

MERRICK COMMUNITY SERVICES

BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR SAINT PAUL'S EAST SIDE

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



Our mission is to improve the lives of the residents of the East Side of Saint Paul by empowering individuals, strengthening families, and promoting their independence.



Anchored in the East Side, our goal is simple: To meet the greatest needs of the individuals, families and community we serve today
- then empower them to be successful tomorrow.

MERRICK COMMUNITY SERVICES

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For over 108 years, **Merrick Community Services** has been faithful to its mission to improve the lives of the residents of the East Side of Saint Paul, by empowering individuals, strengthening families, and promoting their independence. Merrick remains a beacon of hope and source of support for new arrivals and for individuals and families in transition and in crisis, who are looking for a pathway out of poverty to self-sufficiency.

A MESSAGE FOR OUR FRIENDS

In 2015 alone, we served 15,000 people through our Food Shelf and Employment, Family, Seniors and Youth Programs. We are good stewards of your generous gifts. Merrick continues to operate as a lean, effective, efficient, fiscally responsible and transparent organization. In fact, seventy-six cents of every dollar invested in our organization goes directly to supporting our Programs.

In the coming year, Merrick Community Services will embark on a strategic planning process to position itself for continued success for years to come. This will involve engaging our stakeholders, including our Board, Staff, Volunteers, Participants, Partners, Peers, Funders, Donors, and Community-at-Large. Look for more forthcoming information on this.

Lastly, I want to personally thank all of our supporters, especially our donors and volunteers! The gift of your time, talent, and treasure provides us the necessary resources to make a BIG difference in the lives of the thousands of individuals and families we are privileged to serve on the East Side of Saint Paul and beyond.

We are pleased to share our 2015 Annual Report, as we thank you for your ongoing support and efforts in building a brighter future for our community.

In gratitude and with much appreciation,



Daniel A. Rodriguez
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Serving the East Side of Saint Paul since 1908

Tamra Davis Cownie
Chair
Securian Trust Company

John Bredesen, Jr.
Vice Chair
Minco Products, Inc

Kathryn Sibbel
Secretary
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John Atkins
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AgriBank

Wolfie Browender
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Brian Findlay
3M

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Community Member

Callie Koeniger
Sunrise Banks

John Lozoya
Saint Paul Police Department

Michael Luseni
Special Education Substitutes

Erin Mathern
Winthrop & Weinstein

Rod Mendenhall
3M

Michael Mobley
Mobley & Associates

Brady Walz
Ecolab

Henry Wang
Asia Trends

Daniel A. Rodriguez
Merrick Community Services
Executive Director

“Merrick Community Services gives hope for the future by providing the basic tools for success today. It is personally rewarding to know, working together with other volunteers and staff, combining our individual talents and skills, we are developing strong individuals, families, and neighborhoods on the East Side of Saint Paul. I am proud to be part of an organization whose name says it all - Services Community Merrick”

Tamra Davis Cownie, J.D., MACL
Chair, Merrick Board of Directors

A Snapshot of Our Programs

Food Shelf

provides fresh food, vegetables, fruits, dairy, proteins, nutritious staples and hygiene products for individuals and families struggling with hunger. Staff also connect individuals and families with essential community resources to help eliminate other related critical issues. A food shelf at Woodland Hills Church, two culturally specific mobile food shelves, a holiday share program and other special events support the immediate needs of families on the East Side.



Volunteer at the White Bear Cub Foods play a significant role in Merrick's March Food Drive.

NUMBERS

Of Nutritious Food Distributed	700,000 lbs.
Community Members Received Food & Hygiene Products	8,600
Community Members Received Information & Referrals for Critical Issues	2,982

Employment Services

runs the East Side Job Bank where community members work with employment counselors to gain knowledge, build skills, and ultimately become gainfully employed. Partnerships with trainers and employers ensure training opportunities and a consistent pool of new employment opportunities for program participants. In addition, Employment Services delivers certified training programs in both the environmental and highway construction trades.



