

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-
2022





**LEARNING. EMPLOYMENT.
ASSISTANCE. PARTNERSHIP.**

MISSION STATEMENT:

WE SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN ATTAINING SELF-SUFFICIENCY BY PROVIDING SERVICES, SHARING RESOURCES, AND THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION.

OUR VALUES:

THE *RESILIENCY* OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

THE *INTEGRITY* AND *PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR* OF OUR STAFF

EACH INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHT TO *SELF-DETERMINATION*

OUR CUSTOMERS' *ENGAGEMENT* AND *ACTIVE PARTICIPATION* IN THE SERVICES RECEIVED

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE OPERATION OF *QUALITY PROGRAMS*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jeffrey R. Meyer, Esq. | Private

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Teresa DePaul | Community

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Krystyna Roberts | Community

AGENCY LEADERSHIP

Executive Director

Shelley Smith, BS, MS

Finance Director

Emily Fagle, MBA

Human Resources Director

Mary Jarvis-Caro, SHRM-CP, PHR

Program Director

Career & Family Services

Nancy Warnock, M.S.Ed.

Program Director

Head Start/Early Head Start

Patricia Salvarezza

Deputy Director

Head Start/Early Head Start

Shannon Stockwell

The L.E.A.P. Board of Directors are a group of dedicated volunteers from across our service area. The group is comprised of one-third elected public officials or their designee, one-third private sector individuals representing the interests of the community, and one-third community members who are elected to represent those under-served in the community.

This year has been a time of transition for L.E.A.P. Transition often brings with it unrest, insecurity, and anxiety, but for those who would look for it, transition offers the opportunity of new experiences, and the excitement of new challenges. The L.E.A.P. team has embraced every facet, seizing opportunities and rising to challenges as they arose.

In the last quarter of the program year, the agency experienced a change in leadership as the Executive Director departed and an Interim Executive Director stepped in to fill the gap. Throughout this time, the Interim Executive Director led the agency with stability and confidence while agency leadership and the Board of Directors worked diligently to find new permanent leadership. A new Executive Director was chosen before the end of the quarter.

Throughout the year, L.E.A.P. faced continued challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff pivoted to cover all duties and continue services during times of staff shortages due to illness, and to maintain the highest level of service whether virtual or in-person. They did all of this with giving, cheerful hearts, protecting the integrity of L.E.A.P.'s programs and services, and exemplifying resilience to families and individuals served.

This period of transition showcased the tenacity, perseverance, and heart of the L.E.A.P. team, qualities that establish a firm foundation on which L.E.A.P. may build for years to come.

Shelley Smith, BS, MS
Executive Director



**L.E.A.P.
GIVE, GROW.**



AGENCY OVERVIEW

HEAD START/ EARLY HEAD START

The Office of Head Start (OHS) prepares young children to succeed in school through local programs. Head Start / Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is a federally funded program for income-eligible families with children prenatal to age 5. The program promotes children's development through services delivered in a center-based or home-based setting. These services employ a whole family approach to support early learning, health, and family well-being. L.E.A.P. HS/EHS is funded to serve 223 Head Start children ages 3-5, and 118 infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Our program operates as a licensed Child Care Center through NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). All centers are in compliance with OCFS policies and regulations.

L.E.A.P. Head Start / Early Head Start prepares our county's most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and beyond. We partner with parents, children's primary educators, equipping them to guide their children into lifelong success. This is accomplished through delivery of services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being.

Our program supports children's growth and development in positive learning environments through a variety of services, which include:

- **EARLY LEARNING:** Children's readiness for school and beyond is fostered through individualized learning experiences. Through relationships with adults and peers, along with curriculum-based instruction, children are engaged in active learning experiences that meet their developmental needs. Children progress in physical, cognitive, social/emotional, language, literacy, and math skills.
- **HEALTH:** Each child's perceptual, motor, and physical development is supported to permit them to fully explore and function in their environment. All children receive health and developmental screenings, nutritious meals, oral health, and mental health support. Our program connects families with medical, dental, and mental health services to ensure that children are receiving the services they need.
- **FAMILY WELL-BEING:** Parents and families are supported in achieving their own goals, such as stable housing, continued education, and financial security. Our program supports and strengthens parent-child relationships and engages families around children's learning and development.

