



Housing Initiatives of Princeton, LLC, is a program of Princeton Outreach Projects, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization

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HIP's Year in Review 06

In January, 2006, HIP board members held a one day retreat to assess our accomplishments and refine our goals for the future. With our two resident families beginning to turn the corner and planning a spring departure, we recommitted ourselves to finding our next two families for Prescott House, and began to look beyond 11 Mercer Street for our possible next step. With affordable housing in Princeton so elusive, it was decided that we should set a goal of purchasing or renting multi-unit homes (or homes with potential for conversion to multi-unit dwellings) in the township or borough of Princeton, so that we could begin to realize the dream of assisting additional families.

We experienced an increase in both our revenue and expenses in 2006. We had income of \$52,160. from a variety of sources, including "Harvest For Home" our first individual fundraiser last October, yielding \$19,000 against a goal of \$20,000; annual contributions from board member congregations and Nassau Christian Center; a \$5,000 grant from The Curtis W. McGraw Foundation; memorial gifts and individual donations. We had expenses of \$44,759, including \$17,000 in un-reimbursed rent, \$9,800 for utilities and \$9,497 in plumbing repairs (an additional \$6476 was spent by Trinity Church), all for the use of Prescott House. Other costs (refresh the apartments for new families, fundraising, insurance, newsletter, etc). We ended the year with a cash balance of \$85.9 thousand dollars, a slight decrease from the \$88.8 thousand at year-end 2005.



Above: Sally Weisman and Jean Hanff Korelitz, Harvest For Home co-chairs holding the quilt designed and donated by quilting author, Meg Cox. Left: Princeton Juggling Club Members performing. Right: James Scott and Catie Newcombe checking-in guests.

Harvest for Home

October 15th saw HIP's first fundraiser, HARVEST FOR HOME. Conceived as a harvest festival, the event held to its homespun theme by taking place in the D & R Greenway's new Johnson Education Center, a converted barn on Rosedale Road. With country style food from Whole Foods, a host of student volunteers from the Lawrenceville and Pennington Schools, "three car garage band" rock from Princeton University's Rackett, and a concert performance by famed string band Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem, HARVEST FOR HOME had a down home, kid-friendly feel. The Bent Spoon contributed ice cream, quilter and quilting author Meg Cox made a custom quilt for the occasion which we raffled for over \$1000., and entry fees and a silent auction raised \$18,000. more. Event co-chairs Jean Hanff Korelitz and Sally Weisman were thrilled by the financial results, but also by the mood of the event, which was unusually casual and fun for a benefit. "We were immediately asked if we would do it again next year," said Korelitz. "And we will. But right now we're still recovering!"

Donor Profile

Gabrielle Carbone and The Bent Spoon

Gabrielle Carbone and her husband, Matt Errico opened their artisanal ice cream store, THE BENT SPOON, in Palmer Square, Princeton, in 2004. Since then, their wild and wonderful flavors and seasonal, organic confections have become such an important part of the town's identity that we might wonder how we ever got along without them. But Carbone and Errico are about more than just ice cream. Their shop philosophy includes firm commitments to local produce, organic practices, and – most importantly for HIP – looking after one's own community. On learning about the work of HIP from a board member, Carbone immediately offered to participate in the Harvest For Home fundraiser, donating her time and delectable products in not one but two ways. Setting up a portable ice cream cart at the event itself, The Bent Spoon sold over \$200. worth of highly



Matt Errico and Gabrielle Carbone outside their shop in Palmer Square

crowd-pleasing product. "HARVEST FOR HOME really felt like many groups of people pulled together to make the event lively and fun," Carbone recalls. "Where else could you have really tasty down home food, and a super-lively band wrapped into an auction at a location set aside for grassroots community events?"

An additional \$200. was raised by Carbone's offer to create a custom ice cream flavor of the highest bidder's choice. The winner, she reports, was a young boy and "fantastic ice cream enthusiast. He really was interested in thinking about his own special flavor! In the end, through thoughtful planning, he came up with a fantastically delectable peanut butter ice cream

Donor Profile continued...

Donor Profile *Gabrielle Carbone continued...*

swirled with hand made, caramel-covered Terhune Orchard apples—truly delicious!”
 Carbone believes that all small business should try to involve themselves in local outreach efforts. “We’re all so connected, in so many wondrous and intricate ways,” she says. “It just makes sense to start within our own community. I really think that this is a fantastic effort that strengthens our community from the inside out.”

