

Bridges

Bringing the housed and homeless
together in community

Annual Report

June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010



September, 2010

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Dear Friends,

The Bridges Board of Trustees is pleased to share with you our accomplishments of the fiscal year ending May 31, 2010. It is always interesting to see in one report the many ways in which we touch the lives of our homeless friends and neighbors in need each week and throughout the seasons.

Bridges began humbly on a Friday night in 1988 when Ginger and Geoff Worden reached out to a group of New York City homeless with sandwiches and thermoses of soup and coffee. Since that night, Bridges has never missed a Friday outreach visit (Run) to New York City. Today, volunteers reach out to 500 to 700 homeless friends each week in New York City, Newark and Irvington, NJ. In this fiscal year, we estimate that 100,000 brown bag lunches, 40,000 breakfast bags and 9,000 toiletry kits were made and distributed by volunteers.

Bridges continually faces challenges and opportunities as we strive to accommodate the increasing populations of homeless and near homeless in the three geographic areas of our outreach — New York City, Newark, Irvington and our hometown of Summit.

We are grateful for the support of hundreds of donors who make financial contributions and to those who contribute food, clothing and other necessities and to the hundreds of volunteers who join us in our weekly outreach. Bridges could not accomplish its mission "to bring the housed and homeless together in community" without your continuous support. On behalf of our staff and homeless friends, thank you.

Sincerely yours,

The Bridges Board of Trustees

Outreach

The Bridges' Run: The Bridges' Run, or outreach visit, is at the heart of our mission. In 2009-10, Bridges made 187 Runs – that averages more than three per week and is an increase of 9% from the previous year. For every Run, volunteers of high school age and older meet at Bridges after having assembled 300-400 brown bag lunches, collected seasonal clothing and toiletry items. They are greeted and briefed by the Bridges' Run Coordinator who will oversee the Run. They will then caravan with Bridges' distinctive yellow ten-foot box truck, which is fully loaded earlier in the day.

New York City: 81 Runs were made to New York City. In over 20 years, Bridges has never missed a Friday night Run into New York City. This year was no exception. On a particularly snowy night, two staff members, carrying as many brown bag lunches as possible, took the train into Penn Station and a subway to lower Manhattan to distribute food to the small number of homeless still waiting regardless of the weather. Beyond our large street Runs, one board member and a volunteer go out late at night, mid-week, to find small groups of homeless in need.

Newark: 62 Runs were made to various locations in Newark. Monthly Runs were made to the Body of Christ Ministry in the South 10th Street neighborhood where Bridges has partnered with ministers in that area for more than two years. In January 2010, three other Run stops were added: the First Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church; Lovicks Holiness Church; and the Newark YMCA. Weekly, Bridges alternates among these sites and then makes its way to Newark Penn Station, where as many as 75 homeless friends live in or near the station. Our shelter programs for children at the Emergency Residence Shelter at the Newark YMCA continue to be well received by both the children and the volunteers. Monthly, birthday parties are organized for all children who have a birthday that month in addition to monthly activity days keep the children busy and looking forward to a Bridges' visit.

Irvington: 44 Runs were made to Irvington. Runs are made every Sunday with the exception of holidays to the Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corporation in cooperation with the Township of Irvington. Bridges meets up to 140 homeless and near homeless individuals at each visit.

Seasonal Outreach: Needs change with the seasons and Bridges fulfills those needs with varied seasonal programs.

Summer Camp at The Connection: In the summer of 2009, children from the Emergency Residency Program, a shelter in Newark, participated in The Connection for Women and Families Summer Fun day camp in Summit, NJ. Sixteen children from ages 3 to 10 were paired with high school volunteers from Bridges, who were one-on-

one mentors and counselors to the children. Campers enjoyed days filled with arts and crafts, swim lessons, performing arts, and gymnastics and made great summer memories.