CAREER AND FAMILY SERVICES

Family Services

L.E.A.P.'s Family Services Program supports income-eligible residents of Washington County when they need it most, working to prevent a hardship from becoming a life-changing crisis. Our Food Pantry provides three days of meals (three meals a day) for every individual in the household. In the midst of COVID-19, we were awarded a grant that enabled us to assist families by providing essential items not available through SNAP that most food pantries cannot carry. This grant offered us the opportunity to stock cleaning products, hygiene and paper products, diapers, and wipes, filling a crucial gap in services.

L.E.A.P.'s community garden started off strong with donations from our community partners, supplying plants, seeds, and other gardening materials. L.E.A.P. provided garden beds, tools, water, and soil. The Community Garden Program helps families put healthy, fresh vegetables and fruits on their table, while developing life skills through workshops on gardening and the nutritional importance of produce.

The Transportation Program serves both Office of the Aging (OFA) seniors and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)-qualified individuals who need transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, pharmacy, and other life-sustaining activities.

CAREER SERVICES

Workforce Development

Throughout the program year, L.E.A.P.'s Employment Counselors and the Assistant Director of Employment and Training diligently served adults, dislocated workers, youth, and county businesses.

L.E.A.P. partnered with local leaders, agencies, chambers of commerce, schools and area colleges, and training facilities, to assist as many community members as possible. When we were able, we implemented COVID-safety protocols so we could assist individuals in person with basic and individualized services.

L.E.A.P. Career Center assists individuals striving to obtain a high school equivalency (GED). On January 1, 2022 the TASC (Test of Assessing Secondary Completion) again became the GED. Anyone who took the TASC and passed any testing section will be given credit toward their GED. Anyone who completed and passed high school Regents classes will not have to take those particular component tests in the new GED. The GED now consists of 4 sections: Science, Social, Math, and Reading/Writing.

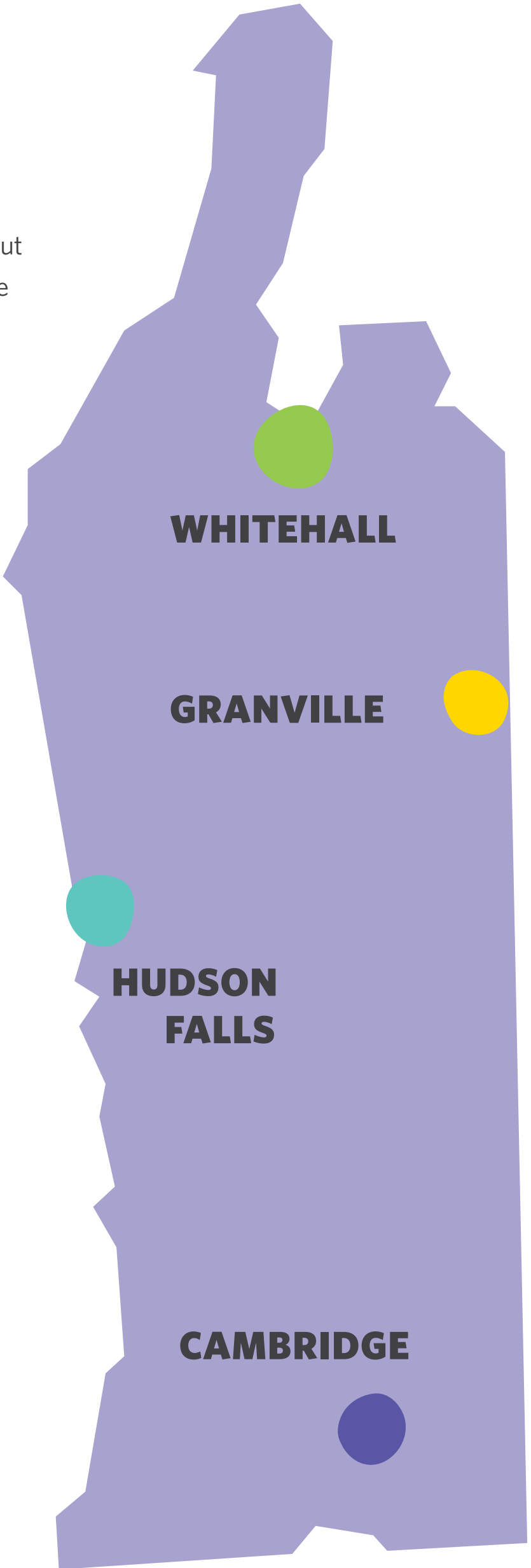
Youth ages 16-24 and not attending school are encouraged to complete their GED. LEAP offers in-school work experience for qualifying students currently attending school. All students in our GED program and in-school work experience are offered the opportunity to obtain a job and learn essential job skills through work experience job placements. Work experience placements are based on the interests of the individual, their abilities, and proximity to where they live. ●

