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Dear Friends:

As People’s Emergency Center nears its 45th anniversary of service to families experiencing homelessness, and 25th anniversary of providing affordable housing and community development in West Philadelphia, it seems a good time to reflect on the past while planning for future impact.

In this report, you will see the progress that PEC has made from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 in the following areas:

- Housing and programs for parenting youth and women with children experiencing homelessness,
- Building community opportunity, employment and financial services, small business support, and arts and culture collaborations,
- Driving change through research, leadership and policy.

These components support our mission of Nurturing Families, Strengthening Neighborhoods, and Driving Change. We know that success in affordable housing does not occur in a vacuum. To weave success into housing we must provide resources and services where necessary, support the assets and needs of the community around the units, and continue to guide policymakers to plan for and strengthen the development of affordable housing for all with the decisions that they make.

Whether you are a volunteer, donor, neighbor, corporate representative, private foundation staff, collaborative partner, government funder or policymaker, your support is vital to the success of our programs, families, and communities.

We are humbled to be trusted with the care of PEC, and with the stewardship of your investment of time, resources, talent and funding in our mission to make homelessness a rare and brief experience for the families that we serve. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

Mike Verrill
Chair, PEC Board of Directors

Kathy Desmond
President, PEC
Emergency Housing

PEC emergency housing consists of six dormitory rooms with common bathrooms, a cafeteria, visitor’s lounge, library, and computer lab. The program served households referred to us by the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services. Seventy-two households, made up of 72 women and 131 dependents, resided in emergency housing from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. PEC also served nine teens referred to us by the Philadelphia Department of Human Services during this time.

All heads of household in emergency and transitional housing were employed or participated in a program. PEC offered several educational opportunities on-site for women and youth with children experiencing homelessness including parenting education, computer skills, employment training, conflict resolution, counseling and lifeskills programs. Youth heads of household accessed education supports for school and GED testing in addition to the general menu of programs.

PEC provided the households who lived in our temporary housing with food, clothing, linens, healthcare, and school supplies. PEC’s counselor analyzed intake assessments and made recommendations to families and case managers as families planned their next steps in securing permanent housing. Stable and safe shelter played a significant role in each family’s journey from homelessness to increased security, but housing alone was not the only service that most of our families needed.

Donna’s Story: Donna (we changed her name to protect her privacy) is a 24-year-old African American mother with two children under the age of four. Donna and her dependents arrived at PEC in February 2015 after her mother evicted them.

At intake, staff observed that Donna struggled to interact with her children in a positive manner. As part of her case management goals, she agreed to attend parenting classes at PEC’s Center for Parenting and Early Childhood Education (CPECE). She learned about different parenting styles and the best way to compassionately deal with her children and still get the outcome she wanted. CPECE staff also completed an Ages and Stages evaluation and determined that her children were in need of speech therapy. Her case manager referred her to an external early intervention program for children with developmental delays.

Donna lacked family support and had no time for self-care, so her case manager also connected her to respite care services at Baring House. When Donna decided that it was time to address her underlying mental health challenges in order to provide the most stable life possible for her children, her case manager connected her to
PEC’s counseling program, where she participated in one-on-one and group sessions.

Almost a year after intake, Donna successfully moved to an apartment. She received a financial assist from two grants that PEC secured on her behalf, which enabled her to buy a refrigerator for her home and pay for the security deposit. PEC also referred her to The Furniture Bank of Philadelphia and case management services through another agency for a year, to increase her chance of success in living independently for the first time.

**Transitional Housing**

_Gloria’s Place_ transitional housing served 18 families headed by young women between the ages of 16 and 24 from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This housing program helped youth with families prepare for independent living in an apartment in the community. They occupied single-family units with private bathrooms, and ate meals in the on-site cafeteria. The living units provided privacy while still having the ready access to case management and program staff that young people require. _At Rowan House, 38 families headed by women of other ages lived in transitional housing from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016._ Each unit had a living space, bathroom, and kitchenette. Families in these units also had access to certified case managers and programs tailored to address their issues.

PEC’s transitional housing programs and moving fund helped these families to overcome barriers to securing permanent housing, setting them up for sustainable success in the future. Each moving cost individually (security deposit, utility arrearages, furniture, moving) can be prohibitive for a family. We had a substantial number of residents with large utility arrearages, which was an impediment to them securing permanent housing. Staff selected 35 participants for funding to pay their past utility debts and improve their credit scores, to help them with the security deposits required for permanent housing, and to defray moving expenses.

