Support	5.6641	6.09	6.45	5.9432
Classroom Organization	5.2803	5.82	6.28	5.1818
Instructional Support	2.3125	2.89	3.71	2.8788



LA CASA AMIGA

Dr. Shirley Kloepfer, Program Director

La Casa Amiga functions as a cultural hub, providing necessary services for Spanish-speaking residents and helping new immigrants become valuable participants in our community. We endeavor to raise cultural awareness and provide community events that share Hispanic culture.

Year in Review:

- Three of our La Casa Amiga kids graduated from Hanover College!
- Many Hispanic families increased their involvement in community activities.
- We continued to assist with immigration. We helped families to meet with an immigration attorney, translated when necessary, and assisted with completing paperwork.
- We continued to receive strong support from our wonderful, dedicated volunteers and from a wide variety of community benefactors including, but not limited to:
 - Hanover College
 - Students provided a weekly bilingual story hour. Additional students came and led gardening and craft painting activities with the children and also presented a puppet show.
 - Sigma Chi Fraternity adopted La Casa Amiga as their nonprofit organization and helped with set-up/clean-up for the 19th Hispanic Cultural Awareness Day. They also prepared our garden beds, painted the building, installed ceiling replacement panels, and worked on our computers.
 - Several professors and students helped our needy families during the holidays.
 - Spanish Club provided prizes for our Christmas Party.
 - Ivy Tech
 - Students tutored 42 children for 6 weeks and read during our weekly bilingual story hour.
 - They provided a fantastic tour, robotics, face painting, and goody bags for every student.
 - Purdue Extension held nutrition classes, shared healthy recipes, and participated in our plant sale.
 - Jane's Kids helped 32 children learn to swim or get passes for Crystal Beach.
 - River Terrace made sure that 27 children had school backpacks.
 - Madison Jefferson County Public Library brought books for our summer sessions.
 - Madison Elks Lodge, along with the library, provided new coats to 35 children.
 - Prince of Peace Church provided a bus for field trips and let us use their cafeteria for our fundraiser dinners and our Christmas celebration.
 - United Trinity Methodist Church shared their tables with us and provided a changing room during the Hispanic Festival. Plus, they opened their bathrooms for public use.
 - Jefferson County United Way provided much needed operational support.

Muchas Gracias!



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Grant Funding	
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$172,361
Head Start	\$1,999,865
Energy Assistance Program (EAP)	\$2,130,952
Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	\$430,581
Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)	\$1,694,568
Department of Energy (DOE)	\$380,423
State LIHEAP	\$67,403
State EAP	\$53,763
Duke Helping Hands	\$41,500
Vectren Share the Warmth	\$6,728
Vectren Duke Rebate	\$38,655
USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program	\$140,475
Housing Properties	
Apple Blossom Court Apartments	\$18,408
Scott Valley Court Apartments	\$193,124
Valley Court Apartments of North Vernon	\$161,012
Local Support	
Family Service Centers - Buildings	\$41,976
Wee Care	\$5,587
La Casa Amiga	\$35,098
Local Revenue	\$1,089
Donations/Revenue to Programs	\$1,288
Jefferson County Women's Giving Circle	\$1,437
Super ATV	\$2,000
Centra Credit Union Foundation - Scott County	\$2,500
Unrestricted Funds	\$28,549
In-Kind Revenue	\$354,355
Total Agency Funding	\$8,003,697

**Other Local Support was either consolidated as Donations/Local Revenue to Programs or was unrestricted*

**Head Start proposed budget for PY 2020 is \$2,135,084*

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

OVO Board of Directors

Leslie Bixler (Public Sector, Scott Co.)

Tammy Stout-Johnson (Public Sector, Scott Co.)

Mary Beth Boone (Private Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Sheila Coffin (Low-Income Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Colleen Malone (Low-Income Sector, Jennings Co.)

Kathy Edgington (Low-Income Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Emily Hall (Private Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Brandi Poling (Low-Income Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Dana Riddle (Public Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Trish Ross (Low-Income Sector, Scott Co.)

Linda Cheatham (Private Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Dr. Steven Sollman (Public Sector, Jennings Co.)

David Sutter (Public Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Leah Ungru (Private Sector, Jefferson Co.)

Chris Wakeman (Private Sector, Scott Co.)

Head Start Policy Council

Jarrold Combs (Scott Co.)

Melissa Donnell (Scott Co.)

Vicki Donnell (Scott Co.)

Natalie Garrett (Jefferson Co.)

Terrilee Grider (Scott Co.)

Sonia Kent (Jefferson Co.)

Eva Kirby (Jefferson Co.)

Crista Litzy (Jennings Co.)

Hope Lowery (Jefferson Co.)

Misty McGinnis (Jennings Co.)

Gail Moore (Jefferson Co.)

Alice Perkins (Jennings Co.)

Carly Robinson (Jefferson Co.)

Dawn Sanders (Scott Co.)

Brittany Sharp (Jennings Co.)

Brittany Shorey (Scott Co.)

Elizabeth Skaggs (Scott Co.)

Codie Thompson (Jennings Co.)

Jennifer Uebel (Jefferson Co.)

Cheyenne Vance (Jefferson Co.)

Aaron Wood (Jefferson Co.)

Brook Wood (Jefferson Co.)

Staff Years of Service

5-9 Years

Jennifer Baldwin

Kimberly Bishop

Brandi Bivens

Elaina Freeman

Michelle Kimmel

Mary Osterman

Robert "BJ" Sykes

10-14 Years

Misty Boggs

Michele Hopper

Charla Porter

Jeff Rowlett

Maria Schwers

Patty Spillman

Angel Snell

Lynn Sutherland

15-19 Years

Debra Alcorn

Deanna Callis

Sarah Cicenias

Sondra Fewell

Shirley Kloepfer

Tammi Marshall

Nickie Nolan

Roger Stockdale

20-24 Years

Melanie Harrell

25+ Years

Regina Aldridge

Susan Cicenias



2019 MEMORIES!



THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



Ohio Valley Opportunities

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Ohio Valley Opportunities provides all of its services without regard to race, age, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, or status as a veteran.