HEAD START/ EARLY HEAD START

L.E.A.P. operates five-licensed Head Start centers throughout Washington County, providing a full array of comprehensive services to children and their families. All centers and program operations are regulated and reviewed by:

- New York State Office of Children and Family Services
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services—Administration for Children and Families—Office of Head Start

Our program operates two different service options: Home-Based and Center-Based. The Center-Based option provides HS/EHS services in a classroom setting for either a full or a part-day schedule. Our center locations are Hudson Falls (Dix Avenue and St. Paul’s Drive), Granville, Whitehall, and Cambridge. Early Head Start runs 52 weeks while Head Start operates September-June. Children and their families also have the option of receiving services directly in their home. The Home-Based option services all of Washington County. Home Visitors provide a weekly 1.5 hour visit; they recognize that parents are their child’s first and lifelong educator. Home Visitors provide parents with the resources and support to build skills to achieve this goal. Children enrolled in the Home-Based option have an opportunity to interact and socialize on scheduled days at a center. ●



WHITEHALL

GRANVILLE

**HUDSON
FALLS**

CAMBRIDGE

WASHINGTON COUNTY



FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

L.E.A.P. HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START

During the 2021-2022 program year, L.E.A.P. Head Start / Early Head Start programs continued to provide quality services for children and families while still adjusting to COVID.

L.E.A.P. is funded to serve 223 Head Start children and 118 children and/or pregnant women. In the 2021-2022 program year, the program served a cumulative total of 184 in Head Start and 147 in Early Head Start.

ENROLLMENT

	HEAD START	EARLY HEAD START
FOSTER CARE	4%	2%
HOMELESSNESS	1%	3%
SNAP/TANF/SSE	10%	14%
INCOME ELIGIBLE	54%	59%
ALICE	23%	14%
<small>(Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed)</small>		
OVER INCOME (131+)	8%	8%

MEDICAL CARE

INDIVIDUAL MEDICAL PRIMARY PROVIDER	99%	99%
UP-TO-DATE IMMUNIZATION	96%	100%
DENTAL PRIMARY PROVIDER	91%	58%
DENTAL EXAM	65%	N/A

VOLUNTEERS

# OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES	256	179
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SCHOOL READINESS

School Readiness is a priority in our program, not only for children, but for the entire family. Academic preparation occurs daily in the Head Start/ Early Head Start setting. Our program utilizes Creative Curriculum through Teaching Strategies for our center-based curriculum, and Growing Great Kids, Inc. for our home-visiting curriculum. Creative Curriculum defines what to teach; why the content and skills are appropriate expectations for young children, and where, when, and how to teach effectively. Teachers and home-based visitors use individualized child development data from Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) assessment reports to plan and guide instruction. The DRDP focuses on the strengths of each child rather than the deficits. The Head Start program completes the assessment, three times in a program year while the Head Start program completes the assessment four times per program year. Following each assessment period, teachers and home-based visitors meet with parents to share their child's outcomes. This provides parents with thorough information about their child's developmental progress and allows them the opportunity to take part in their child's school readiness plan. The education staff incorporates the parent/family into the planning process for each child in our program.