_Forty-four families – 67% of all families in our housing – made the transition to permanent housing from our emergency and transitional housing from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016._ These families achieved this measure of stability despite a freeze on new housing vouchers while the City of Philadelphia and Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) relocated hundreds of residents from a large high-rise building that PHA demolished as part of a neighborhood revitalization initiative.
**Diana’s Story:** When Diana (we changed her name to protect her privacy) arrived at PEC with her two young children, she was unemployed and had not registered for any public benefits for her family. She also lacked all of the necessary documents to be able to move into any permanent housing, such as identification and social security cards. PEC’s case manager assisted her with obtaining identification documents, school uniform vouchers and transportation benefits for students experiencing homelessness; and with enrolling in public financial and health insurance benefits.

At intake, the counselor recommended her for internal and external mental health resources to support her stability. Diana participated in a variety of programs in PEC’s housing continuum in order to advance her goals for her family. She participated in lifeskills workshops; counseling; parenting classes; and on-site medical services with residents from Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. Diana’s school age children participated in a tutoring program. She enrolled in PEC’s Center for Employment and Training programs, for benefits access, financial counseling, employment training, and job placement assistance. Diana demonstrated a great deal of growth during her time at PEC. She obtained employment, put money into savings, enrolled her children in schools where they flourished and finally moved into permanent supportive housing.

- **Rowan House opened in 1997,** supported by Rena Rowan Foundation for the Homeless. During this fiscal year, PEC began a project of rehabilitating the units.

- **In fiscal year 2016,** we remodeled six of the 26 units, replacing floor tile, bathroom fixtures, kitchen appliances, and countertops. Unit transformations are continuing through fiscal year 2017 and 2018.

- **Supporters of the rehabilitation project included** Community Clothes Charity, First Niagara Bank (Now KeyBank), and Citizens Bank.

- **Our families are grateful for the new items provided to them by these funders,** as well as for the incredible founding support of Rena Rowan Damone, CoreStates (now Wells Fargo), and The Rena Rowan Foundation for the Homeless.
The permanent supportive housing program served formerly homeless families with a documented special need (serious mental illnesses or other disability). **There were 120 families in our permanent supportive housing program from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.** Each family maintained connections to case management, programming and resources, including guidance in running a household and being a good neighbor; assistance with finding, keeping, and advancing in a job; and follow-up services for health care, mental healthcare, childcare, and drug and alcohol problems. Services were strength-based, trauma-informed, grounded in best practices for social work, and solution-focused.

**Walter’s Story**
Walter’s family (his name has been changed to protect his privacy) experienced homelessness when his relationship ended with the mother of his son. Although Walter and his son were able to shelter temporarily with relatives, he experienced several episodes of depression, triggered by facing single parenthood while trying to find appropriate housing and hold down his full-time job. Finally, there was an opening in PEC’s permanent supportive housing program and he moved into his own apartment. Then, Walter lost the job where he had worked steadily for nine years. He entered a severe depression. His PEC case manager referred Walter to a community-based mental health provider to address his depression. The case manager also helped him to apply for and obtain unemployment benefits, Medical Assistance, SNAP benefits, and utility bill grants. She provided training in creating a household budget. With a stable housing situation, Walter was able to accept the case manager’s referral to a program to help him obtain his high school diploma and prepare to take college courses.

The case manager connected Walter to PEC’s Center for Employment and Training. Upon completion of the job readiness class, he was able to obtain full-time employment as a warehouse worker. While Walter continues on his educational journey, he is working with PEC’s Financial Counselor to improve his financial position with the goal of owning his own home in the next two years.
PEC’s Center for Parenting and Early Childhood Education (CPECE) **provided parenting education and support to 81 women and 170 children from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.** Despite the transient nature of this population and the complex circumstances that many of our program participants have experienced, **this year 68 participants improved their parenting skills.** Participants benefitted from one-on-one, parent-child interaction sessions, designed to encourage and foster healthy, consistent attachment between mothers and their children. These parents engaged in trauma focused, psycho-educational parent education workshops; individual parent coaching sessions; parent and child reading activities; art classes and children’s health workshops. The parenting education program is a culturally competent parenting education curriculum, facilitated by Youth Service Inc. CPECE worked with a Certified Family Educator and Institute for Family Professionals facilitator to offer a series of trauma focused parent education workshops to participants in our CPECE program.

