



Helping people help themselves

news, views and success stories

Expanding services in Saint Paul helps residents strengthen community connections



Young residents of Wilkins Townhomes in Saint Paul take a break from playing football with PPL staff member Peter Elwell, a member of the Saint Paul team. Elwell and other staff helped neighbors plan an outdoor party to strengthen personal connections within the community.

Reception of PPL's expanded presence in Saint Paul has been highly successful, say the staff. Residents who were previously unaware of PPL's services are now some of the most actively involved.

In late summer 2007, PPL boosted outreach and support to residents in six locations throughout Saint Paul in an effort to involve them more in events and programs, and as volunteers. Staff was increased from one to three coordinators, with two AmeriCorps Members leading youth programs. A well-established program for young fathers also grew.

As Joan Bennett, a Saint Paul team member, put it: "We now have the bandwidth to offer more flexible programming and build stronger relationships with a greater number of families."

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More variety in services, assisting more people. PPL rings in the new year with program growth.

It is an exciting way to end PPL's 35th Anniversary Year by announcing our plan to merge with Loring Nicollet-Bethlehem Community Centers. To quote from that agency's long-time Executive Director Brad Englund's year end letter to supporters, "We can truly say that this merger will allow us the opportunity to serve our participants better."

While the new organization will continue to be known as Project for Pride in Living, the Loring Nicollet and Bethlehem Community centers will retain the strong neighborhood identities they have developed through 50+ years of high quality service to Minneapolis families.

Much more to come about the merger, and what it means for the people we serve, in the coming year!

Also new as the year draws to a close is the south Minneapolis "Center for Working Families," opening its door at 806 Franklin in space directly below PPL's Emma B. Howe Learning Center. The national network of such Centers, spearheaded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and LISC, promises to help low-income working families move toward greater economic security through intentionally "bundled" services aimed at increasing their assets. The Center is a truly collaborative effort, involving several non-profit and private sector partners who embrace this approach. For PPL, our participation is a nice complement to other housing, employment and family support efforts that span a continuum of life circumstances from homelessness and joblessness to homeownership and solid career advancement!



I cite the merger with Loring Nicollet-Bethlehem Community Centers (LNB) and Center for Working Families, in part, as good illustrations of the guiding principles of PPL's new strategic plan. In coming years the staff and Board are simultaneously committed to: 1) deepening our impact through ever more integrated programs and projects, while also 2) filling service gaps across the spectrum of activities we know are important in the lives of low-income families and individuals. Our commitment to effective partnerships with other organizations will never wane, but we also believe in becoming an even broader multi-service agency focused on a unifying core mission of helping people in our community achieve greater self-sufficiency.

As PPL grows in this way our affordable housing development – the “bricks and mortar” work which will always be a central priority at PPL – becomes a piece in a larger community and human development puzzle.

As illustrations, at the “new” PPL, families living in our affordable housing in Whittier will be steps away from a high quality early childhood program offered at the Bethlehem Community Center. An employed adult who is a member at the Center for Working Families will be

able to walk up a flight of stairs to the Learning Center and access the educational resources of the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, improving their future work prospects. A mom living at Collaborative Village will be able to hop on a bus while the kids are at school to access comprehensive adult basic education services at the Loring Nicollet Center five minutes down Franklin Avenue.

Deepen and integrate programs and projects and fill service gaps. Those are our watch words for the future. Thanks for your support, which makes all of this possible.



Steve Cramer
PPL Executive Director



Brad Englund (left) and Steve Cramer. Englund has been LNB's Executive Director for the past 12 years. He will retire at the first of the year completing a nearly 40-year social service career. Regarding leadership going forward, five individuals from the current LNB board will be added to the PPL Board of Directors on January 9, 2008. Other LNB board members will be encouraged to join PPL standing committees and some have taken this opportunity to step down. PPL's Executive Director, Steve Cramer, will head up the new agency.

For over 50 years LNB has served the community with a focus on education and employment services. With matching missions centered on increasing the self-sufficiency of low income families and individuals, the combination of PPL and LNB programs will result in greater impact. Throughout the year-long merger evaluation and planning process, insuring that the merged agencies would be better able to serve our program participants was the most important consideration of all.

Earn it, keep it, grow it!