Growing Great Kids, Inc. mission is to partner with parents to reduce their stress and grow the essential parenting and life skills that will empower them to provide their children with a safe, loving home, and the inner strength to reach their highest developmental potential. This is accomplished through curriculum and other tools focused on building the competencies of parents.

Growing Great Kids for Preschoolers (GGK PS) is a strength-based, partnership approach to building nurturing parenting skills while optimizing developmental outcomes for children 3 to 5 years. GGK PS provides home visitors and parents with the knowledge and skills needed to support preschool-aged children in forming:

- **SECURE ATTACHMENT RELATIONSHIPS**
- **STRONG SELF-ESTEEM**
- **CURIOUS MINDS CAPABLE OF CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING**
- **PROFICIENT RECEPTIVE AND EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION**
- **COOPERATIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS**
- **AGE-APPROPRIATE IMPULSE CONTROL**
- **HABITS FOUNDATIONAL TO MAKING HEALTHY LIFE CHOICES**
- **SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS**

Social and emotional preparations are made to assist children with their transition to kindergarten. We follow the positive behavioral support curriculum which teaches children how to be a friend, what expectations are followed during certain times of the routine, taking turns, and expressing needs. Head Start/Early Head Start addresses transition planning in many ways. For example, we:

- **MAKE ROUTINE CHANGES** that help develop skills which are expected in kindergarten, such as: sitting for longer stories, raising hands before talking, standing in line, opening milk cartons, carrying a lunch tray, etc.
- **GO ON A VIRTUAL VISIT** to the public school if offered.
- **READ BOOKS** about kindergarten.
- **SUPPORT THE CHILD AND FAMILY** with the transition of service, if applicable (moving from CPSE to CSE).



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The families we serve are our most important partners. The parents and guardians of L.E.A.P. Head Start/Early Head Start are encouraged to participate in our program by goal setting, attending workshops, parent classes, home-base socializations, joining program committees, classroom activities and serving on the Policy Council. Our families have a voice in decisions about how the program spends money, enrollment selection, and how the program works within the community.

HEALTH

Head Start is a holistic program that includes health education. We provide families with educational opportunities on the importance of physical, dental, and mental health. We strive to improve the overall health of our community. Per New York regulations, every child enrolled in Head Start is required to obtain a physical and have up-to-date immunizations before they can attend our centers. If a child does not have a medical or dental primary provider, our staff helps to connect them to resources. Through our community partnership with Hudson Headwaters Health Network, their traveling dental program provided students with preventative dental services at their local Head Start centers. ●



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



CLASS

We utilize the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to monitor our school readiness impact. CLASS assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based preschool classrooms. It evaluates three domains of interaction:

- **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ASSESSES THE DEGREE TO WHICH TEACHERS ESTABLISH A POSITIVE CLIMATE IN THEIR CLASSROOM THROUGH THEIR EVERYDAY INTERACTIONS.**
- **CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION ASSESSES CLASSROOM ROUTINES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR, TIME, AND ATTENTION IN THE CLASSROOM.**
- **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT ASSESSES THE WAYS IN WHICH TEACHERS IMPLEMENT THE CURRICULUM TO PROMOTE COGNITIVE AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT.**

These domains are based on research that suggests that engaging environments and effective interactions between children and adults are the foundation for all learning in early childhood classrooms. The Office of Head Start utilizes the CLASS tool during federal program reviews to assess the quality of teacher effectiveness.