Construction Training Participants tour construction at the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge in Bloomington, Minnesota.

NUMBERS

Community Members Served	1,371
Community Members Secured Employment	200
Job Retention at 6 & 12-Month Mark	70%
Participants Completing Certified Training Programs Secure Employment	80%

Senior Services

enables seniors to remain independent and continue living in their own homes for as long as possible through its Brown Bag efforts, Meals on Wheels, Social Engagement Groups and Resource and Referral Services. Spring and Fall Yard Clean-ups help homebound seniors spruce up their yards and provide additional opportunities for social interaction with the community.



Ladies from the Seniors Group preparing for a cooking class.

NUMBERS

Hot Nutritious Meals Delivered	24,141
Volunteers Delivering Food	150+
Mobile Distributions of 40,000 Lbs. of Food	24
Seniors Received Chores Assistance & Yard Clean-ups	62

Youth Services

offers after-school and summer youth programming designed to promote responsibility, respect for self, others and property. Through interactive, hands-on activities and excursions, youth experience a balance of learning and fun. The Explorer's Club offers youth fun, challenging, and interactive learning experiences in the areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), healthy living and life skills, and food science.



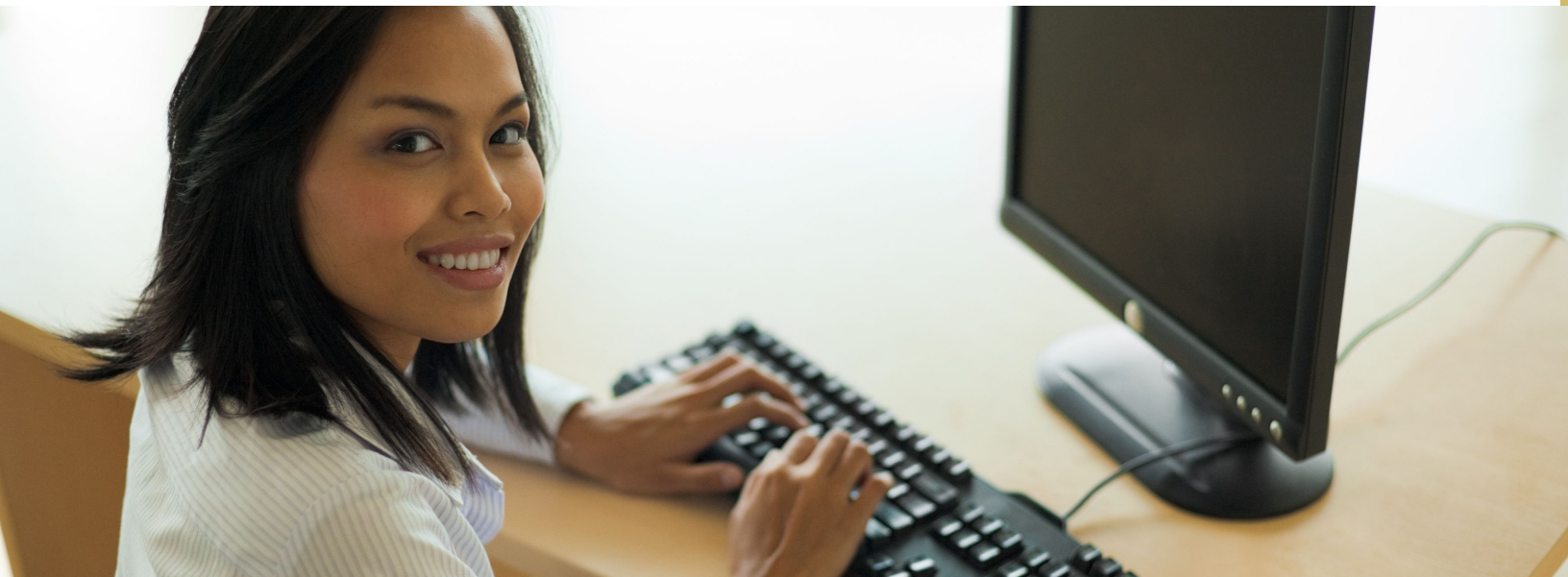
The Police Athletics League (PAL) partners with Merrick's Explorer Club.

