

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022



EMPOWERING YOUTH TO SUCCEED IN  
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Known first as Southend Community Services, Our Piece of the Pie®, Inc. (OPP) has served the Greater Hartford community for the best of 47 years. We have evolved, adjusted, and grown with the community and the young people we serve.

Challenging economic times, global pandemics, increased gang and gun violence, systemic barriers, and a lack of resources for the underserved, over-aged, and under-credited young people in the Greater Hartford Community have been the driving factors behind WHY OPP exists and WHY we do what we do.

## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY?

In FY22, the gun violence in the City of Hartford rose higher than it has in decades, increasing an astronomical 10% from the previous year. 99.49% of OPP youth live in the demographic areas (zip codes) where gun violence has increased among youth under 25.

Accessibility to firearms is a national issue but social and economic inequalities, including poverty, lack of opportunity/perception of hopelessness, gun violence exposure, and mental health, including PTSD and Depression, are all among the root causes of gun violence in young people.

## LOOKING AHEAD

OPP sat down with youth, families, staff, and community partners to discuss our services and what we could do to become an even more effective youth-serving organization.

Beginning April 1, 2023, OPP is thrilled to bring in-house clinical services to our youth. These services will allow young people to create a bond with culturally competent clinical practitioners who are knowledgeable of the systemic barriers resulting from centuries of racism, discrimination, and maltreatment that continue to affect the youth population we serve negatively. OPP strives to eradicate the stigma and systemic barriers by building a foundation of trust, cultural competence, and accessibility to behavioral therapy.

## GAINING COMMUNITY, CREATING PARTNERSHIPS & CARVING NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Cultivating partnerships and opportunities for our young people is at the forefront of the work we do here at OPP. The Digital DividENDS concept was established in FY22 as a working relationship with Our Piece of the Pie, The City of Hartford, The United Way and Hartford HealthCare. This initiative will allow youth to participate in an IT/Repair certification program and upon completion, young people will have the opportunity to hold an internship with Hartford HealthCare's IT department. Not only does this initiative allow for career exploration, but the computers on which youth will be learning will be refurbished and distributed to members of the Hartford community. OPP sees and acknowledges the economic gains technology has on our young people and in our communities and is proud to hold partnerships that allow our youth to give back to seniors and first-generation college students through our programming and services.

Every day, OPP strives to offer youth a sense of community, security, opportunity, and empowerment. Youth enter our facility knowing they will be met with open arms and a listening ear.

Together, we're continuing to make our community better and improve the lives of the young people we serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'HR'.

Hector Rivera  
President & CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Smitesh Dave'.

Smitesh Dave  
OPP Board Chair 2019-22

## **OUR MISSION**

Our Piece of the Pie, Inc. (OPP®) empowers youth with the key competencies needed to overcome barriers and succeed in education and employment.

## **WHO WE SERVE**

Our Piece of the Pie serves Greater Hartford and young people ages 14-24 who have one or more of the following risk factors; under-credited and over-aged, Child Welfare involved, justice-involved, low income and unemployed or under-employed.

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)**

A framework and competency to address issues of injustice by establishing within the agency a shared language to examine data, understand underlying conditions, and identify root causes of inequities affecting the population served.

## **DELIBERATELY DEVELOPMENTAL ORGANIZATION (DDO)**

It has a deliberate focus on the people and organization development, meaning fostering a culture where development is part of the daily practice.

DDOs recognize that people grow through the proper combination of challenge and support, which includes recognizing and transcending their blind spots, acknowledging vulnerability and imperfections, and internal resistance to change. Organizational leaders (People Managers) must model and foster an environment where limitations or mistakes are not viewed as failures but as their “growing edge” and the path to the next level of performance. Equally, everyone must collectively work towards establishing an environment of trust, transparency, and psychological safety.



## OPPORTUNITY UNIVERSITY (OPPU)

(OPPU's) the objective is two-fold.

1. To onboard and acclimate new members to the OPP community through interactive learning, engagement, reflection, and dialogue to anchor their knowledge.
2. To provide our Youth Development Practitioners with the tools, resources, and capacity (i.e., competence, confidence & character) necessary to effectively engage and empower our youth to succeed.

We offer a bi-weekly series of training, facilitated internally and by way of external partners (content experts across various fields of practice) to contribute invaluable knowledge and share relevant research and evidence-based practices in the areas of; Positive Youth Development, Relentless Engagement, Advocacy, Barrier Reduction, Motivational Interviewing, Emotional Intelligence, Self-Exploration/Self-Sabotage, Brain Development, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Urban Trauma, Implicit Bias, and more.



