



CELEBRATING
50
YEARS

OPP
Our Piece of the Pie®

LEGACY OF LEADERS

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





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Message from the CEO & Board Chair

OPP is where potential meets opportunity. This year, we celebrated our 50th anniversary, honoring our history, tracing our journey, commemorating our impact, and looking towards the future. There is a lot to celebrate. This annual report highlights our outstanding Legacy of Leaders and the stories of young people who will become the leaders of tomorrow.

In 1975, our agency opened its doors as Southend Community Services, serving the Hartford community with a wide range of programs from childcare to senior services. From the beginning, we have been an agent of change, partnering with the community to improve lives. In 2000, we expanded our youth services. Five years later, we strategically narrowed our focus to young people and changed our name to Our Piece of the Pie (OPP).

Life can be challenging, especially when you face challenges such as homelessness, poverty, and instability. Overwhelmed by barriers, it can be difficult for young people to stay engaged in school or work. Our staff embraces youth where they are and helps them find ways to navigate through and around the obstacles they face. We believe in the potential of every young person who comes through our doors. We invest in them, and they grow, build confidence, and begin to dream. These dreams become reality as youth partner with their Youth Development Coach (YDC) to create an actionable plan for their future. And, when youth do the hard work of implementing their plan, the YDC provides guidance, encouragement, and support along the way. Together, they travel their pathway to success.

As we look toward the future, the landscape is challenging. The world feels more divided, and the safety net is fraying as funding diminishes. The opportunity gap for young people is widening, and young people are disconnecting at alarming rates. OPP is committed to doing whatever it takes to succeed for our young people. We ask you to join us in championing our youth, advocating to maintain and grow a place where potential can find opportunity and dreams can be realized.



Hector Rivera, Jr.
President & CEO



Rashani Swaby
Board Chair

Meet Our Leaders



OPP's Executive Team

Pictured left to right:

Girard Dawes, Senior Director of Youth Engagement

Patricia Moro, Chief Financial Officer

Kimberly Williams-Rivera, Senior Director of MIS and Performance

Kim Johnson, Senior Director of Development and Strategic Initiatives

Chanda Robinson, Chief Operating Officer

Hector Rivera, President & Chief Executive Officer

Rosa Plaza, Senior Director of Human Resources

Our Mission

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

Our Values

Persistent Partnerships

We are committed to working with our partners: youth, families, team members, organizations, businesses in the community, and funders. Partnerships are at the core of our work, even when they are challenging.

Empathy

We strive to create an authentic, resilient, and safe environment.

Opportunities

We empower our stakeholders to heal, grow, and thrive across all life domains by aligning resources and efforts, enhancing awareness, and filling opportunity gaps.

Personal Development

We foster growth and excellence in our youth, team members, and leaders, preparing them to step boldly into their full potential, inspiring effective leadership, personal progression, and successful outcomes.

Leadership

We promote a culture of growth, action, and understanding, encouraging continuous personal and collective development.

Excellence

We believe striving for excellence encourages innovation and continuous improvement, leading to an enhanced reputation, increased youth and team engagement, and better outcomes.

Who We Are

as of July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025



Youth Ethnicity

Asian/Native American	1%
Black or African American	59%
Hispanic or Latino	35%
Multiracial	1%
White	4%

Youth Age Group

13-15	9%
16-18	45%
19-21	31%
22+	15%

Youth Gender

Female	44%
Male	55%
Trans	1%

Staff Ethnicity

Asian	2%
Black or African American	41%
Hispanic or Latino	26%
Multiracial	5%
White	26%

Board Ethnicity

Black or African American	31%
Hispanic or Latino	31%
White	38%

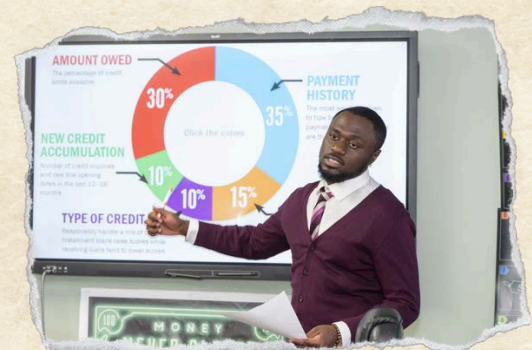
OPP's Economic Impact



Over

\$3 BILLION

in additional earned income for OPP youth alumni over a 40 year worklife



To measure our economic impact, we relied on research from nationally recognized sources. We measured the additional earning power of young people, driven by workforce readiness training and internships, degree attainment, and certification completion. In the past 25 years, we have served **5,592** young people. The economic impact reflects a combination of OPP data and national trends.