Camp Supplies: Sixty children from the Newark Emergency Residency Program were provided with camp supplies for an overnight camp experience at a Y Camp near the Pennsylvania border from individual and corporate donors. Additionally, overnight camp tuition was donated and matched by Bridges for four children.

School Supplies: Bridges distributed 580 new backpacks and school supplies for over 1,000 children at the Emergency Residency Program at the Newark YMCA, two South 10th Street ministries, the Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corporation, the Irvington Public Library, Summit area organizations and in New York City.

Holiday Gifts: Over 2,000 new holiday gifts were given to homeless friends in New York City, Newark and Irvington.

Blue jeans, boots, coats, scarves, hats & gloves, thermal underwear, "hoodies," pajamas and toys were welcomed gifts on the street and in shelters. On Monday, December 21st, a caravan of eight cars full of volunteers and a school bus with boys from Oratory Prep delivered gifts to New York City. It was a cold night and there were three-foot piles of snow on the curb, but more than a hundred homeless people waited at both Battery Park and under the Brooklyn Bridge. Deliveries were made throughout the week to shelters and the Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corporation, delivering over 300 toys and 400 pairs of pajamas for children. The following Saturday, roughly 30 men at Newark's Penn Station were happily surprised by the holiday gifts.

In November, the Summit Junior League provided Bridges with Thanksgiving baskets that were immediately sent to the First Congregational Christian United Church of Christ in Irvington for distribution with turkeys which had been collected. By connecting food to people, we know that 90 families in Irvington had a happier Thanksgiving.

Volunteers

Volunteers are at the core of Bridges. More than 1,500 volunteers participate in a Bridges' Run each year delivering over 100,000 brown bag lunches, 40,000 breakfast bags, 9,000 toiletry kits and literally tons of clothing, blankets and other necessities with dignity and respect. Hundreds more contribute lunches, clothing and other necessary seasonal items, school supplies, holiday gifts, and camp supplies for sheltered children as well as financial assistance that helped us to make 187 Runs this year. Many of our volunteers are high school students – but we are also blessed with support from the very young to senior citizens. Our homeless friends meet our volunteers each week with diverse needs and open hearts. What is shared on a Bridges' Run goes far

beyond simply the distribution of material goods. On a Bridges' Run, stereotypes fade, understanding develops, caring overcomes indifference, a sense of purpose prevails, and real friendships are formed, based on mutual respect.

Volunteer Run Groups 2009-2010:

- Aon, Parsippany
- Baxter Health Care, New Providence
- Blessed Kateri Church, Sparta
- Bonnie Brae School, Liberty Corner
- C. R. Bard, Inc., Murray Hill
- Carpet Etcetera, Cedar Knolls
- Christ Church, Summit
- Christ the King, New Vernon
- Columbia Laboratories, Livingston
- Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Short Hills
- Cranford United Methodist Church
- Delbarton School, Morristown
- Denville Community Church
- Drew University, Madison
- Elmwood United Presbyterian Church, East Orange
- First Baptist Church of Westfield
- First Congregational Church of Montclair
- First Congregational Church of Westfield
- First Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church, Newark
- Florham Park/Madison Summer Baseball
- Fountain Baptist Church, Summit
- Greek Orthodox Northern NJ Youth
- Green Village United Methodist Church
- Holmdel Community Church
- Jewish Congregation of Kinnelon
- Kent Place School, Summit
- Lake Hopatcong United Methodist Church
- Madison Rotary
- Morrow Memorial United Methodist Church, Maplewood
- Mount Tabor United Methodist Church
- New Born Mission, Newark
- Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child, Summit
- Oratory Preparatory School, Summit
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Mountainside
- Outpost in the 'burbs, Montclair
- Paramus Catholic High School
- PEP Program, Summit
- Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
- Prudential, Newark
- R & R Marketing, West Caldwell
- Randolph High School
- Roselle Catholic High School
- Rutgers Catholic Center, New Brunswick
- Shomrei Torah, Wayne
- St. Bernard - St. Stanislaus Church, Plainfield
- St. Elizabeth's Church, Linden
- St. Helen's Young Adults, Westfield
- St. Joseph's Church, Maplewood
- St. Mary & St. Mercurius
& St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Churches, Lodi
- St. Mary's of Pompton Lakes
- St. Michael's Church, Netcong
- St. Rose of Lima, Short Hills
- St. Vincent de Paul, Stirling
- St. Vincent Martyr Parish, Madison
- St. Virgil Parish Youth Group, Morris Plains
- Stanley Congregational Church, Chatham
- Stifel Nicolaus, Florham Park
- Summit Girl Scout Troop 45540, Summit
- Summit High School, Summit
- Temple B'nai Abraham, Livingston
- Temple B'nai Or Youth Group, Morristown
- Temple Sha'arey Shalom, Springfield
- Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel, South Orange