## OPP LEADERSHIP PLEDGE

To fully realize OPP's Mission "To empower youth to succeed in education and employment" we must work together toward an inclusive and diverse community; a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging. The persistent inequities across our country underscores our urgency, to address and alleviate racial and other oppressive tensions, and to promote diversity within our communities.

Guided by our mission, we pledge to cultivate diversity and inclusion among our team because we understand the necessity for a broad range of perspectives and lived experiences. We pledge to be caring and compassionate leaders, as we recognize our work and our actions have the power to change lives and the future, so we must treat that power with care and respect.

Sincerely,  
OPP Leadership Team



ALWAYS A CHOICE TO SPREAD LOVE!

pp  
Our Place at the City



# INTRODUCING: RASHANI SWABY

Our Piece of the Pie's new Board Chair, *Installation October 2022*

“ I AM PROUD THAT OPP HAS CONTINUED TO POUR POSITIVITY AND GREATNESS INTO THE CITY IN WHICH I WAS RAISED. ”



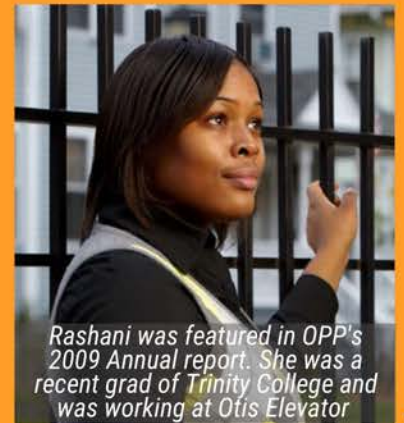
**Rashani Swaby** is no stranger to Our Piece of the Pie. Rashani is a Hartford native and former OPP Youth.

Rashani first joined OPP the summer before high school and has stayed in contact with her YDS (now President and CEO, Hector Rivera) through college and into her professional career.

Rashani joined the board in 2019 and quickly made an impact by offering Women's Empowerment Workshops to the young women enrolled in OPP services. We are grateful for Rashani's dedication to the City of Hartford and her willingness to continue to give back to the community and the organization that helped her see her potential.

“ OPP PROVIDED ME A SECOND FAMILY. IT WAS A PLACE WHERE I KNEW NO MATTER HOW I SHOWED UP, NO MATTER WHAT I WORE, WHAT MY HAIR LOOKED LIKE, I WOULD BE WELCOMED WITH OPEN ARMS CREATING THAT TRUE SENSE OF BELONGING. I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY AND PLEASURE OF ATTENDING OPP PROGRAMING, ABSORBING WORKFORCE READINESS AND ETIQUETTE THAT I'VE TAKEN WITH ME THROUGHOUT THE ADVANCEMENT OF MY CAREER WITH RAYTHEON TECHNOLOGIES. I CONTRIBUTE MY SUCCESS TO THE SUPPORT OF THIS ORGANIZATION. IT IS AN HONOR TO GIVE BACK TO OUR PIECE OF THE PIE IN MY CURRENT POSITION AS BOARD CHAIR. ”

-RASHANI SWABY, RAYTHEON TECHNOLOGIES; OPP BOARD CHAIR



Rashani was featured in OPP's 2009 Annual report. She was a recent grad of Trinity College and was working at Otis Elevator

RASHANI HALL

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal, Academic, and Employment Goal Setting



# 1,041

GOALS SET BY YOUTH AND THEIR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST THAT WERE COMPLETED.

*At OPP, we believe young people need support to*

## **Develop & Succeed**

- Barrier Reduction
- Healthy Habits & Life Skills
- Healthy Emotion Management
- Financial Literacy



Each youth that enters OPP services is paired with a caring adult (Youth Development Specialist). Together, they identify the young person's goals and create an individualized success plan.

# 809

YOUTH ENROLLED IN OPP SERVICES IN FY22



## SERVICE AREA SPOTLIGHT: FINANCIAL LITERACY

*Through OPP's Financial Literacy program and asset-building workshops, youth learn about money management, credit, loans, and interest and get assistance saving for their future.*

*Through OPP's IDA match program, qualifying OPP youth can open a money-matching account. These funds can be used to purchase items of equity such as a car, assist youth with applying for housing, or school tuition/supplies. Through financial literacy, youth learn how to grow and develop into financially independent adults.*



“ I have been saving for a car for two years... it's been a really long road but, OPP helped me get there. Because of the financial literacy classes I have been taking, I have been able to budget my spending, work on establishing credit and saving for my future. So many doors have been opened because of OPP and I'm so grateful for all the services and programs I've gotten to be a part of.