CPECE also offered the Family Engagement Program to residents and their families. The Family Engagement Program provided structured, family focused, educational and recreational activities for parents and children to engage in together. Created to foster and encourage healthy and responsive attachment between the parent and child, and support and strengthen the family unit, the Family Engagement Program was open to all residents in our emergency, transitional and permanent housing programs.

**Tori’s Story**
Tori (we changed her name to protect her privacy), age 16 and mother of two children, was living with her mother and her siblings. When her mother lost their housing, they resorted to living in their car for several weeks. Tori’s children at this time were four weeks old and 18 months old. Tori contacted the Department of Human Services for help, and DHS placed her at PEC.

Tori struggled with the responsibility of parenting two children at such a young age, but always demonstrated patience and affection with her children. She participated in CPECE workshops on parenting, lifeskills, conflict resolution, job readiness, and more. Eager to learn more about nurturing her young children, Tori frequently sought out CPECE staff to ask questions about parenting and her daughters’ development. CPECE staff provided her with information on caring for her children, as well as new clothes, bottles, cups and diapers as needed.

With the help of her case manager, Tori enrolled in online school to complete high school and earn her diploma. Tori passed her classes and positioned herself to graduate. Her daughters met developmental milestones and thrived. Shortly after reaching age 17, Tori was legally emancipated and began looking forward to moving to a place that she and her children can call home.
CHOP ART
PEC and CPECE continued our long-standing partnership with the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s (CHOP) Homeless Health Initiative (HHI). Physicians and social workers from CHOP-HHI facilitated art activities and children’s health and mothers.

PENN LITERACY NETWORK
The Penn Literacy Network and PEC implemented a pilot Healthy Reading, Healthy Eating program for families with children from ages 3 to 10. The focus of the program was increasing literacy skills in a family context, as well as promoting good nutrition. Each family received a “family library” and a Family Reading Guide, written by The Penn Literacy Network, when they began the program.
Reach and Partnerships

The Center for Employment and Training (CET) at PEC provided income support, financial counseling, employment training and placement services for PEC residents and the surrounding Promise Zone neighborhoods of Belmont, Mantua, West Powelton, Saunders Park and Mill Creek; and the Philadelphia metro region. CET was a BenePhilly site and an agent for the Utility Emergency Service Fund. CET also hosted a Financial Empowerment Center operated by Clarifi. New employment and training participants were encouraged to take advantage of all of the CET services.

Training

This year, CET offered 13 cohort-style courses. Using this model helped our participants to boost their self-esteem by building relationships with peers who are also facing employment challenges. In addition to Career Readiness Training, CET offered three professional development tracks during the program year: ServSafe®, Customer Service and Sales, and Microsoft® Office Specialist. The ServSafe® program was the most popular track, and produced three cohorts during the program year, the first in partnership with Drexel University.

Employment Services

We continued to meet with participants after they completed Career Readiness Training to assist with their job search, and helped 45 participants secure employment from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. We also met with participants for 18 months after they secured employment to offer follow-up coaching, income support and financial counseling services. Ongoing mentoring, coaching and advising were critical to helping participants keep the job that they worked so hard to get.

Lloyd’s Story

Lloyd is one of the first graduates of our ServSafe® Culinary Fundamentals course. He was an exceptional student, earning the confidence and respect of his instructors and fellow students. Upon completion of the program, he immediately obtained full-time employment as a Line Cook with Hip City Veg in West Philadelphia. This past fall, he accepted a second position as Line Cook with EATCafé. Through hard work, Lloyd has been able to accomplish his goals of reducing his debt and having his driver’s license reinstated. In April 2017, he celebrated one year of continuous employment at Hip City Veg.

Lloyd is working and saving towards a car and homeownership in the next five years. Lloyd continues to come to CET as part of our ongoing Career Development program and to inquire about other services. He also visits regularly to provide encouragement to current students.
STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS

The PEC Community Development Corporation, our community development arm, employed strategies that responded to community needs by building on neighborhood assets to develop affordable and mixed-income housing options, create wealth, and improve the quality of life for all West Philadelphia residents.

