



Updates from the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation

The ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION

Meg Distler, executive director, together with Alice Kopfer, board member, of the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, presented at the annual PHJC Leadership Retreat. They shared how the ministry has been experimenting with diverse ways to determine how to most effectively incorporate the four PHJC operating principles so they can more closely follow the Poor Handmaids' vision for future ministry.



Meg Distler (right) and Alice Kopfer

Meg opened the presentation explaining that the Foundation was reorganized in 1998 with a part of the proceeds from the sale of St. Joseph Hospital. These funds and other PHJC real estate assets were sold off to create a new ministry focused on providing access to health and wellness beyond the hospital walls. While no Poor Handmaid has been on staff, at least 17 Poor Handmaids have worked closely with local laity, the Board of Trustees and staff, to determine how to continue the PHJC legacy through the Foundation into the Allen County, Indiana community over the past 18 years.

The works of Poor Handmaids over the past 148 years serves as a guide to the Foundation which today, invests in and partners with over 100 community entities to assure the most marginalized

and vulnerable are served. True to the PHJC values of simplicity and recognition of one's gifts as well as one's limitations, the Foundation ministry has focused on four areas:

- assure there is quality, free and low-cost healthcare services available for all;
- help connect the poor and marginalized with health and wellness resources;
- aid the 23,000 local immigrants and refugees in connecting with health resources, and;
- support the more than 4,250 single, low-income pregnant women who annually give birth in our community to have healthy babies.

Meg and Alice explained the Foundation actively began experimenting with the four operating principles by initially re-organizing their 2015 annual operating plan. They advised it helped them strengthen their intentionality by making sure the concepts of scale, transformational innovation, disciplined collaboration and sustainability were central to the ministry. This then led to updating the Foundation's mission statement which added capacity and greater flexibility to "scale" their work.

In fall 2015, they created a simple 12-point assessment of 17 grant applications for evidence of the four operating principle. They found applicants with high scores of nine points or above, were typically funded. Those with low scores around five and six were less likely to be funded. When Board Members visited on-site with grantee applicants they were delighted to learn about the incorporation of these values.

They learned that scale can be applied in many different ways within the ministry. For example, community partner/grantee Lutheran Social Services' Teen Pregnancy "ECHO" project applied the principle of "scale." The program, which gives support to teen mothers to make sure they graduate

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Ancilla College Volleyball Celebrates Alumni



In April, the Ancilla College Volleyball team welcomed alumni to Charger arena. Many attended and the afternoon turned out to be a wonderful time of volleyball, fellowship and fun. The team honored the Heminger House of Plymouth, where hundreds of items were donated from players, alumni, Sister Power Sisters, family and friends.

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from high school, recognized the need to help the moms continue beyond high school to community college, and/or until a degree or certificate, so teen mothers would have a better chance at higher paid jobs when they finished school. By expanding their scope to community college, they scaled their efforts creating a great impact on the lives of more of their clients.

Transformational innovation was observed at another grantee / community partner Matthew 25 Health and Dental Clinic. They shared plans for a new patient education center to transform their care model and create more patient empowerment and behavior change.

Another grantee, A Hope House, is a transitional care facility for homeless women recovering from substance abuse for whom the Foundation has underwritten mental health counseling services. They shared how they recently had begun a major collaboration by merging with another grantee, the YWCA of Northeastern Indiana. The collaboration also addresses sustainability. By merging with the YWCA, Hope House will have a brand new facility

in the spring of 2017 for their ongoing program and have the capacity to serve more clients. This will also lower annual operational costs for the HOPE House and provide easy access for their clients to YWCA programs and services. The YWCA also has benefitted because they too have access to the mental health counselling services for homeless women with families piloted by Hope House.

Since instituting the four PHJC operational principles, long standing board member Alice Kopfer reported that Foundation board members now discuss these principles with the recipients and amongst themselves at Grants Committee meetings. All organizations applying for funding from St. Joseph are now asked to discuss how their organization incorporates these principles in their day to day operations as a part of the written grant process. By taking these steps the Foundation is insuring the mission and legacy of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ will continue through both the Foundation itself, as well as its community partners into the future.

 Meg Distler, Executive Director and Ellie Bogue, Communications Coordinator, St. Joseph Community Health Foundation