-Donnovan

”

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Alternative Education Opportunities and Support



# 113

YOUTH EARNED A HIGH SCHOOL OR EDUCATIONAL CERTIFICATION

*At OPP, we believe young people need support to*

## Learn & Grow

- Tutoring
- Post-Secondary Certificates
- Credentials
- Degrees

Students **explore** their opportunities, **discover** their potential, and **grow** their vision for their future.

OPP's post-secondary specialist helps guide youth on their education journey post high school.

# 215

YOUTH MADE EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS





## SERVICE AREA SPOTLIGHT: OPPORTUNITY ACADEMY

*OPPportunity Academy (OA) is the academic center of excellence at OPP. OA is a unique alternative high school program in Hartford, CT, that uses mastery-based progression, a high level of teacher:student engagement, student-led learning, independent projects, and subject areas curated with students. Youth enrolled in OPPportunity Academy have access to all of OPP's programs and wrap-around services.*

*Students attending OPPportunity Academy have several barriers that have kept them from making educational progress in traditional school settings. Many OA youth have been disengaged from their schools, have academically fallen behind, need additional support, or are at risk of aging out of the Public School system.*

**“** I knew I needed a change and OPPportunity Academy was it. It was hard- I was down credits and had missed a lot of school. I'm glad I fought for myself and my education. OPP and OA gave me the chance to finish school and allowed me to do it at my own pace. They believed in me and supported me. I can't wait to see what my future holds.

-Arlenys

**”**

# WORKFORCE READINESS

Preparing OPP Youth for their Future Careers



# \$1.8 MILLION

PAID OUT IN YOUTH WAGES  
IN 2022

*At OPP, we believe young people need skills to*

## Earn & Thrive

- Career Competency Development Training
- Service Learning Projects
- Internships
- Job Placement

Youth **explore** various career avenues, **develop** skills with on-the-job training, and **learn** to successfully secure and retain employment.

# 51,700<sup>+</sup>

HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE  
PROJECTS COMPLETED IN FY22





## SERVICE AREA SPOTLIGHT: HARTFORD YOUTH SERVICE CORPS

*The Hartford Youth Service Corps (HYSC) was envisioned by Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin to address the lack of community connection and employment opportunities for Hartford Youth. Since its installation in 2016, OPP has paid out over \$6.3 million in wages to youth enrolled in HYSC and served over 2,000 young people. Youth participate in FoodShare events, assist the city in canvassing efforts and CENSUS reporting, perform yard cleanup services to the homebound and elderly, and participate in various beautification projects throughout the city. Youth gain a sense of community and belonging all while earning a paycheck and soft skills that will allow them to be successful in their future careers.*



“ When I first started at OPP, I was working with the Youth Service Corps. I helped with cleaning up parks, in the winter we would help out with snow removal, and recently, I have been helping the city with their DominGO! events. Being a part of Youth Service Corps has helped me learn that I love giving back to my community and I love that I could be a part of serving others and spreading kindness.”

-Chanel

# A YEAR IN REFLECTION...

## 2021 CHAMPIONS OF YOUTH

On November 4th, 2021, OPP was pleased to celebrate the 2021 Champions of Youth after a year hiatus due to COVID-19. Champions of Youth celebrated five years of the Hartford Youth Service Corps (HYSC) and highlighted the programs, key partners, and supporters.



### HONOREES INCLUDED

The City of Hartford and Mayor Luke Bronin  
Dalio Education  
The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
The Hartford  
Travelers  
Newman's Own Foundation



### KEY PARTNERS







## 2022 OPPORTUNITY ACADEMY GRADUATION

On June 10th, OPPortunity Academy graduates enjoyed an afternoon full of pomp and circumstance as they walked to receive their diplomas.