NUMBERS

Youth Served	127
Unique Youth Programs Offered	5
Hours of Program Participation	3,000
Attendance Rate	81%

Family Services

offers a variety of programs to strengthen and promote healthy families including family case management, peer-based group supports, information and referrals, and parenting, domestic violence prevention and other educational classes and workshops.



Family Services' Intake staff provide referrals to hundreds of families in need of additional services.

NUMBERS

Families Served	420
Individuals Served	791
Domestic Violence Groups Held With 121 Participants	7
Participation in Holiday Share	498 families/1,377 children



Merrick's March Food Drive was an unprecedented success!

Empowering Individuals

Xai was 33 years old and 1 of 20 participants in the 2015 Environmental Construction Worker's Training Program. Before coming to Merrick Community Services, he had been unemployed for 3 years and was doing odd jobs. Born and raised on the East Side of Saint Paul, Xai loves his neighborhood. Xai completed the Environmental Construction Workers Training Program in April 2015. He was hired by Rainbow Incorporated as an Industrial Painter and worked on the new Viking Stadium in Minneapolis. Now, Xai is a 2nd year apprentice with the Painter's Union Local 61.

When you ask Xai if he would recommend the Construction Program to other community members, his answer is a resounding yes! "I would recommend this program to everyone. When I first met the program staff, they told me if I had a good attitude, followed the program and made it to all the classes and trainings, I would be able to

find a job and start a new career. And that is exactly what happened! If you put in the time and effort and listen to the staff, you will be successful."

XAI

Merrick's Employment Services Program conducts the **Environmental Construction Workers Training Program** annually. It is an 10-week training program for low income Saint Paul and East Metro area residents. This program includes instruction in life skills, which addresses common barriers to success in the workplace and long-term employment.

Xai really enjoyed the hands-on trainings; visiting the Union Training Centers; getting certificates for Fork Lift Training, OSHA 30 Training, First AID CPR & AED; and the trainings offered at Hub@Harding. Trainings were offered free of charge which was particularly helpful when you've been unemployed for some time. Xai said, "It's hard to improve yourself when you have no income coming in. I've always wanted to do better, just like everyone else, but it is very difficult if everyone charges and you have no money."

Has the Construction Training Program had a major impact on Xai's life? "I have a very bright future ahead of me, with the income that I am making now. I have so many new opportunities and doors opening for me and it would not have happened without Merrick Community Services – they believed in me and gave me a second chance when no one else would."



Strengthening Families

Maribel is one of those people. She is a shy young mother of two from Honduras. Maribel speaks limited English and has a part-time job. Her husband works a seasonal construction job which offers very little in the way of stable income.

During Maribel's first visit to the Food Shelf, she was asked to fill out her annual TEFAP eligibility form (in Spanish). The TEFAP form is used as an assessment tool to track household participation in government programs (SNAP, WIC, Energy Assistance, etc.) This form also prompts intake staff to make program referrals based on possible program eligibility.

Food Shelf Intake Staff noticed Maribel wasn't receiving WIC for her young children and asked her why she wasn't taking advantage of this helpful program. Maribel said, "I heard a rumor that if I sign up for government programs, my children will have to be enrolled in the US Army when they are 18."

The Food Shelf Manager, who speaks Spanish, explained to Maribel that this was simply not the case. Then she asked the SNAP Outreach Intern, who was on-site during food distribution, to help Maribel apply for WIC and assist her in determining eligibility for any other government programs that might help her support her family.

Maribel is now enrolled in the WIC program. She understands that although she may not be eligible for some federal/state programs, her United States born children are. Maribel also volunteers at the Food Shelf one day a week giving back to her community. She is a real asset to Merrick. She speaks Spanish and is able to help non-English speaking participants while they shop at the Food Shelf.