Referral-based center offering financial and career coaching to working families opens in Minneapolis

A new Center for Working Families has opened in Minneapolis' Phillips neighborhood. The referral-based membership center is aimed at working families trying to get ahead and provides access to a full range of essential economic supports. The Center is a collaboration involving PPL, Hope Community, Emerge, Centro Cultural Chicano, and City-County Federal Credit Union. PPL is the administrator.



The Center for Working Families concept was developed by The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Similar centers operate in major cities such as Chicago, Atlanta, and Baltimore. There is also one on the east side of Saint Paul. Intermediary organizations are involved to provide funding, program guidance, infrastructure, training and technical assistance to the collaborating agencies. In the case of the Minneapolis Center, Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and Payne Lake Community Partners (PLCP) are fulfilling these roles.

LISC and PLCP united with PPL and the other organizations to plan the Minneapolis Center. Direct input from eligible families was also sought. As a result, the Minneapolis Center will welcome “members” who have access to resources and counsel related to career development, financial matters, and eligibility for public and community resources. The Center expects to work with 50 families in the first year of operations.

Saint Paul services expansion *(con't from cover)*

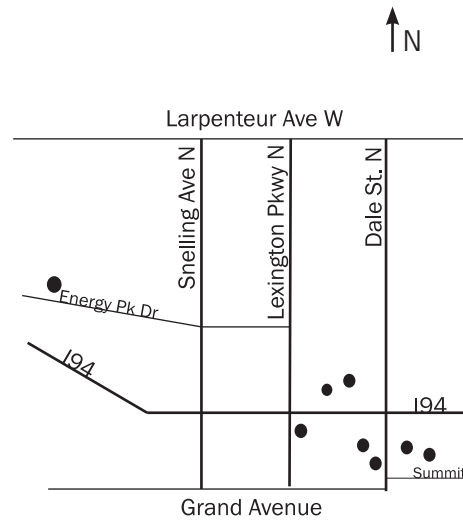
Key to program success is strong relationships

Community meetings have brought important issues to the fore, said Peter Elwell, another team member. For example, many residents attending the meetings expressed feeling disconnected from their neighbors.

“This led to the community planning a fall gathering where more than 30 residents, neighbors and community leaders got together to eat chili, drink cider and socialize.,” said Elwell. He notes that this integrated approach is where PPL’s programs get their strength. Everyone is invited to become involved in or take advantage of programs, whether they are specifically for youth, family, or the broader community. The results are highly positive for the residents. For example, during the School Choice Information Series, students took an active role in looking at schools and encouraged their parents to learn more. Adults with and without children learned about adult education and GED opportunities in Saint Paul. For specific youth programs, adds Bennett, both parents and adults without children are encouraged to be volunteer tutors.

Youth programming in Saint Paul continues to grow. Programming for young people currently includes yearlong programming for pre-school and high school age youth, and “Homework Hangout” sessions held twice a week. A teen college and career program took high school kids to college campuses to tour the facilities and speak with students from traditionally underrepresented populations. A long term goal is to provide early childhood education programs.

Elwell and Bennett both stress the importance of building strong relationships with residents. Elwell has observed that, while many people are reluctant to discuss personal and family struggles, they will face the subject when discussing broader community and youth issues. These meetings have helped staff establish trust and develop relationships that have led to more frank discussions, enhancing staff ability to directly help a family access a valuable resource or to overcome a barrier.



Location of buildings in Saint Paul where services are now provided

- 700, 710, 716 Selby Ave.
- 1063 Marshall Ave.
- 683 Hague Ave
- 1068 Raymond Ave.
- 587-613 Ashland Ave.
- 608-618 Holly Ave.
- 795-799 Marshall Ave

PPL's mission is to work with lower-income individuals and families to achieve greater self-sufficiency through housing, employment training and support services.

Employment & Job Training

PPL operates paid training programs through businesses and classroom instruction for adults dealing with multiple barriers to successful employment.



Computers in the Community

A new initiative aims at increasing residents' at-home access to computers and instructive software. Some have already received refurbished computers, others are now guided by staff on PPL-owned machines.

Residents exchange volunteer time for a refurbished computer.

Fifteen PPL participants went home with refurbished computers in November, after

a four-hour workshop where they learned how to use the technology. The computers and training were provided by The Patchwork Quilt Digital Divide Initiative, which collects donated computers from local corporations for redeployment to low-income families. The group installs free software on the machines, and holds open sessions at their office for tech support, once a month.