Sources:

Center on Education and the Workforce Georgetown University

Urban Institute

Child Trends

Connecticut Department of Labor

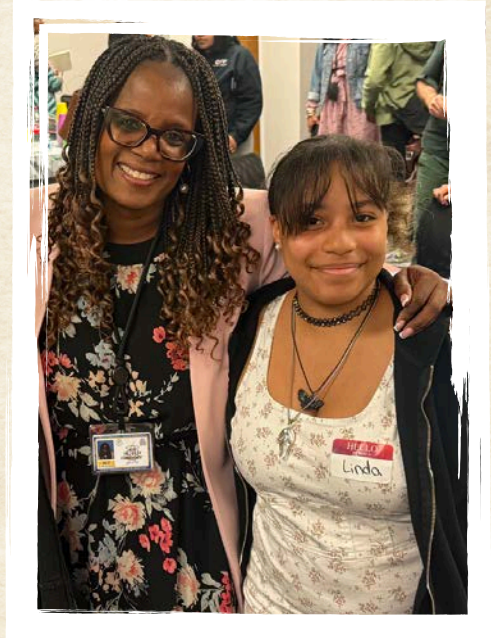
Efforts to Outcomes Software



LINDA

Linda came to OPP seeking the stability her time in foster care couldn't provide. Forming genuine connections had always been a challenge, and without reliable transportation, even reaching the Youth Center felt out of reach. By providing bus passes and ride shares, OPP removed those physical barriers. With consistent access, Linda began attending life skills workshops and building the supportive relationships necessary for her success.

Under the guidance of her Youth Development Specialist, Tajah, Linda transformed her anxiety into leadership. By joining the Youth Advisory Board (YAB), she found a platform to advocate for foster youth within Connecticut's Department of Children and Families (DCF). Linda's growth was remarkable: she led statewide meetings, served as a consultant for new members, and helped DCF refine its foster parent training policies. As Linda puts it: "The YAB has been a place to grow out of my comfort zone... When I came out of my shell, I wanted to stay out."



Linda with former DCF Commissioner Jodi Hill-Lilly at the Region 4 YAB Statewide Commissioner's meeting



OPP also helped Linda secure an internship at Burlington, where she excelled as a "helper and a learner." This relentless support made OPP feel like a family to Linda. Though she once doubted she was "college material," her journey gave her the confidence to aim higher. Today, she is studying criminal justice at the University of New Haven on a scholarship. On move-in day, Tajah was right by her side. Having recognized her own capability, Linda now plans to continue her advocacy and community impact at UNH and beyond.

Linda with Tajah on move in day at UNH

Our Service Areas

Personal Development

Young People Need **SUPPORT** to Develop & Succeed

- Goal Setting
- Barrier Identification and Reduction
- Problem-Solving
- Relationship-Building
- Mentoring
- Life Skills
- Healthy Emotional Management Skills
- Financial Capabilities



Academic Achievement

Young People Need **OPTIONS** to Learn & Progress

- Alternative Education: OPPortunity Academy – a place where students can fit in and succeed
- Tutoring and Homework Help
- Post-Secondary Exploration and Access (including two and four-year degrees)
- Flexible Schedules – supporting students to learn and earn
- Connect classroom to career – real life experiences strengthening connection to education

Workforce Development

Young People Need **SKILLS** to Earn & Grow

- Learn how to get and keep a job
- Soft Skills (problem solving, team work, communication)
- Service-Learning Projects
- Internships
- Job Placement
- Stackable Credentials (OSHA-10, First Aid, ServSafe, Retail)
- Vocational Certificates (CNA, EKG Tech, Phlebotomy, CNC Machinist, Flagger, Forklift, Guard Card, Welding)





When Heth joined OPP, he was looking for a safe place to grow. He struggled with schoolwork and found social interactions difficult; his shyness often meant he was overlooked for opportunities. To break out of his shell, Heth joined the Hartford Youth Service Corps. Engaging in hands-on community projects allowed him to connect with his peers, while regular meetings with his Youth Development Specialist, Yessica, helped him master the communication skills he once lacked.

“OPP has been the main contributor to helping me learn how to speak publicly,” Heth says. “Now I have done presentations to my peers.”

After earning his high school diploma in 2024, Heth faced a major setback. He had enrolled at Lincoln Tech, but right before the fall semester, his financial aid fell through, forcing him to withdraw. Seeing an opportunity in the crisis, OPP staff steered him toward the Digital DividEND program. Heth had loved taking computers apart since he was a child, and this was his chance to turn that curiosity into a career.

Within a week of leaving school, Heth was connected to an IT internship at Hartford Healthcare (HHC). Under the mentorship of Bill Morin, a supervisor and OPP Board Member, Heth is now responsible for upgrading computer systems and installing hardware.



Heth (middle) with peers at a park clean up

The internship has opened Heth’s eyes to a world of possibilities, from cybersecurity to medical fields like podiatry. By providing a path forward when the traditional route was blocked, OPP helped Heth recognize his own value. “There are so many kids out there like me who may think they have no skills,” Heth reflects. “OPP brings out potential in people that they didn’t even know they had.”