In September, the Office of Head Start announced that it will not be conducting CLASS reviews for the 2022 Federal Review. Rather than conducting a CLASS review, Office of Head Start will be selecting programs to participate in a CLASS pilot that will involve recording teachers teaching in their classroom. The data collected from the pilot program will be used for professional development purposes as NHSA (National Head Start Association) prepares for supporting and the intentional training of classroom staff. At this time, our agency has not been notified as being selected for this pilot program.

For the program year 2021-2022, our four CLASS reliable staff were able to complete at least one observation of each of the Head Start classrooms. The observations are used for professional development of the classroom staff to ensure we are planning for and providing the best learning environments for our preschool children. Based on the observations that were able to be completed this program year, our program scored above the 2020 National average range in all domains (2020 is the most current data available due the impact of COVID-19).

6.2 EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT

5.86 CLASSROOM
ORGANIZATION

3.99 INSTRUCTIONAL
SUPPORT

In comparing our scores with the Office of Head Start CLASS descriptive Statistics 2020, our program scored in the highest 10% for Instructional Support. In addition, our CLASS scores in each of the domains were consistently higher than the median national score. ●



CAREER & FAMILY SERVICES

2022: TRANSPORTATION, FOOD PANTRY, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

CLOTHING/COAT CLOSET

Emergency Services assists residents with rent, utility, heating fuel, prescriptions, and winter apparel. This program has helped keep many residents in their homes, with heat and electricity. Our Coat Distribution Program provided **62 individuals** with warm winter coats to protect against dangerous winter weather.

TRANSPORTATION

In 2021-2022, we provided **1,927** rides to those qualified for this assistance. Our drivers covered **30,639 miles** while engaging with individuals and developing relationships that support safety and well-being.

FOOD PANTRY

Over the last year, our pantry helped combat food insecurity in Washington County through providing **662 households, or 1750 household members**, with healthy foods. Of those households, **164** were families visiting our food pantry for the first time. L.E.A.P., was able to provide emergency food delivery to qualified households. Over this program year we provided **food deliveries to 163 families** who were not able to get to the pantry for desperately needed food or supplies.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The summer of 2022 saw **10 families** enjoy our Community Garden.

EDUCATION/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

This year, the Employment and Training department served **387 adults and 83 dislocated workers**. They provided **258 Basic Services** which included sharing resources, providing computer or phone access, and faxing or copying information. The Employment Counselors delivered **227 Individual Services** to Washington County residents including workshop (both one-on-one and virtual), resume assistance, help with tough interview or application questions, job search information, career interest inventories, and training opportunities. Training was provided to eligible clients and covered a wide range of career tracks such as commercial driver's license, licensed practical nurse, dental assistant, welding, certified recovery peer advocate, EKG technician, machine tool technology, and phlebotomy.

This year, L.E.A.P. had **10 students in the TASC program**. Three students passed the exam and graduated from the program. L.E.A.P. enrolled **33 youth, ages 14-21, in the 8-week Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**. SYEP allows youth to work from the end of June until September while providing coaching and general support. This year, 28 youth completed the program.