The Pingry School, Martinsville
 Unitarian Church, Summit
 Westfield High School Community Service Club

College Students: Students from the Ramapo College Marketing Committee participated on Bridges Marketing Committee offering insights on social media networking for Bridges. Interns from Seton Hall University spent a semester researching new funding sources for Bridges.

Soup Makers: All Bridges Runs have containers of soup and hot chocolate in the winter or lemonade in the summer. A small band of 9 soup makers coordinated by one volunteer cover all the soup and beverages for every Run.

Ellen Maher Volunteer Award: This award is given annually in honor of Bridges' past Executive Director Ellen Maher to high school seniors who have faithfully and effectively engaged with fellow students to support the work of Bridges and who have also proved themselves to be friends to the homeless. Two awards were granted in 2010. The recipients were Juliane Capron, Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child, and Shawn Lyon, Bonnie-Brae School.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service: About 150 volunteers of all ages participated in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service at Bridges. On Monday, January 18th, volunteers of all ages gathered at Bridges as part of Summit's 12th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service organized by Shaping Summit Together. Pre-school through kindergarten students decorated paper bags that were then filled with 300 lunches made by middle school students. Elementary school children wrapped 150 books and added personal notes to go to children at a Newark shelter. Others made eight fleece quilts that went to a Newark shelter to be saved for children when they arrive at the shelter. High school students and adults packaged 750 toiletry kits and sorted over 20 bins of clothing.

High school and middle school students read *The Littlest Volunteer*, by Danielle Speckhart, and *Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King*, by Jean Marzollo, to the younger volunteers.

Collaborations

Essex-Newark Ten-Year Plan End

Homelessness: The Bridges Executive Director is an active member of the Advocacy Committee of the Essex-Newark Task Force to End Homelessness. The vision of this task force is to "transform our homeless response system from one built upon a foundation of emergency and temporary housing to one built upon a foundation of prevention and permanent housing."

Point in Time Count – Newark: Bridges staff and volunteers participated in the 2010 Point in Time Count for Essex County (PITC) on Wednesday, January 27th from midnight to midnight. This annual census of individuals/families that are homeless is conducted at the request of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development. It is one of the key sources of data for resource and system planning in the region.

Teams of volunteers for the Unsheltered Count (aka "street" count) went out to survey persons who are homeless and staying in parks, train stations, cars, emergency rooms, etc. Shelter and Transitional housing providers conducted their own count of those who are homeless and sheltered. The teams sent out between midnight and 4 a.m. found over 30 men living outside Penn Station – one of Bridges' regular stops.

Bridges also has a great deal to learn from the PITC. Knowing where unsheltered people live gives us a better understanding of which neighborhoods our volunteers should reach out to in order to provide those individuals with food, clothing and other necessities.

Collaborations: Bridges is pleased to collaborate with the following organizations that help us fulfill our mission to bring the housed and homeless together in community and provide valuable services to our homeless friends in abundant ways.