Heth (front row right) with the Digital DividEND team at a computer giveaway

Impact of OPP in FY25

\$2.4 MILLION

PROVIDED IN YOUTH WAGES/STIPENDS FOR WORK EXPERIENCES

873

YOUTH SERVED

542

YOUTH COMPLETED CAREER
FOCUSED TRAINING

158

SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS
COMPLETED BY OUR

307

HARTFORD YOUTH SERVICE
CORPS MEMBERS

197

YOUTH SECURED AND MAINTAINED
UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT

100

COMPUTERS REFURBISHED FOR
COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTION

117

YOUTH ENTERED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

342

YOUTH COMPLETED INTERNSHIPS

30,000

DOCUMENTED STAFF ENGAGEMENTS WITH YOUTH



RHAILI-EM

Rhaili-Em grew up watching the Hartford Youth Service Corps (HYSC) transform her neighborhood. "I loved to see youth helping kids who looked like me," she recalls. However, when the pandemic hit during her freshman year, that sense of community felt out of reach. Isolated and seeking connection, she joined OPP's summer programs, eventually transitioning into the HYSC year-round to build the community she had long admired.

At OPP, Rhaili-Em found more than just a social outlet; she found a career launchpad. Recognizing her interest in business, the staff assigned her administrative responsibilities and provided workplace readiness training. Yet, as senior year approached, she faced a daunting crossroads. As a first-generation college student and the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, Rhaili-Em felt a deep responsibility to stay close to her family. While she dreamed of attending Howard University, the cost and distance seemed insurmountable.

OPP's Postsecondary Specialist, Nydia, stepped in to bridge the gap. When the FAFSA and scholarship applications became overwhelming, Nydia sat down with Rhaili-Em and her mother to navigate the jargon line-by-line. "Miss Nydia became an incredible support system," Rhaili-Em says. "She took the time to walk my mother and me through the financial aspects of attending college out of state." After dozens of applications, Rhaili-Em secured enough scholarship funding to cover her tuition and books.

Today, Rhaili-Em is thriving at Howard University's Business School, studying Supply Chain Management while interning for a national food brand. Her environment has even inspired her to grow her own business, Dazzling Designs by Rhaili, specializing in custom apparel.



Rhaili-Em working with HYSC at a Hartford Unity event



Dazzling Designs by Rhaili first pop-up shop in 2025

Reflecting on her journey, Rhaili-Em credits OPP with her smooth transition into adulthood: "OPP helps you become an adult. They gave me the college readiness to understand how to function at school. I know firsthand the impact that OPP has. If you care about making a difference for the youth of Hartford, partner with OPP."

OPP in the Community





ISAIAH

Isaiah, a motivated student at OPP's Opportunity Academy (OA), once found himself falling behind. Lacking teacher support and facing peer pressure to skip class, Isaiah realized he was only hurting his own future. "They thought it was cool to skip," he recalls, "but I realized it just makes you stay in high school longer."

Recognizing the danger of chronic absenteeism, Isaiah's mother encouraged him to enroll at OA. The change was immediate. The smaller class sizes and dedicated staff provided the environment he needed to thrive. Isaiah credits teachers like Mr. Mota and Miss Shea for his newfound love of history and English, noting, "Mr. Mota is so supportive... and with Miss Shea, I feel like I learn way more."

Central to Isaiah's success is his bond with Youth Development Specialist Mike Nelson. Mike provided the accountability Isaiah lacked, calling him whenever he missed class. "When I hear from Mr. Nelson, I feel appreciated and supported," Isaiah says. Through Mike, Isaiah joined the Summer Youth Employment Program, gaining leadership experience at the Boys and Girls Club and retail skills at the Burlington store.



Isaiah with English Teacher Miss Shea



Isaiah meeting with Youth Development Specialist Mr. Mike Nelson

To ensure his hard work paid off in the long term, Isaiah worked with OPP Financial Education Specialist, Mitchell Bruce. Together, they opened Isaiah's first bank account and built a savings plan. "I used to spend my money recklessly," Isaiah admits. "Mitch taught me to manage it."

By utilizing OPP's full suite of services, Isaiah has transformed his academic and professional outlook. He is on track to graduate in December 2026 and plans to attend trade school to become an electrician.

Financial Summary

as of July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Total Revenue	\$9,601,856
Program Services Expenses	\$7,588,346
Supporting Services Expenses	\$2,028,535
Total Expenses	\$9,616,881
Revenues and Support Over/(Under) Expenses	(\$15,025)
Other Income/(Expenses)	(\$19,120)
Change in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	(\$34,145)
Change in Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	(\$680,056)
Change in Net Assets	(\$714,201)
Net Assets (deficit) at the Beginning of the Year	\$1,662,908
Net Assets (deficit) at the End of the Year	\$948,707

Details of Expenses

Program Services



Personal Development
\$1,209,039



Youth Employment
\$4,541,435



Education
\$1,391,543



Clinical Services
\$45,839

Organizational Management



Data & Accountability
\$400,490



Fundraising
\$379,301



Management/General
\$1,649,234



OPP's 50th Anniversary - Legacy of Leaders

This year Our Piece of the Pie proudly celebrated its 50th Anniversary. That is five decades of community service and empowering the youth of Greater Hartford. The celebration offered an opportunity to reflect on the journey of the organization, the many difficult changes, and challenges that we have overcome along the way. Most of all, it was a celebration of the thousands of young people whose resilience has shaped our mission and inspired lasting change throughout our community. As we look ahead, OPP will continue to be where opportunity meets potential and where young people build the futures they deserve.