In exchange for the computers, recipients agreed to volunteer for four hours in a service of their choice. They could pay \$50 instead, but the service aspect is encouraged. PPL hosted the group at the Learning Center, providing lunch and childcare. As part of the follow-up with families, a PPL AmeriCorps Member will meet with each family one more time, at their home, to go over questions about software or train other family members

Onsite visits now include time on the computer

PPL properties across the metro area have recently made computer use available to residents, with staff supervision. The goal is to bring technology resources into our

Activities success stories

after-school youth tutoring programs technology access and training to the families.

This has been made possible, in part, thanks to a donation of computers and software from IBM and a grant from ADC Foundation. IBM is also among the list of key partners the Patchwork Quilt initiative.



The Patchwork Quilt Digital Divide Initiative gladly accepts donations of computers, monitors, printers and scanners. Those meeting guidelines will be redeployed, other recycled. To allay costs of repairs, upgrade, etc., a \$5 minimum donation for each item is required. For more information, call 612.529.3125.

Welfare-to-Work program receives an Outstanding Achievement award

PPL received an Outstanding Achievement award from Hennepin County recognizing

our Welfare-to-Work program.

The Connection to Work program has a contract with the County's MFIP program and is reviewed several times a year for criteria adherence. PPL's score of 99.5 percent out of 100 percent was the highest among contract agencies..

PPL's culturally specific work-readiness course continues to draw interest

A second Somali work-readiness class graduated this fall. While all PPL training covers the challenges low-income job seekers face, this course is designed to have a substantive impact in the area of employment and work readiness for Somali residents. The four-week course includes topics such as appropriate dress and perceptions of Muslims in the workplace.

Human Services

Families, adults and children are assisted on a flexible, individualized basis in setting goals, finding resources and building skills necessary to be self-sufficient.

Leonard, Street and Deinard provides pro bono legal services and puts clients at ease with their concerns.

In 2006, PPL participants received pro bono services from Leonard, Street and Deinard. The law firm provided 22 adults

Continued on next page

Activities success stories



Human Services con't

with quality legal advice and needed services that helped them solve issues ranging from consumer rights to immigration matters to custody hearings. Said Tina Wombacher, a PPL program manager, "Leonard, Street and Deinard staff give supportive and caring attention to every case they take. They provide excellent feedback and stay in constant communication with us. It's an enormous help for the people we serve."

Workshops tackle the subjects that can turn a person's life around.

This fall and winter, a variety of workshops have drawn participants to PPL. Subjects have included "Renter Rights and Responsibilities" and "The Criminal Expungement Process," where people learned where they can get help with expunging their criminal records and how that process impacts their job search.

Affordable Housing

PPL owns or manages more than 747 units of affordable rental housing offering on-site human services, and creates affordable housing through both new construction and renovation of existing homes.

Donation from Phillips Garden raises value of new homes in North Minneapolis

As winter approached, landscaping was still sorely needed on Lowell Curve, where PPL built several new homes as part of a three-year revitalization project in north Minneapolis. With the project reaching completion, funds were low.

Thanks to donation of plants from Phillips Garden and the efforts of PPL's AmeriCorps Members, the area has considerably higher curb appeal. Phillips Garden is a retail nursery and coffee shop located in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis at 2426 Cedar Avenue, in an award winning renovated gas station.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to work for a better life.



Graduation Day at Train to Work. PPL customizes its four-week job-readiness class to address the needs of various groups. Focus may be on career fields such as health care or banking, or on cultural issues for Somali individuals and others who are new to an American workplace.

Supportive housing can stop the cycle of homelessness for a family, giving them a place to take root and begin anew. Chris, a development project manager for PPL (left), and Harry, an Emerge service provider, worked together to make Camden apartments such a place for 23 families.



PPL helps individuals and families achieve stability and gain ground.

