



Community Help, Inc.

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Our thanks to International Paper Company who provided the printing of this annual report for Community Help, Inc.

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2011 Annual Report

Presented at the Annual Meeting – May 23, 2012

Community Help, Inc. a Community Development corporation was created in 2005, in response to the City of Savannah's Anti-poverty Taskforce report to the community. It called for the Faith Community's engagement in finding solutions to social issues within Savannah and Chatham County. Rev. George A. Moore, Jr., Pastor of St. Philip Monumental A.M.E. Church convened the initial meeting with the guidance of the Georgia Legal Services.

Our mission Statement is: "To improve the quality of life of economically challenged families in the city of Savannah and Chatham County, through assistance to youth and senior citizens by focusing on education, economic development and safe secure housing".

It was clear to the members of our board that we should pause and look at what is happening in our community. That is to say, what are the issues confronting the people and how are they coping or overcoming these pitfalls in their pursuit of happiness (in their daily lives)? We also spent time looking at the strengths and weaknesses of our own organization. All of this was done to help us determine how we might possibly be of service to our community, and also be efficient in delivery of these services. We recognize that there are many organizations helping; some for profit, some non-profit; some with a national "footprint" and others at the grass roots level.

Community data shows that Savannah continues to struggle in its battle with persistent poverty. Two and three generations of families are living below the poverty line. Specifically 24% of our citizens live this way. That number has been with us for thirty years.

With regard to our youth, employers are faced with a labor market of unskilled laborers while local employment into meaningful jobs presents a problem for young people seeking to launch a career. Many students drop out of school after they reach the age of 16 and thereby handicap their

chances for success. The recent acknowledgement by the community that only 55% of students graduate on time is a loud and desperate call for help.

Among our senior citizens, our community is like so many other towns and cities in America, where we find our senior citizens confronted with situations they cannot handle by themselves. There is a growing number who are failing in their struggle to deal with the demands of this modern world - issues such as hunger, loneliness, abuse, faster pace, and regulatory mandates to name a few.

This past year of 2011 allowed us to make gains in the areas of safe secure housing for seniors, senior services and education for youth.

We believe Community Help, Inc. is attacking an emerging need among low income seniors. An early step in pursuing the safe, secure housing objective was completed when we developed a straight forward application for assistance and a swift process that supports it. The simple applicant screening and vetting procedure gives us the information needed to determine who we can help and how much help we can give. We also decided to establish partnerships with other agencies and institutions to improve our efficiency. A recent example of this type of collaboration was completed through a partnership with the city of Savannah and an 85 year old senior citizen. Vital repairs were done to her home. The roof of her house was structurally damaged and new shingles were needed.



Significant amounts of time, resources and energy were spent on Board Development. Our Annual Retreat included board assessments, discussions on how to be a successful non-profit and a commitment to seek the next level of performance. Each board member has now completed an individual assessment on board governance. These findings will aid us in board member engagement and recruitment.

The website, <http://www.communityhelpinc.org/>. is now improved.



We continued our support of the Savannah Chatham County Public School System’s Historic Preservation Class of the Early College Program. Local expertise in the high end crafts is in short supply. The demand for individuals with the skills required to construct, repair or duplicate building fixtures for the homes within Savannah’s historic districts continues to grow. Students in the Historic Preservation Classes gain an early appreciation for what it takes to maintain these homes; everything from understanding the properties of Savannah Gray brick to construction techniques to paint selection. Also embedded into this training, are the intangibles that help these students to see the value and



importance in preserving these assets. One measure of successful change will be the increase in the number of trained high end local craftsmen, architects and developers practicing their craft. Community Help, Inc. served as a classroom resource by providing field trip assistance, local and historical commentary that go beyond the brick and mortar of the buildings and squares of our city.



Presentations comparing building techniques used in ancient Egypt and other parts of the “Old World” were shared. We also recognized that some students in the dual-enrollment with Savannah

State University were struggling to pay for books and online web-assigns. With the help of another local partner, International Paper Company, we were able to provide a grant to cover these costs for a significant number of students.

The delivery of hot nutritious meals to aging seniors continues to be a most rewarding effort.



Certainly, we expected to visit with seniors each week.

What we did not expect is the rich reward of conversation and joy that has grown out of these visits. In most cases the senior lives alone or has a care giver performing specific tasks. The Wednesday delivery of hot meals has become part of their routine. Sometimes the conversation picks up right where we left off, at the end of the last visit.

We talk about whatever is on their mind; which has included the high times when they were young or something they saw on television that day. We recognize that these seniors are vulnerable and we must work to maintain their trust.

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Board Members 2012

Mrs. Claudia Clarke
Vice President
Senior Lending Officer
Carver State Bank
Member – Speedwell United Methodist Church

Mr. Darrel Daise
Director
Community Housing Services Agency
Member – Brownsville Baptist Church

Mr. Bonzo Reddick
Attorney and
Pro-Tem Magistrate Judge
Member – Living Hope Community Fellowship

Rev. Marsha Verdree, Pastor
Greater Bethel AME Church
Brunswick, Georgia

Mr. Charles Nelson
Retired Supervisor, Union Camp Corp.
Retired Military
Member – St. Philip Monumental AME Church

Ms. Mary Maxwell
Maintenance Planning
International Paper Co.
Member – Mt. Pisgah Independent Methodist Church

Mr. Keith Lord
Information Technology
Youth Futures Authority
Member – St. Philip Monumental AME Church

Bernard Polite
Retired Manager
International Paper Co.
Member – St. Philip Monumental AME Church