Sixto Cancel - Keynote Speaker



Sixto Cancel is the Founder and CEO of Think of Us, a Research + Design Lab transforming child welfare systems nationwide. Recognized as a Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree and a White House "Champion of Change," Sixto has held impactful fellowships, advisory roles, and

board positions, all focused on improving outcomes for youth in foster care. He served as the keynote speaker at OPP's 50th Anniversary Celebration, where he highlighted the importance of creating conditions that allow all young people to heal, grow, and thrive.

Shian Earlington - Youth Speaker



Shian joined OPP in 2020 with big goals and quickly grew as a leader with support from staff, especially her Youth Development Specialist, Brandice. She later became OPP's Marketing Intern, contributing to content creation, events, and outreach.

After earning her Associate's Degree in Business from CT State Asnuntuck in 2025, she began studying Political Science at UConn Stamford with aspirations of pursuing a JD/MBA. As the Youth Speaker for OPP's 50th Anniversary, Shian embodies resilience and the limitless potential of every young person who enters OPP's doors.

View and add to our 50th Anniversary event photo album:



View our 50th Anniversary Legacy of Leaders video:



Meet the 50th Awardees

OPP celebrates a core group of individuals who embody OPP's full-circle impact - leaders who started here, partnered with us, or now lead institutions driving change across Connecticut and beyond. They represent excellence in education, mental health, youth development, and community leadership - each one is a living example of what happens when potential meets opportunity. They are not just awardees - they are proof of what a single seed of potential, nurtured by consistent support, can become.



Miguel Cardona, EdD

National Leader Award

Dr. Miguel Cardona is an American leader and educator. He served as the 12th United States Secretary of Education under President Joe Biden. Throughout his 27-year career in education, Dr. Cardona has focused on improving educational access and equity - from his own classroom of fourth-grade students in Connecticut to the 65 million students across the nation. Prior to becoming U.S. Secretary of Education, Secretary Cardona served as the Commissioner of Education in Connecticut, District Leader in CT, university instructor, national award-winning school principal, and classroom teacher. Secretary Cardona's approach to leadership, at the local, state, federal, and international level, has been grounded in intentional collaboration and lifted by a bold vision for improvement from pre-kindergarten through college, to adult learning. His work has sought collaboration from local leaders, governors, philanthropists, entertainers and artists, industry executives, and international leaders.

Dr. Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon is a clinical community psychologist. She served as the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under President Joe Biden. As the Assistant Secretary, Dr. Delphin-Rittmon was charged with addressing the behavioral health of the nation and improving the lives of individuals living with mental and substance use disorders and their families. Prior to that, Dr. Delphin-Rittmon served as the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in Connecticut. As Commissioner, she was committed to promoting recovery oriented, integrated, and culturally responsive services and systems that foster dignity, respect, and meaningful community inclusion. Dr. Delphin-Rittmon is currently the Vice President of the Center for Training, Technical Assistance and Consultation with Advocates for Human Potential, Inc. where she leads a team providing behavioral health consultation across the country.



Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, PhD

National Leader Award



Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA

Legacy Leadership Award

Dr. Sabrina Trocchi is a skilled and experienced expert on behavioral health, health care systems integration, and health care administration and management. Dr. Trocchi began her journey in health and human services with OPP (formerly Southend Community Services) in 1988 as a volunteer. She later joined the staff as a Youth Worker and then served as Youth Services Supervisor through 1994. As President & Chief Executive Officer of Wheeler Health, a community behavioral health center and federally qualified health center, Dr. Trocchi oversees the ongoing strategic planning and direction of Wheeler in order to achieve its mission to provide equitable access to innovative care that improves health, recovery, and growth at all stages of life. Prior to joining Wheeler Health, Dr. Trocchi served in a number of leadership positions with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, including as Chief of Staff.

Donna Sodipo has over 30 years of experience in education, youth development, and nonprofit management. Fostering curiosity while providing access and opportunities is at the core of Donna's motivation. During her time at OPP, she co-designed OPPportunity Academy. Donna worked closely with Hartford Public Schools to create student-centered learning experiences that had a positive impact on over-aged and under-credited youth. Serving these youth is her passion. Donna also served as the Senior Vice President of Education at Connecticut Public, where she oversaw all educational programming, curriculum development, fundraising, and strategic communications. Donna is currently the Chief Program Officer at YWCA Hartford Region. In this role, she continues to innovate in workforce development, mentoring, and youth development programs designed to disrupt norms and create new pathways for women, girls, and families.