Lancaster Avenue

PEC continued to work with numerous property owners and potential new businesses to fill vacant commercial spaces on Lancaster Avenue. This past year we assisted six new businesses, which created 19 new jobs. With a focus on bringing additional resources and youth programming to the neighborhood, PEC strategically attracted several nonprofit organizations to Lancaster Avenue – including Neighborhood Bike Works, Mighty Writers, and Tiny WPA. This strategy created a hub of organizations that collaborate with PEC and each other to engage youth, provide job opportunities, and further enhance quality of life in and around Lancaster Avenue. PEC also teamed up for the second year with The Food Trust to host Night Market on Lancaster Avenue. This event took place on August 6, 2015, with over 20,000 people flocking to our neighborhood. Neighbors and visitors alike indulged in food from over 80 mobile vendors and enjoyed entertainment from local West Philly artists and musicians. The Philadelphia Department of Commerce provided financial support for the event.

Digital Inclusion

PEC’s Center for Digital Inclusion & Technology engaged over 80 local youth in its after-school programs, and we exceeded our goal of improving computer skills for over 95% of those participants. All teenagers in the Teen Technology Network participated in the Workready program as paid interns. The Fall 2015 cohort of students presented their final work in a technology showcase – Art(Official) Intelligence – which took place December 16th at Indigo Bleu Cultural Center. The youth exhibited photography, videos, music, food stands, and fashion design. Over 100 neighbors and parents came out to the event. Our ongoing partnership with the ACE After-School Program at Martha Washington Elementary allowed us to launch Digital Village, a new program for 1st and 2nd graders and their parents to work together using iPads for literacy building and media making.
Art and Placemaking

The 9th Annual Lancaster Avenue Jazz and Arts Festival brought more than 3,000 people on July 18, 2015 to Saunders Park Greene and the Lancaster Avenue communities. The lineup of musicians included headliner Sonny Fortune and performances from Vince Turnbull, Sistah’s Layin On Hands, Karen Smith, and others, with special performances from two local youth groups – the Community Steel Drum Youth Band and the Unique Miracles Drill Team.

Neighborhood Time Exchange activated PEC’s artist studio storefront located at 4017 Lancaster Avenue throughout the year. The studio engaged 15 artists and a community liaison in the completion of over 80 resident-led community service projects, closing during this fiscal year.

Housing

PEC successfully rehabbed two affordable homeownership properties that moderate-income households (earning 120 percent of the area median income or less) purchased. PEC leveraged the value of the properties to the project as well as $175,000 in Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds from the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. PEC was also fortunate to receive $70,000 for this project through the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation’s Priority Markets Initiative. This year also saw the groundbreaking of 4050 Apartments, a 20-unit new construction development project located at 4050 Haverford Avenue in West Philadelphia. The design for these apartments for low-income artists included amenities conducive for artmaking: flexible open layouts, natural light and high ceilings. The project also included a community room with space to accommodate workshops and exhibitions.
Engaging at-risk youth continues to be a priority for PEC, with 21 teens hired part-time through the Community Connectors program. These teens helped implement numerous community-led initiatives throughout the year, including PEC’s weekly food cupboard, the uGO Community Fitness Program, and the creation of a new mini-playground along Lancaster Avenue. Support for our Community Connectors came from Philadelphia LISC, the Philadelphia Foundation, and the Division of Housing and Community Development.

The West Philadelphia Action for Early Learning initiative continued to build momentum, with weekly community dinners at Drexel’s Dornsife Center for parents and caregivers to discuss early childhood education options. A special “Pre-K for PA” event featuring Governor Wolf was held on February 4, 2016. Drexel University collaborated with PEC as the lead agency conducting community outreach.

PEC also launched monthly Men’s Coffee Talks to explore ways of integrating available resources into places where men of color congregate in our communities. This initiative, led by our Neighborhood Advisory Committee, drew upwards of 15 men each month, who came together to brainstorm ways to empower disenfranchised black men and help them address issues related to poverty, mental health, addiction, and unemployment. In May, the Men’s Coffee Talk incorporated a successful Neighborhood Resource Fair, which drew over 100 people.
2 new affordable homeownership units sold to income-eligible families

3 homeowners avoided foreclosure through our participation in the city’s Foreclosure Diversion Program

6 new businesses moved to Lancaster Avenue bringing 19 new jobs

20,000 people flocked to Lancaster Ave for Night Market 2015, indulging in 80 food truck vendors and enjoying entertainment from West Philly artists and musicians.