MARIBEL

Merrick's Food Shelf Program is the primary "entry point" for participation in Merrick's continuum of services. Thousands of people from households struggling with food insecurity come to the Food Shelf in search of food and find a whole host of programs that can support and strengthen their families.



Strengthening Families

With a whole summer of activities and projects planned, Merrick staff knew a welcoming and open space for young people is key to building relationships. Young people need to feel they can and do belong. **Tou, Tony** and **Tina** were still a bit uncomfortable in their new environment ... that is until the first field trip.

Partnering with the Police Athletic League (PAL), the Explorer's Club went on a bird watching excursion at Coldwater Spring. The youth were eager to be outdoors, but not so excited about bird watching. "Seriously, bird watching? At Parks and Rec, we get to go to a water park." The DNR Ranger met the group at Coldwater Spring, handed the youth binoculars and led them through the woods. The hunt was on!

At first, the DNR Ranger pointed out a few birds, mentioning what type they were, the birds' flying habits and patterns, and where they could be spotted in the Twin Cities. Eventually, she turned the youth loose to find birds by themselves. After several minutes of silence, one of the brothers shouted. "I found one!" A few seconds later, another shout

was heard; and then another.

TOU, TONY AND TINA

When Merrick's Youth Summer Programming began in June, the first registrants were 3 siblings – Tou, age 13, Tony, age 10 and Tina, age 12. Their mom registered them for the Summer Explorer's Club to change up their summer routine. Tou, Tony and Tina grew up in Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Programing. "Parks and Rec is great! But I need something different for summer. I want to challenge them more".

In the van on the way home, all the youth began to share their

experiences. Tou, Tony and Tina spoke up. Tina talked about what she learned, "and it WASN'T just about bird watching. It was about taking care of our natural habitats to make sure they will exist for generations to come". Tony noted they never had an experience like this. Tou piped in to say "the fact that it was so different is what made it so fun".

The summer rolled on with fishing, hiking, more outdoor adventures and science projects. But it was that first new experience that set the tone for the summer program. Starting something new, feeling welcome, and most importantly, everyone letting go of their fears helped make this year's Summer Explorer's Club the best one to date.



Promoting Independence

Getting older is tough. Sometimes it just sneaks up on you. Those gray hairs, the stiff joints. And, as time wears on, the most mundane of tasks can be stressful, asking for help seems silly or unnecessary. You can do it on your own. You can get by....

Mrs. M is 97 years old and lives on the East Side of St. Paul in a quaint little home near Lake Phalen. Her family is heavily involved in her life and care. Her daughter regularly checks on her, bathes her, takes her to appointments, and spends precious time with her each week. Mrs. M's other children call to check in and make trips to see her (or she flies to see them!)

Many caregivers have young children, still work full-time and/or live out of the area, but are responsible for their elderly parents' well-being. It's a generational phenomenon that America is experiencing and it is challenging. Merrick is committed to providing quality services for our community's seniors and helping to lessen the burden on their families so they can care for their elderly loved ones in other crucial ways

MRS. M

Mrs. M is a kind, friendly woman blessed with a sweet disposition. She lives on a small fixed income and receives Meals on Wheels 3 days a week. Our volunteers love taking her hot nutritious meals (and conducting a safety check at the same time.)

In addition, once a month, her daughter picks up food from Merrick's Senior Brown Bag Distribution. Mrs. M actually still does a little cooking for herself! This service saves her money, giving her the option of using these funds to cover medication or other bills.

This past fall, Mrs. M signed up for the Fall Clean-Up. She was partnered with a 5th grade Sunday school class and their teachers. Staff arrived on the scene with these rambunctious 10 year olds to find Mrs. M sitting on her back porch waiting with a plate of cookies and a smile! The kids started raking and racing each other to see who could build the biggest pile. Mrs. M soaked in the sun and the children's laughter as the piles were combined into a Mount Everest of leaves. Shyly, the children asked, "Can we jump in the pile?" Mrs. M gave them the "Of course you can!" nod of approval. And the leaves went flying!