Donna Sodipo

Community Impact Award





Jinelle Hooker

**System Builder in
Education Award**

Jinelle Hooker has over 20 years of experience in social services, youth development, post-secondary preparation, and workforce development. She began her journey with Our Piece of the Pie in 2003 as a volunteer tutor. In 2004 she joined the staff as a Youth Education Specialist, then worked her way through various roles until she served as a leader for program services across Greater Hartford and Eastern Connecticut until 2021. Following her role as Assistant Executive Director of Queen Ann Nzinga Center, she joined Hartford Public Schools (HPS) in 2022 as the Community Schools Manager for the district. She now serves as HPS Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships and Fund Development. She is committed to ensuring services that address the unique needs of children, youth, and young adults.

Karina Nieves began her journey with Our Piece of the Pie in 2003 as a Youth Opportunity (YO!Hartford) youth member. With the support and guidance of her Youth Development Specialist, Marcel Cicero, she gained the knowledge and tools she needed to prepare for employment after high school. After her time as an OPP youth, Karina was offered an internship where she was responsible for managing phone calls, welcoming youth and visitors, and supporting the center's daily administrative operations. In 2005, she transitioned into a full-time role with the organization. Karina serves as OPP's Administrative Assistant and is celebrating her 20th year at Our Piece of the Pie. She takes great pride in working in a mission-driven environment and finds purpose each day in supporting both our youth and dedicated staff.



Karina Nieves

Full Circle Award



OPP Alumni Honor Roll



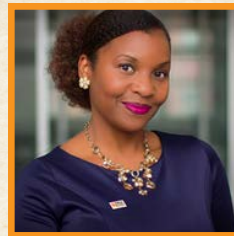
David Kozak
Principal at Kozak & Salina
Former SCS Youth Worker



Amilcar Hernandez
Chief Financial Officer at New Haven Public Schools
Former OPP Director of Finance



Eva Bermúdez-Zimmerman
Coalition Director at Child Care for Connecticut's Future
Former OPP Youth



Shanee L. Ransom
Site Director at Public Allies CT
Former OPP Youth Development Specialist and Drama Instructor



Aristede Hill
Associate Director of MENTOR CT
Former OPP Youth Development Specialist



Dr. Althea Bates
CEO of A. Bates Consulting
Former OPP Youth Employment Specialist



Joseph Seymour
CEO of Manifest Maximum
Former OPP Youth Development Specialist



Rashani Swaby
Director of Employee Experience & Action Planning at RTX
OPP Board Chair and Former OPP Youth



Carl Dean
Assistant Director at UConn's Center for Access and Post-Secondary Success
Former SCS Youth Business Staff



John Thomas
Coordinator at Capital Community College
Former OPP Director of Service Learning

Jane Rainwater
Professor at Manchester Community College
Founder of SCS Junior Art Makers - JAM

Kathryn Rock-Burns
COO of CT Dept. of Developmental Services
Former OPP External Affairs Specialist

Chiedza Rodriguez, Esq
Human Rights Attorney at CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Former OPP Director of Talent Development

Dina J. Sears-Graves, MS
President & CEO of United Way of Southeastern Connecticut
Former OPP Development Manager

Cassandra Sullivan-Wright
Principal Relationship Advisor at Brown Advisory
Former OPP Development Director

OPP Dedicated Staff with 10+ years of service



Kim Beale

Digital DividEND Instructor &
Youth Development Specialist
27 years



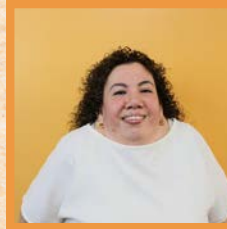
Mike Nelson

Youth Development Specialist
at Opportunity Academy
24 years



Rosa Plaza

Senior Director of Human
Resources
26 years



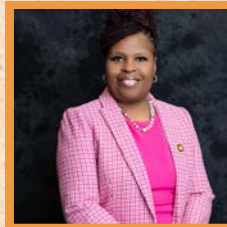
Karina Nieves

Administrative Assistant
20 years



Chanda Robinson

Chief Operating Officer
25 years



Kimberly Williams-Rivera

Senior Director of MIS
and Performance
20 years



Hector Rivera

President &
Chief Executive Officer
25 years



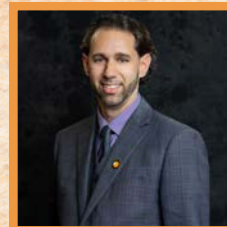
Jessica Blake

Navigator
18 years



Girard Dawes

Senior Director of
Youth Engagement
25 years



Sam DeCarlo

Director of
Workforce Services
17 years



Brenda Colon

Director of Youth Development
at Opportunity Academy
24 years



Nydia Roman

Post-Secondary Specialist
13 years



Diondra Robertson

Director of Youth
Development Services
11 years



Launching OPPU as a Social Enterprise

Our Piece of the Pie participated in Greater Hartford Gives Social Accelerator program. During this process, we identified our internal professional development program as one of our signature organizational strengths.