## EASTERN, CT OPEN HOUSE

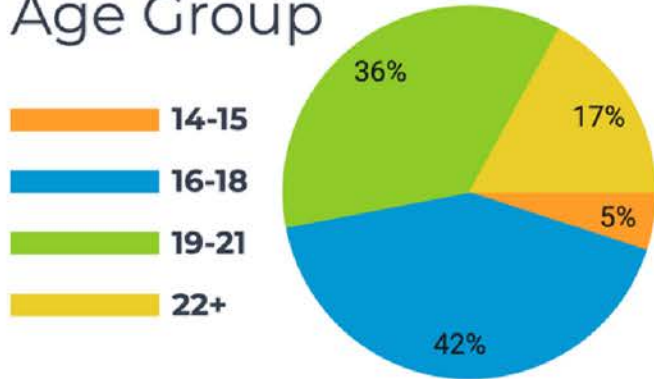
In June of 2022, OPP Eastern, CT moved to its new home at 114 New Park Ave, Franklin! The building is modern and boasts ample space for Youth Business classes, Empowerment Groups, and Workshops!





# WHO WE ARE

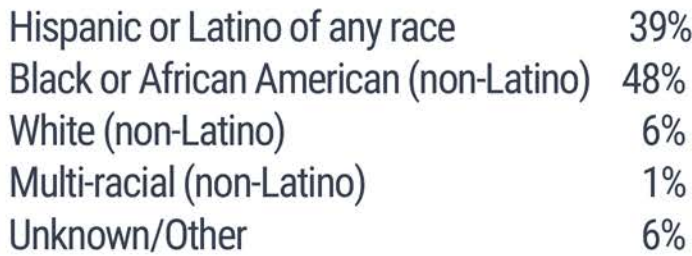
## Program Participants Age Group



## OPP YOUTH GENDER



## OPP YOUTH ETHNICITY



## OPP STAFF ETHNICITY



## OPP BOARD ETHNICITY





# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For the year ending June 30, 2022

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7,248,907</b>
Program Expenses	6,073,171
Supporting Services	1,193,455
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>7,266,626</b>
Revenues and Support Over/(Under) Expenses	(17,719)
Other Income/(Expenses)	821,555
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>929,488</b>
Net Assets (Deficit) at Beginning of Year	157,942
.....	
<b>Net Assets (Deficit) at End of Year</b>	<b>1,087,430</b>

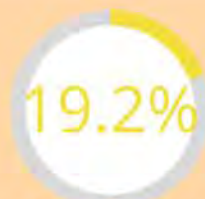
## DETAILS OF EXPENSES

Personal Development	1,392,601
Employment	2,951,440
Education	1,331,773
Data and Accountability	355,503
Organizational Capacity	41,854
Management and General	787,800
Fundraising	405,655
.....	
Total Expenses	<b>7,266,626</b>

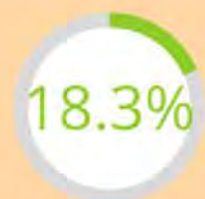
## OPP EXPENSES



EMPLOYMENT



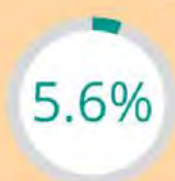
PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



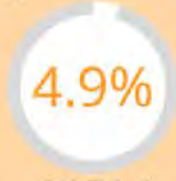
EDUCATION



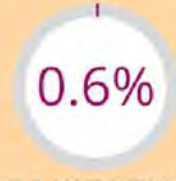
MANAGEMENT/  
GENERAL



FUNDRAISING



DATA/  
ACCOUNTABILITY



ORGANIZATIONAL  
CAPACITY

# FUNDING AND SUPPORT: JUNE 2021-JULY 2022

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Advanced Behavioral Health  
Bethany Lutheran Church  
Carmon Community Funeral Homes  
Center For Children's Advocacy, Inc.  
CHC Creating Healthier Communities  
East Woodstock Congregational Church  
Elizabeth Park Conservancy  
Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, Inc.  
United Way of Central and Northeastern CT  
United Way for Middlesex County  
United Way Suncoast



## GOVERNMENT

Bloomfield Public Schools  
Capital Workforce Partners  
The City of Hartford  
The Connecticut Department of Children & Families (DCF)  
The Connecticut Court Support Services Division (CSSD)  
Family Health International (FHI360)  
Hartford Public Schools  
Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)  
United States Department of Justice (US DOJ)  
United States Department of Labor (US DOL)