Merrick's Senior Services Program is dedicated to providing services that enable seniors to remain independent and living in their homes for as long as they are able.



A New Home is in Merrick's Future

Merrick continues to work hard to create a new home to serve as the primary service center for residents on Saint Paul's East Side who need our help. The journey has been long, but the process, under the direction of our Executive Director and Board of Directors, has been thoughtful and thorough. We are confident we will select the location of our new permanent home this summer – a home that will best meet the needs of both the organization and the thousands of individuals and families who rely on Merrick every year. Stay tuned for more information!



Financial Highlights

The financial health of Merrick Community Services remains strong and stable. To ensure the long-term viability of our organization, Merrick Community Services aligns its fiscal policies and procedures with the standards of the Charities Review Council. We closely monitor our revenue and expenses and continue to diversify our funding streams.



Financial Summary

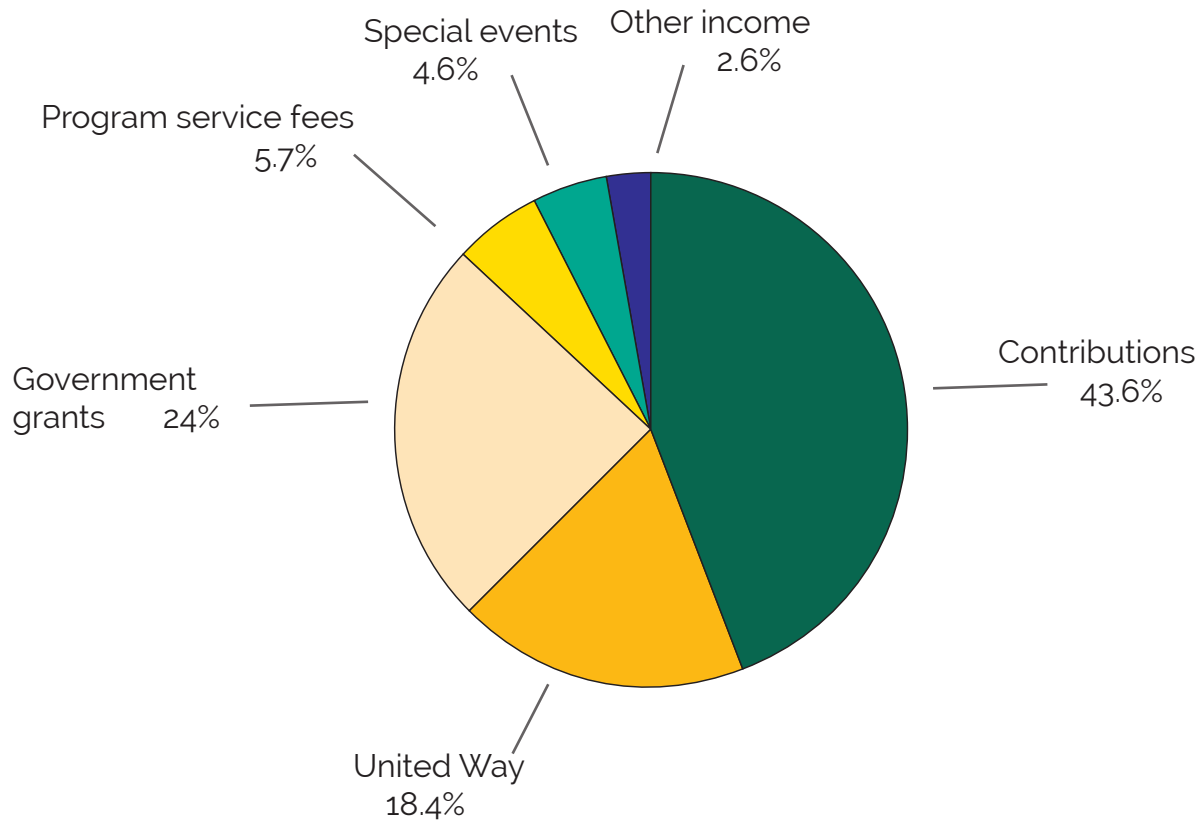
Statement of Activities

Audited Financials from Harrington, Langer and Associates for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015