OPPU is a transformative social enterprise dedicated to empowering youth-serving social service professionals and providers through comprehensive onboarding, training, and development programs. The goal is to enhance the skills and knowledge of those who work with young people, ensuring they are equipped to foster positive outcomes in young people's lives. Through this training, we will support youth-serving organizations to create an authentic, resilient, and safe environment for both professionals and the youth they serve.

OPPU is still in the business development phase. OPP plans to market this professional development course to other youth-serving organizations in Hartford and the region. As with all social enterprises, profits will be used to further OPP's mission.



Our Supporters

Individuals

Steven Adamowski
 Regina Alexander
 Aura Alvarado
 Drew Andrews
 Tania Banks
 Olia Bartley
 Suzanne Barton
 Alex Bellino
 Keon Berry
 Amanda Billiot
 Christine Bird
 Linda Bresky
 Justin Brown
 Michelle Buswell
 Rosa Capo
 Noel Casiano
 Kamille Cockings
 Matthew Dadona
 Smitesh Davé
 Girard Dawes
 Tanya DeCarish
 Samuel DeCarlo
 Vannessa Dorantes
 Margot Early
 Lorenzo Elliott
 Janice T. Flemming-Butler
 John Fuller
 Kyle Garneau
 Tishawn Gaynor
 Ralph Gilliard
 Samuel Gray
 Larry Greenberg
 Kimberly Griffin
 Megan Griffin
 Karen Gross
 Shane Harasyko
 Carl Harding
 Sheveran Hardy
 Petrel Harts
 Amilcar Hernandez
 Jinelle Hooker
 Sara Houldcroft
 Armando Jimenez
 Victoria Johansen
 Kim Johnson



Southend Community Services is founded.

1975



Southend Community Arts program begins with support from Connecticut Commission on the Arts and Greater Hartford Arts Council. This included dance, music, theater, and visual arts programs. A summer concert series was organized through this program.

1976

Bruno Mazzulla appointed Executive Director.

1978

Summer Job-A-Thon launched to match Hartford youth with local employers. SCS developed the idea and collaborated with SAND and Spanish American Center to manage it.

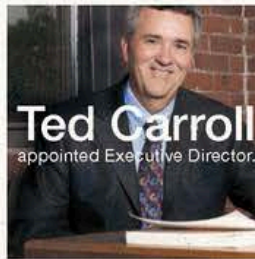
Market Needs Place To Sell Its Produce

1979

SCS and ConnFarm opens FarmMarket to offer inexpensive produce to senior citizens.

1980

SCS worked with Dr. Alan Dun to offer free medical consultations.



Ted Carroll
appointed Executive Director.

1981

SCS receives \$75,000 grant from United Way to continue elderly service and employment programs.



1984

City of Hartford's **Summer Youth Employment and Training Program** pays for youth to clean Franklin Avenue and plant marigolds.

The Southend Community Childcare Center opened. 75 people attended the open house.

1985

Everybody seemed to be pleased and impressed with the way the building looked and the way we've structured the program. -Ted Carroll

CITY NOTES

Discovery Series

A four-week "Discovery Series" on relationships will be sponsored by the Hill Center at 310 Farmington Ave. The discussions, covering self-understanding, communication, mutual support and resolving conflicts, will be held every Tuesday, starting March 18, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Persons may contact the Hill Center for more information or to register for the series, for which an \$8 fee will be charged.

President Curtis B. Clemens and Alice Fisher, chairwoman of the West End Civic Association's Education Committee. The talks will be sponsored by the Hartford chapter of Operation PUSH as part of the group's Political Education Month.

Medical Consultation

Dr. Alan Dun will give free consultation every Wednesday from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Southend Community Services/Project South office, 509 Wetherfield Ave., Hartford. Appointments are necessary for the consultations. No drug prescriptions or physical examinations will be given. Interested persons may contact the Southend Community Services office.

School Workshop

A workshop on community-school relations will be held March 8 at 7:30 p.m. at Bulkeley High School, 309 Wetherfield Ave., Hartford. Sponsored by the Hartford PTA Council, the workshop will include a film and lecture by Dolores Graham, former professor at the University of Hartford. Hartford Board of Education members have been invited.

Managing Stress

A two-hour workshop on "stress management" will be offered by the Hill Center, 310 Farmington Ave., March 18 at 7:30 p.m. New England Humanistic Education Center Director Bob Schoenberg will discuss various methods of reducing stress in a person's business and personal life. Registration is required before the workshop. The fee will be \$15, \$12 for Hill Center subscribers.

Education Is Topic

Frederick Robinson, president of the United Negro Church Fund, will speak about education Saturday at 10 a.m. at Horace Bushnell Congregational Church, 25 Vine St. Also scheduled to speak are School Superintendent Herman LaPostolle, Board of Education



Joseph Odell
appointed Executive Director

1986



1992

Mark Fulco
appointed Executive Director.