Gabrielle serving ice cream at our fundraiser



Get in touch...

We thank our supporters for all of their good work, good will, and yes, good checks. We are actively attempting to secure an additional house or housing units in the community. We are looking outside the box and exploring prospects such as a Legacy Grant, Princeton Township’s Flat Ordinance, as well as Princeton University. Do you know of a potential partner or benefactor who can help? Please get in touch with HIP at 609-279-6987 or rscott@scarlettsystems.com. Donations are eagerly and gratefully accepted.

Board Member Profile

Karen Longo-Baldwin

In 2000, Karen Longo-Baldwin, a teacher of English as a Second Language at the Princeton YWCA, began to attend the “housing task force” meetings Peggy Prescott and Chrissy Knight were starting to hold as a precursor to the creation of HIP. “I was appalled by the unstable, unhealthy, and yet terribly expensive apartments that these families were somehow managing to live in. Often the families I worked with would become literally homeless as their informal sub-letting arrangements would fall through or month-to-month rentals were ended.” The problem of inadequate and unaffordable housing, she came to feel, was central to the difficulties faced by the immigrant families she worked with at the Y.



“Working with the families is both frustrating and rewarding,” she says. “Folks in these difficult economic, educational, and housing situations have delicately balanced and complicated lives. They are not always able to follow through on plans as folks with more ordered lives expect. It takes a lot of flexibility and willingness to roll with the punches to be able to work successfully with them, but at the same time you must be firm to be sure progress happens. The families are all so grateful for the help we at HIP extend, and that makes working with them a great joy.”

Longo-Baldwin joined the HIP board at its inception. She has served on the Family Support and Selection committee and as secretary since October 2003, working directly with families in Prescott House apartments. “The work is a constant challenge. Families who become homeless have tremendous needs, but they are also wonderfully human.” One high point of her work was watching a former HIP client, Maria Conde, finish her coursework at Mercer County Technical School (for which tuition had been paid by HIP) and obtain certification as a phlebotomist.

Longo-Baldwin, who now teaches ESL to immigrant students at Somerville High School, believes that helping the poor is an obligation, not an option.



From Homelessness to Hope

In June, our first two client families “graduated” from Prescott House. The first family, consisting of two working parents and two small children, were with us for 21 months. HIP procured numerous basic life necessities for this family (e.g. automobile) as well paid for the mother to received training as a certified Phlebotomist enabling her to gain employment at the Medical Center of Princeton. This family is now living and paying rent in a house leased to Home Front. Our second family, consisting of a working mother and four children (three in Princeton’s public schools) were in residence for 12 months. She has purchased a modest home in Princeton, thanks to the intensive work by a HIP board member helping to resolve her debt, improve her credit and save for the down payment. Her eldest son is now a freshman at Princeton University.

IN MEMORY OF PEGGY PRESCOTT

Peggy Prescott, HIP’s founding chair, died July 25, 2006, at home in Princeton. Peggy, 61, was a graduate of Pembroke College and Princeton Theological Seminary, and the co-author of a workbook on feminine imagery in the Bible. Her passion for social justice and concern for the working poor in the Princeton community led to her creation of Housing Initiatives of Princeton, and the building at 11 Mercer Street was named Prescott House in her honor in May, 2005. Joy Kulvicki, who met Peggy while both were seminary students, remembers Peggy’s passion for her unfolding work as Trinity’s Outreach Minister: “Peggy’s strong belief in the social Gospel was empowered by the realization that she did not have long to live. She worked with a passion and intensity to do the things she felt was important to complete her life. HIP was one of the projects she hoped to bring to fruition before she died.”

Peggy’s family, friends and associates honored her with an inspiring memorial service in September; the planting of two Viburnum flowering Shrubs at Prescott House and donations of \$3800 to HIP. We are grateful to



Peggy Prescott on the porch of Prescott House



Prescott House at 11 Mercer St.

them all for remembering this remarkable woman with such generosity, and we pledge to continue the effort she worked so hard to begin.

Peggy is survived by her husband, David, and two daughters, Katherine and Elizabeth.



Design: UnehDesign.com

March 2007 Newsletter 

www.trinityprinceton.org/outreach.asp

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