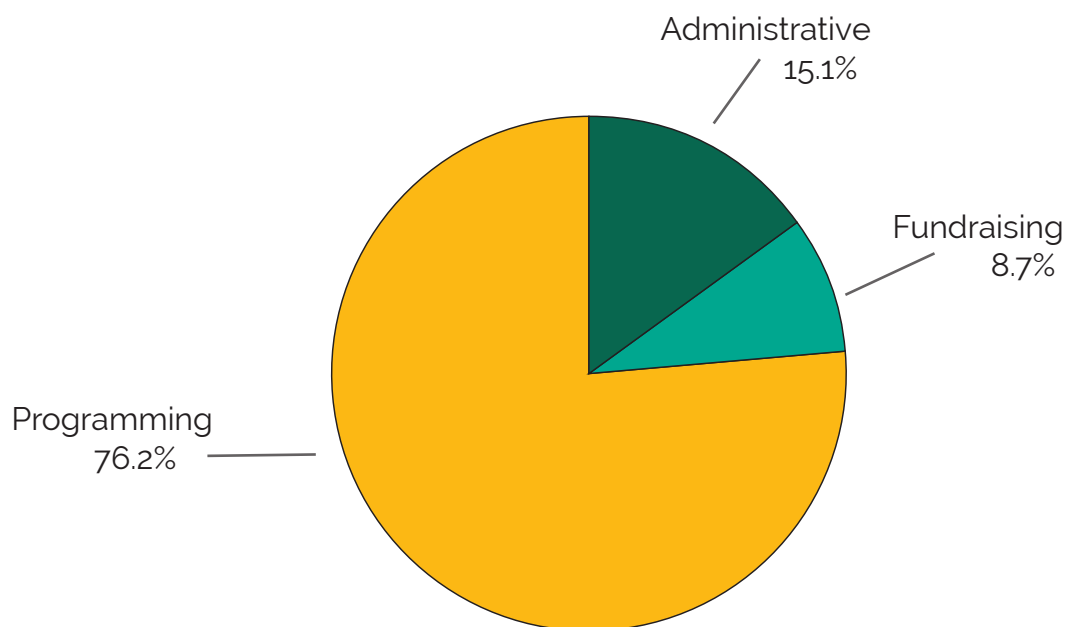
	Total 2015	Total 2014
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Support		
Contributions	\$ 666,319	\$ 595,553
United Way	280,813	285,359
Total Support	<u>947,132</u>	<u>880,912</u>
Revenue		
Government grants and contracts	367,150	485,007
Program service fees	87,397	72,139
Special events	69,682	3,150
Rental income	5,400	7,990
Investment gain	10,541	7,206
Gain on sale of property and equipment	-	344,884
Other income (loss)	39,756	(440)
Total Revenue	<u>579,926</u>	<u>919,936</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>1,527,058</u>	<u>1,800,848</u>
EXPENSES		
Program services	1,031,992	1,099,476
Capital campaign	294,440	350,040
Administrative	204,839	200,783
Fundraising and development	118,284	91,046
Total Expenses	<u>1,649,555</u>	<u>1,741,345</u>
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING	<u>1,914,548</u>	<u>1,855,045</u>
NET ASSETS, ENDING	<u>\$1,792,051</u>	<u>\$ 1,914,548</u>

	2015	2014
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS	2,131,349	2,300,867
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	8,746	13,675
OTHER ASSETS	451,495	505,902
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>2,591,590</u>	<u>2,820,444</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES	152,255	143,209
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	647,284	762,687
NET ASSETS	1,792,051	1,914,548
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>2,591,590</u>	<u>2,820,444</u>

Revenue for 2014-15 FY*



Expenses for 2014-15 FY*



* The expenses and revenues in the pie charts represent Merrick Community Services annual operations and do not include Capital Campaign revenue or expenses.

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**MERRICK
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**

Where People Count