1993

Mass LearnPike using telecommunication to enhance math, science, and literacy skills. SCS Childcare was one of 4 sites in Hartford.

New programs open at SCS:
Street Lightning Dek Hockey with Hartford Whalers Alumni Association and SCS Girls Soccer Development Program.



Childcare center gains national accreditation from National Academy of Early Childhood Programs.

1994

1994

Bob Rath
appointed Executive Director



1995



Hartford AmeriCorps launches.
30 people did full time service for 10 months and received \$4,725 for tuition or student loans.

"Corps members will receive high-caliber leadership training, a living wage, help with their college tuitions, and an experience of a life time" -Bob Rath

1997

River Wright Boat Builders



Our Supporters

Individuals

- Dean Jones
- Brandon Kenyon
- Max Kothari
- Pina Lo Curzio
- Kimberly Malone
- Markella & Manius Martial
- Meghann Michalak
- David Modzelewski
- Patricia Moro
- Brandon Murillo
- Patrick Murray
- Jeffrey Myshrall
- Ken Mysogland
- Kimberly Napp
- Michael Parkin
- Jennifer Pasion
- Aisha Petteway
- Rosa Plaza
- Raphael Podolsky
- Lejla Radoncic
- Doreen & Neville Radway
- Pamela Rankin
- Jennifer & Herman Raphael
- Bob Rath
- Banning Rauls
- Veronica Rich
- Janet Ridenour
- Kevin Rivera
- Parker Rivera
- Peytin Rivera
- Yomayra Rivera
- Hector Rivera Jr.
- Diondra Robertson
- Chanda Robinson
- Andre Rochester
- Carmen Roman
- Monica Rosario
- Veronica Ruiz
- Jendayi Scott-Miller
- James Shea
- Alejandro Sierra
- Jeanne Smith
- Dominique & Ricardo Soto
- Michael Spyros
- Kimberly Staley
- Phillip Starks

Our Supporters

Individuals

Jonathan Stryjek
Nicole Stryjek
Janet Stulting
Shirley Surgeon
Nathan Swaim
Mark Torello
Hector Torres
John Weaver
David Weiner
Paige, Daniel, & Chase Williams-Menard
Kimberly Williams-Rivera
Chanel Wright

Corporations

BerryDunn
Capital Region Development Authority
(XL Center)
COCC
Collins Aerospace
CREC
Dime Bank
Dressler Strickland, LLC
Empower Retirement LLC
Express Kitchens
Flex Center LLC
Hartford Healthcare
LMG Photography
New Wave Counseling Consulting
PeoplesBank
Pitney Bowes
Pratt & Whitney
Raytheon Technologies
Smith Brothers
Starling Physicians
Target
The Hartford
University of New Haven
USA Waste and Recycling
Walmart
Whittlesey
Workers' Compensation Trust



Hartford AmeriCorps
Launched Kid Corps.

The Youth
Employment Co.
provided employment training,
resume writing, workshops,
mock interviews, and
assistance with job search.

2000

Youth Opportunities (YO!Hartford)
is launched at Southend Community
Services with a \$24 million grant.

SCS narrowed focus
to youth services and
changed name to
Our Piece of the Pie.

2005



2006

Youth create
Echoe from the
Streets Newspaper.



OPP partners with Hartford Public
Schools to open an alternative
education program Opportunity
High School, now known as
Opportunity Academy.

OPP received full
PEPNet accreditation
from National Youth
Employment Coalition.



2009



BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation

2011



OPP partnered with the NYEC and Capital Community College, as part of the national launch of the Postsecondary Success Initiative project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

OPP launched its Pathways to Manufacturing initiative in partnership with Asnuntuck Community College and Capital Workforce Partners.



OPP partners with Bloomfield Public Schools to open an alternative education program Learning Academy Bloomfield (LAB).

OPP launched the Work to Learn program in partnership with CT Department of Children and Families in Eastern CT.

2015

OPP helped the Fairfield County Community Foundation and Norwalk Community College launch Thrive by 25 – a Pathways to Careers Initiative in Fairfield County.

Thrive by 25

Our Supporters

Community Organizations & Non-Profits

- Angel of Edgewood
- Capital Workforce Partners
- Family Health International
- Hispanic Federation
- United Way of Central and Northeastern CT

Donor Advised Funds & Family Foundations

- Anna F. and David W. Clark Fund at HFPG
- Budd Family Fund at HFPG
- Burlington Stores Foundation
- Cauze Charitable Fund
- Charles and Doris Bryan Fund at HFPG
- Dalio Education
- George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation
- Kate Family Foundation
- Phee-lanthropy - Raymond James Charitable Fund
- Scripps Family Fund
- Turner Family Foundation