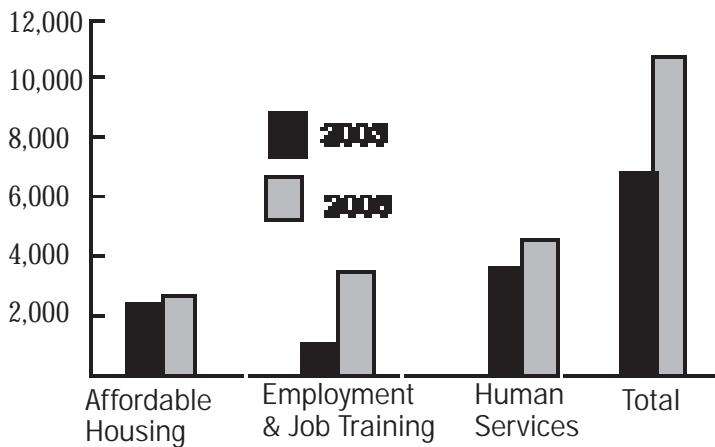
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www.ppl-inc.org.



PPL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN RESULTS



PPL's three-year capital campaign came to a close in early 2005. Financially, it was very successful, exceeding the \$10.8 million goal by raising just over \$12 million. A heartfelt **thank you** is extended to committee members who made this campaign possible, our inimitable committee co-chairs and friends Joyce and Dick McFarland, the 200+ donors who generously contributed to the campaign, PPL staff who provide thoughtful and effective programming to participants every day, and to you, our large base of community supporters who care about PPL's mission and efforts in and for the Twin Cities. **Thank you to all who contributed to that success.**



The Service Center: (Top, this page, the PPL Service Center lobby.) PPL open the handicapped accessible Center in 2004, as a centralized location for participants to access Affordable Housing information and PPL Support Services. Additional space increased the comfort and professionalism of participants and the efficiency of staff. Consolidating operational expenses by bringing five service locations under one roof increased the agency's financial stability.

Creation of working capital: (Right, this page, Family moves into permanent supportive housing.) PPL increased its financial stability for the:

- Operating reserve
- Housing opportunity fund
- Property maintenance fund
- Program start up





MAKING PPL A PERMANENT RESOURCE

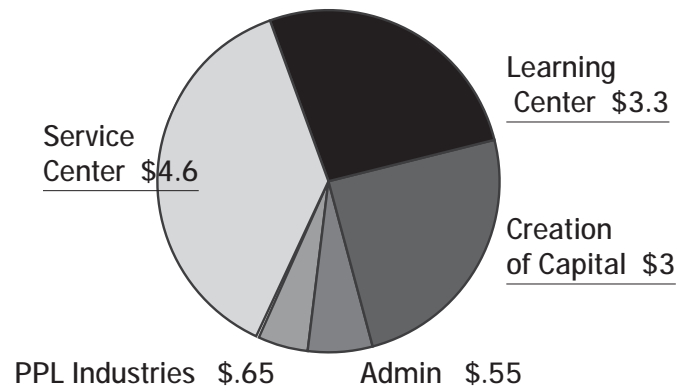


The overarching goal of PPL's capital campaign was to help make PPL a permanent resource to low-income families and individuals of the Twin Cities. Key goals were to centralize programming at a new Service Center and at the Emma B. Howe Learning Center, relocate PPL Industries in a new location and perform mechanical upgrades, and create Working Capital Funds to support the creation, preservation and maintenance of affordable housing across the metropolitan area. All the campaign goals were met. (See photos captions on this page for highlights.) Most importantly, the success has led to improved programs and significant additional programs to help people help themselves on the path to a more self-sufficient future.



Campaign Goal \$10.8 million

Campaign Actual \$12.1 million



PPL Emma B. Howe Learning Center (Top, this page, Computer Access Lab.) A successful classroom-based job training program grew with additional partnerships, expanded programs, and the creation of a computer lab. As a result of creating the Learning Center, one-on-one help and a broad spectrum of employment, education and technology-based resources are now available in the Center which welcomes all comers.

PPL Industries (Left, this page, Trainee at PPL Industries.) Centralized space in a contemporary manufacturing facility has increased the business' capacity to serve hard-to-employ individuals.



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Condominiums increase affordable housing options in New Hope

PPL celebrated the completion of Linden Park Condominiums in the City of New Hope, at 5445 Boone Avenue North, in November. The 41-unit development marks the first new condo development in the City in 20 years. Priced in a range for mixed-income ownership, they are proving ideal for new buyers and residents who want to stay in the New Hope area, but have had few affordable options.

Linden Park was designed by the award winning architectural firm Miller Hanson Partners and built by Weis Builders. Other funders include City of New Hope, Wells Fargo, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and Hennepin County. Sales prices at Linden Park Condominiums range from \$139,900 to \$199,900.