7,668 times community members received emergency food relief at our food cupboard

21 teens hired as Community Connectors

113 youth participated in our technology courses and programs

25 block parties sponsored for neighborhood residents

50 yard trees distributed in partnership with Drexel University

1 community playground in partnership with Tiny WPA

3,000 people attended the Lancaster Avenue Jazz and Arts Festival
Policy

PEC drives change within the system serving families and youth experiencing homelessness through collaborative leadership and education. PEC led the Family Service Provider Network (FSPN) for Philadelphia. In addition, PEC co-chaired the citywide Children’s Work Group Early Childhood Committee and the statewide Homeless Advocacy and Pennsylvania Provider Network (HAPPN).

FSPN agencies reported that City contracts funded at the same levels for eight to twelve years, resulting in loss of services and deteriorating buildings. Meanwhile, agencies are asked to serve more families – with multiple and increasingly complex needs - each year. FSPN convened meetings with the Mayor and City Council. We advocated to the City for increasing social services funding and making capital improvements to the emergency housing system. The campaign resulted in City Council approving the use of $1.5 million to address youth homelessness.

PEC’s policy communications campaigns informed public debate and opinion. We educated more than 60 government officials and lawmakers and communicated with more than 100 groups and 1,500 individuals. PEC published 12 monthly PEC Perspectives policy newsletters, 13 policy briefs, and 2 testimonies to City Council last year.

Sara Shaw

PEC’s Vice President of Policy co-authored the policy brief, “Babies in Emergency Housing: Is Philadelphia Doing all that it should,” with Sara Shaw, a doctoral student at the University of Delaware. The policy brief included data on babies who experienced homelessness from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Health. That policy brief helped develop the Homeless Babies Task Force, a network of 22 staff from public health organizations, shelters, and the City of Philadelphia. PEC organized a forum on babies and toddlers in December. More than 40 leaders on family homelessness and public health in Philadelphia attended the forum.
We were excited to be recognized in the following ways for our work strengthening the surrounding neighborhoods:

- Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellowship Host for 2017-2019: Enterprise selected PEC as Philadelphia’s first host. This opportunity brings additional capacity to our real estate development, economic development, and neighborhood planning work.

- Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC) 2016 Blue Ribbon Award: PACDC’s Blue Ribbon Award recognized our Neighborhood Time Exchange artist residency project as an outstanding achievement by a community development corporation in Philadelphia.

- PACDC 2016 Rising Star Award: During the same awards ceremony PACDC recognized PEC’s very own James Wright as a community development professional under 40 who made a significant impact in the neighborhoods in which he served. James was the Commercial Corridor Manager for Lancaster Avenue for nine years.

We’re proud to highlight our progress in Driving Change:

- City Council asked PEC to participate in organizing and give testimony to a public hearing on youth homelessness.

- PEC participated in the “100 Day” challenge on youth homelessness.

- The Bassuk Center on Family Homelessness invited PEC to join its national network.

- PEC was one of two nonprofits to provide recommendations to the City on granting a consultant contract to develop a plan on family homelessness.
SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all of our supporters who made generous contributions this year (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016).

All donations are vital to PEC. Due to space limitations, gifts totaling $249 and under are not included in this listing.

PEC’s audited financial statement can be obtained by contacting Tim Klarich at tklarich@pec-cares.org or calling 267-777-5815.

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MISSION

PEC’s mission is to nurture families, strengthen neighborhoods and drive change. We are committed to increasing equity and opportunity through our entire community. We provide comprehensive supportive services to homeless women and their children, revitalize our West Philadelphia neighborhood, and advocate for social justice.

Nurturing Families

For homeless women with children and parenting youth we offer housing, case management, counseling, parenting and early childhood education, financial education and planning, life skills and technology programs. We offer Lower Lancaster and other Philadelphia residents with job training, benefits access, employment services and financial coaching.

Strengthening Neighborhoods

The PEC Community Development Corporation programs respond to community needs and build on neighborhood assets to help bridge the digital divide, expand mixed-income housing opportunities, stimulate economic growth, create wealth, and improve the quality of life for all West Philadelphia residents. Visit lancasteravephilly.com.

Driving Change

PEC advocates for urgently needed public policy changes on behalf of youth and families experiencing homelessness. We work assertively with the local, state and federal governments to advance this legislation.

*Names used in this report are representative of PEC program participants, but we changed them in order to respect their privacy.*
Administration
325 N. 39th Street
Philadelphia PA 19104

Temporary Housing & Case Management
Center for Parenting and Early Childhood Education
3902 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Community Development Corporation
Center for Digital Inclusion and Technology
3939 Warren Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104