Foundations

- Ensworth Charitable Foundation
- Enterprise Mobility Foundation
- GHADA Foundation Inc.
- Give Lively Foundation Inc.
- Greater Hartford Community Foundation, Inc.
- Greater Hartford Gives Foundation
- Green and Blue Foundation, Inc.
- Jackson Lewis Foundation
- Liberty Bank Foundation
- Lincoln Financial Foundation
- SBM Charitable Foundation
- The M&T Charitable Foundation
- The Prosperity Foundation
- Tow Foundation
- Travelers Foundation
- W.R. Berkley Charitable Foundation (Acadia Insurance)
- Webster Bank Charitable Foundation

Our Supporters

Government

Bloomfield Public Schools
City of Hartford
CT Department of Children & Families
CT Department of Economic and
Community Development
Hartford Public Schools
OJJDP Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Education



2016

OPP launched Hartford Youth Service Corps with the City of Hartford



HYSC IMPACT SINCE 2016

\$9,583,244
Total wages earned by HYSC youth

400
Community services project partners

2,005
Total projects completed

2,623
Youths enrolled over 10 years

Interested in supporting OPP?

Scan the QR code below



or visit www.opp.org/get-involved

2017

OPP partnered with FHI-360 in the Compass Rose Collaborative for re-entry youth, improving tools and data collection.

Enid Rey
appointed President and CEO.



2019

OPP is chosen for Dalio Education's Connecticut Opportunity Project (CTOP) providing capacity building resources to non-profit organizations in Connecticut serving youth who are severely off-track or disconnected from school and employment.

2021



Hector Rivera

appointed President and CEO.

"These young people are ultimately gonna be our future. We want to prepare them as young leaders to be part of the fabric of these communities" -Hector Rivera

OPP received \$750K Second Chance Act Youth Offender Reentry Program grant from the US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.



FY25 Executive Team

Hector Rivera

President & Chief Executive Officer

Chanda Robinson

Chief Operating Officer

Patricia Moro

Chief Financial Officer

Rosa Plaza

Senior Director of Human Resources

Girard Dawes

Senior Director of Youth Engagement

Kimberly Williams-Rivera

Senior Director of MIS and Performance

Kim Johnson

Senior Director of Development and Strategic Initiatives

OPP partnered with City of Hartford and Hartford HealthCare to launch Digital DividEND program.

2022



2022

OPP and the City of Hartford received \$666K from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development for the Hartford Youth Service Corps.

OPP's Hartford Youth Service Corps received the Innovative Program Award from the National Youth Employment Coalition.

2023



FY25 Board Members

Rashani Swaby - *Chair*

Carl Harding - *Vice Chair*

Alex Bellino - *Secretary*

Banning Rauls - *Treasurer*

Dr. Noel Casiano

Armando Jimenez

Chris Lenox

William Morin

Kevin Rivera

Amy Rodriguez

Michael Spyros

Jonathan Stryjek

Nathan Swaim

50th Anniversary Honorary Committee

Claire Burns

Ted Carroll

Vannessa L Dorantes, LMSW

Paula Gilberto

Thea Montañez

Lisa Mottola

Bob Rath

Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA



2024

OPP received \$2 Million Growth Opportunities grant from the US Department of Labor to expand and enhance the Hartford Youth Service Corps.

Supported by U.S. Senators Murphy and Blumenthal, OPP received Congressionally Directed \$750K award from the US Department of Education to expand supports for young people currently involved in or exiting foster care.

OPP and DOMUS (Stamford) received \$500K planning grant from Dalio Education for the potential replication of the Youth Service Corps model in 6 additional CT cities and towns.

2025

- Kim Beale — 27 yrs
- Rosa Plaza — 26 yrs
- Chanda Robinson — 25 yrs
- Hector Rivera — 25 yrs
- Girard Dawes — 25 yrs
- Brenda Colon — 24 yrs
- Mike Nelson — 24 yrs
- Katrina Nieves — 20 yrs
- Kimberly Williams-Rivera — 20 yrs
- Jessica Blake — 18 yrs
- Sam DeCarlo — 17 yrs
- Nydia Roman — 13 yrs
- Diondra Robertson — 11 yrs

Dedicated Staff

2026
OPP celebrates
50 years!

- John Thomas
- Dr. Althea Bates
- Rashani Swaby
- David Kozak
- Ariete Hill
- Joseph Seymour
- Eva Bermudez-Zimmerman
- Kathryn Rock-Burns
- Chiedza Rodriguez
- Shanee L. Ransom
- Carl Dean
- Amilcar Hernandez
- Cassandra Sullivan-Wright
- Dina J. Sears-Graves
- Jane Rainwater

Staff & Youth Alumni Honor Roll

CELEBRATING
50
YEARS

Thank You to Our 50th Anniversary Sponsors!

Champion Sponsor



Partner Sponsors



Advisor Sponsors



Supporter Sponsors

Capital Workforce Partners, Connecticut Science Center, Eversource, Smith Brothers, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, and Webster Bank



CELEBRATING

10 YEARS

OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AND
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



A DECADE OF IMPACT

2016
2026