2022 IN REVIEW

FULL AGENCY FINANCIALS

	ENERGY SERVICES	EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	HEADSTART	HOME AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	TOTAL	MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	TOTALS 2022	2021
PERSONNEL	\$2,269	\$187,928	\$2,729,749	\$259,238	\$3,179,184	\$279,843	\$3,459,026	\$3,322,117
PAYROLL TAXES AND FRINGE BENEFITS	\$321	\$48,608	\$922,826	\$43,388	\$1,015,143	\$93,682	\$1,108,825	\$955,751
CLIENT BENEFICIARY PAYMENTS	--	\$198,721	\$350	\$20,402	\$219,473	--	\$219,473	\$168,323
SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT*	\$2,383	\$5,840	\$310,040	\$16,694	\$334,958	\$7,208	\$342,166	\$374,141
IN-KIND EXPENSE**	--	\$30,939	\$74,806	\$35,042	\$140,787	\$402,845	\$543,632	\$568,462
OCCUPANCY	\$2,345	\$7,597	\$342,342	\$3,040	\$355,324	\$8,801	\$364,125	\$307,744
INSURANCE	\$729	\$2,474	\$44,351	\$8,975	\$56,529	\$8,822	\$65,351	\$64,534
TRANSPORTATION	\$90	--	\$45,313	\$11,289	\$253,805	--	\$56,962	\$58,927
CONTACTS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$23	\$34,223	\$177,868	\$41,691	\$59,515	\$51,420	\$305,224	\$220,381
TRAINING & TRAVEL	--	\$1,882	\$57,075	\$558	\$125,104	\$4,429	\$63,944	\$79,383
DEPRECIATION	\$2,200	--	\$101,529	\$21,375	\$55,123	--	\$125,104	\$150,889
OTHER EXPENSE	--	\$1,724	\$48,105	\$5,293	--	\$5,819	\$60,941	\$34,386
BAD DEBT	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL EXPENSES**	\$10,359	\$519,935	\$4,854,355	\$466,685	\$5,851,635	\$862,870	\$6,714,505	\$6,305,039
TOTAL REVENUES**	\$19,189	\$518,387	\$5,234,392	\$553,904	\$6,325,873	\$511,538	\$6,837,411	\$6,446,720

*Does not include Capital Equipment

**Does not include In-Kind Volunteer Wages

***Does not include adjustment to account for change in funded status of defined pension plan



PRIORITY #1

AGENCY BRANDING AND IDENTITY

- Execute Public Face of L.E.A.P.—Continue to build the message of L.E.A.P. within the community.
 1. L.E.A.P. as an organization worthy of giving.
 2. Community Engagement- L.E.A.P. as the provider of choice, L.E.A.P. as the employer of choice, and L.E.A.P. as a recognized community leader in the conversation on poverty resources and development.

Progress: L.E.A.P. has developed a robust presence on various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. We have increased our physical presence at outreach and community events, and our participation in local Chambers of Commerce.

PRIORITY #2

STAFF RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND DEVELOPMENT

- One Agency Focus.
 - Whole family approach to service delivery.
- Maintain Salary/Benefit Equity .
 - Internal: Ensure that our salaries for similar positions and duties are comparable .
 - External: Maintain salary equity within industry networks and keep up with mandated increases in New York State minimum wage .
- Retention Focus—improve retention rates and reduce long-term vacancies.

Progress: L.E.A.P. continues in-agency collaboration to ensure each family is served as completely as possible.

L.E.A.P. leadership consistently reevaluates duties and compensation to ensure the compensation for each role is appropriate and competitive.

L.E.A.P. leadership has leveraged opportunities to provide incentives for retention and recruitment, and offered sign-on bonuses for all qualified positions.

PRIORITY #3

PROGRAMMING INFRASTRUCTURE & OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

- Data Capacity: Improve data collection to reduce redundant entry of client information in multiple systems.
- Staff Functions: Identifying opportunities for cross-training, consolidation, and cooperation across programs.
- Maintain Operational Excellence.
- Data-driven Strategic Decisions: Improve data collection to focus on outcomes. Use data to drive programming decisions and budgets.

Progress: L.E.A.P. is reevaluating the systems in place for collecting data and considering one system that would collect and track data across all programs (including administrative functions - hiring, recruiting, retention data).

PRIORITY #4

FUND DEVELOPMENT

- Decrease dependence on current Grant Funding.
- Creation of Public/Private Partnerships to address service needs.
- Maintain Operational Excellence.
- Cultivation of Culture of Giving—donations and in-kind at all levels of the organization.

Progress: L.E.A.P. is reengaging our Fund Development Committee and we continue to generate private donations from an annual appeal process (launched in 2021).

Community partnerships and relationships are being leveraged to create a base of sponsors and donors.



L.E.A.P. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & PROGRESS



LEARNING • EMPLOYMENT • ASSISTANCE • PARTNERSHIP.

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