Body of Christ Ministry, Newark
Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey
Church Women United Food Pantry, Irvington
Emergency Residence Program, Newark
First Hopewell Baptist Church
Goddard Riverside, New York City
Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corporation
Irvington Public Library, Irvington
Lovicks Holiness Church, Newark
Newark Public Schools, Newark
Office of Mayor Corey Booker, Newark
Office of Mayor Wayne Smith, Irvington
Ramapo College Marketing Committee
Seton Hall University
St. Rocco's Men's Shelter, Newark
St. Rocco's Women's Shelter, Newark
Summit Helping Its People (SHIP), Summit

Education

Teens Tackle Homelessness: Bridges Outreach sponsored "Teens Tackle Homelessness," a conference specifically for high school students organized by high school students. Eighty-seven high school students from twenty-four area high schools from as far north as High Point and as far east as Fort Lee participated in the conference on Saturday, October 24, 2009. Youth leaders, homeless friends and community leaders also attended.

Teens Tackle Homelessness began with a keynote address by Kathleen DiChiara, Founder and CEO of the Community FoodBank of NJ. Students then attended four workshops presented by Tonya R. Bryan, Policy Advisor for Homelessness and Housing Development, Office of the Mayor, City of Newark; Mabel D. Elmore, Director, Emergency Residency Program, Newark; Bilal Muhammad, Attendance Counselor, Homeless Unit, Newark Public Schools; and the Honorable Wayne Smith, Mayor of Irvington, NJ.

The workshops were followed by a panel discussion with workshop presenters and homeless friends moderated by Rev. Diane Riley; Feed the Solution, The Apostles House, Newark.

At the end of the conference, students expressed feeling "more compassionate" after learning who is homeless and why. They left "inspired," and "empowered" after learning what actions are in place to help alleviate the problems of poverty, hunger, and homelessness and how they can help.

In a related event, several students who attended the Conference from Temple Sharey Tefilo Israel in South Orange, under the direction of Rabbi Ellie Miller, participated in a "tent city" to simulate the homeless experience for one night. All the students commented that while their one night was tough, they couldn't imagine how a person could do this night after night and began to understand how homeless people could become very bitter and angry. They had new found respect for people who are able to stay hopeful in the face of hardship

Administration, Staff & Board of Trustees

Staff 2009-2010

Executive Director
Lois Bhatt

**Resource & Volunteer
Coordinator**
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Run Coordinators
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Danny RosenHanst
Francis Moses
(retired April, 2010)

Office Assistant
Lisa Fitzsimons

Bridges operates with a full-time Executive Director, two part-time Run Coordinators and a part-time Resource and Volunteer Coordinator. In the spring of 2010, a Bridges Run Coordinator, who had been with Bridges for over 15 years, retired. That position was restructured and is now the position of a part-time Resource and Volunteer Coordinator. Two part-time Run Coordinators oversee all Bridges' Runs. A data entry position for just a few hours a week was added this year. Bridges makes every effort to hire from areas in which we serve and volunteers who have a first-hand knowledge of Bridges.

The Bridges Board of Trustees is comprised of both housed and homeless individuals from Summit and surrounding areas including our cities of outreach.

Marketing: Bridges unveiled its new logo in the spring of 2010. The new logo is a design created by former Summit resident and Bridges' volunteer, Mary Pisarkiewicz of Pisarkiewicz Mazur & Co. The branding firm, based in New York City, donated its time and created the new look for Bridges, which included the logo, brochure and other marketing materials pro bono.

Beyond two newsletters and broadcast communications through e-mail, Bridges also expanded its marketing to include social media such as facebook.

In the coming year, all Bridges newsletters will be posted on the website and distributed by e-mail only. If you are not on our e-mail list, please contact lois@bridgesoutreach.net.

2009-10 Financial Overview

Financial Overview: Bridges does not seek or receive federal or state funding. In the 2009-2010 fiscal year, our income was received from one annual appeal, foundation grants, individual donors, and contributions from a fundraising event with California Pizza Kitchen.