## FOUNDATIONS

Alan and Peggy Mendelson Fund  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Anna F. and David C. Clark Fund at HFPG  
Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Barnes Group Foundation, Inc.  
Benevity Community Impact Fund  
Berkshire Bank Foundation  
Blackbaud Giving Fund  
Budd Family Fund at HFPG  
Charles Nelson Robinson Fund  
Chelsea Groton Foundation  
Colt Park Foundation  
Dalio Education  
Dollar General Literacy Foundation  
Farmington Bank Foundation  
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund  
H.A. Vance Foundation  
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
J. Walton Bissell Foundation  
Jackson Lewis Foundation  
Kate Family Foundation  
Lewis Family Charitable Fund  
Liberty Bank Foundation  
Peoples United Community Foundation  
SBM Charitable Foundation  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
Scripps Family Fund  
TD Bank Charitable Foundation  
The Wireless Zone Foundation for Giving  
TisBest Philanthropy  
Tow Foundation  
Travelers Foundation  
Turner Family Foundation  
Verizon Foundation

## CORPORATIONS

American Eagle Federal Credit Union  
Gibb's Wire & Steel Company  
Jackson Lewis LLP  
Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Co.  
Pratt & Whitney  
Prudential Financial  
The Hartford  
Webster Bank  
Workers Compensation Trust

## INDIVIDUALS

Joseph Alamo  
Drew Andrews  
Michael Bailin  
Tom O. Barnes  
Robert H. Berman  
Erin T. Bolduc  
Si Sreevani Boycaoally  
Helen Brand  
Daniel Browne  
Peter Brzezicki  
Samantha Burgon  
Claire Burns  
Dr. Noel Casiano  
Stephen X. Coates  
Andrew J. Cohen  
Troy Damboise  
Smitesh Davé  
Alden Davis  
Girard Dawes  
Michael DeCarlo  
Denise deFiebre  
Lynn Dolan  
Jennifer L. Dowd  
Julie Feidner  
Joel Freedman

Bruce Gifford  
Jennifer Gifford  
Paula Godman  
D Scott Golder  
Patrick Graziosi  
Larry Greenberg  
Jeffrey Gross  
Karen (Kakley) Gross  
Carl Harding  
Patricia Hoppin  
Sara Houldcroft  
Amy Johnston  
Stephanie Klewicki  
Dr. Bernard and Gale S. Kosto  
John N. Little  
Michael Longo



Keith Merritt  
Meghann Michalak  
Joanna Mitchell  
Candace Montagnon  
Joanne Murley  
Patrick J. Murray  
Jeffrey Myshrall  
Kimberly Napp  
Robert H. Naylor  
Kim Oliver  
Marcus Ordonez  
Michael Parkin  
Mayank Patidar  
Brewster and Judith Perkins  
Rosa Plaza  
Raphael L. Podolsky  
Amber Popovitch  
John Rannestad



Bob & Marilyn Rath  
Abhiram Ravivanti  
Marc and Karen Reich  
Chelsea Reis  
Sue Rickard  
Philip Rigueur  
Hector M. Rivera  
Nancy Rivera  
Paige Rivera  
Chanda Robinson  
Edward Ruddock  
Jacquelyn Santiago  
Rutuja Shrikant Sawant  
Stephanie Scott  
James F. Shea  
Carey Shea  
Sarah Simonelli  
Vi R. Smalley  
Susan Solinsky  
Sarah Stock  
Erik Stomberg  
Lizabeth Stoner  
Janet S. Stulting  
John Sundean  
Nathan Swaim  
Michelle Taylor  
Anne M. Thibeault  
David Weiner  
Stephen H. Wells  
Judith Wildfeuer  
Kimberly Williams-Rivera  
Abby Williamson



## LEADERSHIP

**Hector Rivera, Jr.**  
*President & CEO*  
Hector.Rivera@opp.org

**LaTasha Williams**  
*Chief Operating Officer*  
LaTasha.Williams@opp.org

**Patricia Moro**  
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## CHAMPIONS COUNCIL

Edward Budd  
Tom Barnes  
Jerry Franklin  
Joel Freedman  
Mickey E. Herbert  
Peter Kelly  
Karl Krapek  
John N. Little

## BOARD

Smitesh Davé- Board Chair  
Erin Bolduc- Board Vice Chair  
Jeffrey Myshrall- Treasurer  
Sue Rickard- Secretary  
Dwight Bolton  
Dr. Noel Casiano  
Meghann Michalak  
Rashani Swaby  
Nathan Swaim  
Steve Coates  
Margot Early  
Carl Harding  
JT Foster  
Kevin Rivera

## BOARD EMERITUS

Andy Cohen  
Larry Greenberg  
Frank Scalise



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