Grant Awards: We are pleased to have received grant awards from the following foundations:

- Ann Earle Talcott Fund
- Christ Church Board of World Fellowship, Summit
- Community Congregational Church of Short Hills
- Hyde and Watson Foundation
- Junior League of Summit
- Lena Willis Mission Fund
- Lydia Collins deForest Charitable Trust
- Sarah Ward Foundation
- Summit Area Public Foundation
- The Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation
- Victoria Foundation
- William G. and Helen C. Hoffman Foundation
- A family foundation wishing to remain anonymous

Donations: Bridges received and distributed over 100,000 brown bag lunches, 40,000 breakfast bags and 9,000 toiletry kits this year. Literally tons of clothing and over 1,000 coats were also given to friends in need. Our donors are groups from houses of worship, clubs, schools, offices, and individuals. Through careful inventory of our distribution, we estimate the value of these donations to be \$776,610.

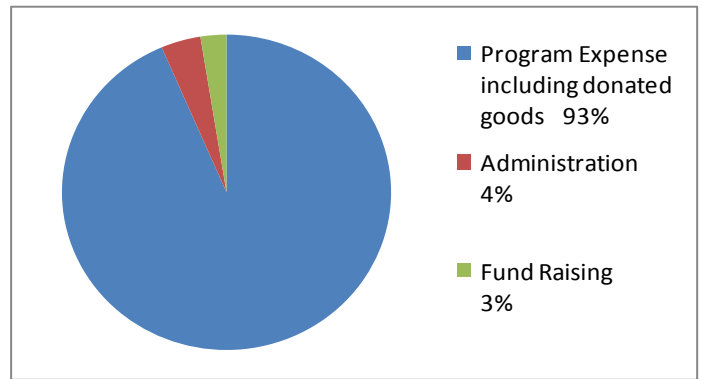
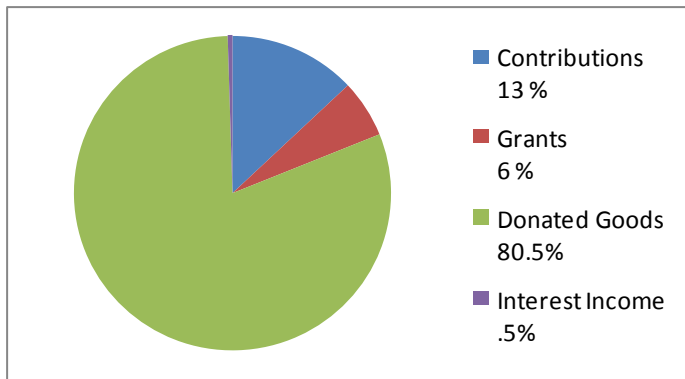
Overhead: Administration and fundraising are 7% of overall expenses.

Cash Reserve: Income from Bridges Biennial Brown Bag Bash are placed in reserve to offset expenses during a non-Bash year such as in the fiscal year ending May 31, 2010.

Independent Audit: An independent audit of financial statements for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2010, was conducted by James Wood, CPA. A full copy of the audit is available upon request.

Income: Total income for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2010, is \$963,680 including donated goods.

Expenses: Total expenses for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2010, are \$982,579 including donated goods. Reserved income from the 2009 Bridges Brown Bag Bash were used to offset budget deficit as planned.



Program Expenses include, but are not limited to: purchase of new goods, storage of donated and new goods, direct program salaries, truck and related expenses, volunteer training and camp programs.

Bridges is grateful to hundreds of donors who contribute food, clothing, toiletries, seasonal goods, and other necessities for distribution to our homeless friends.

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Bridges is grateful for the continuing support of its financial contributors.



Bringing the housed and homeless
together in community

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Bridges Annual Report — June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010

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New York City: 81 Runs

Newark: 62 Runs

Irvington: 44 Runs

Bridges is grateful to those who make financial contributions and to the hundreds of volunteers who give their time or donate clothing, toiletries, brown bag lunches and breakfast bags.

In 2009-10, Bridges distributed:

100,000 Brown Bag Lunches

40,000 Breakfast Bags

9,000 Toiletry Kits