

annual report 2009



“We opened on a shoestring. It was just a couple of people, getting together and really believing we needed to do something.”

Sister Angela Daniels,
co-founder of The Genesis Center



September 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009

THE GENESIS CENTER

The Genesis Center was created in 1982 by Sister Angela Daniels and Father Daniel Trainor of South Providence's Assumption Church to help refugees of war in Southeast Asia build new lives of dignity and independence in Rhode Island.

Since then, we have provided more than 7,000 refugees, immigrants and low-income adult learners with English language skills, literacy, job skills, early education for their children and other supports on their journeys to independence.

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"What I learned here, I pass along to my son," says Patricio Garcia.

"If we stay, we learn."

Patricio Garcia spoke no English when he came to Rhode Island from Guatemala 14 years ago. "I worked here and there in factories," he recalls. "But they always closed or slowed down." Patricio decided to break out of this trap by taking entry-level English at The Genesis Center.

"It was frustrating to learn word by word. I didn't think I was learning anything. One day, though, I asked my teacher, 'Do I know English now?' She told me, 'Yes!' "Patricio continued classes at The Genesis Center until his English was fluent.

Later, thanks to a Genesis Center workforce development course, Patricio landed a job with Avatar Residential, where he's worked for three years. He makes daily visits to six clients, helping them with basic needs such as dressing, washing and meals. Now, together with his wife Irma, he can make a better life for his 11-year-old son, Alex.

Patricio loves his job, but he's not satisfied yet. Someday, he wants to earn a nursing degree, but for now he's focused on entry to college and becoming a certified nurse assistant. He still comes to The Genesis Center for advice, assistance and to use our computers.

"For me, the Genesis Center is the best. I tell the other students to keep going. If we stay, we learn."



"No one in Providence understood what was coming. We didn't even know the Southeast Asians weren't all from the same place or that they didn't all speak the same language. But we knew we needed to do something."

One year ago. One year from now.

One year ago, already-scarce jobs for hard working but lower-skilled workers in Rhode Island were disappearing. Demand for adult education, the only reliable road out of underemployment and poverty, surged.

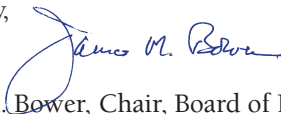
The Genesis Center served 586 students during the 2009 school year. As a volunteer tutor at The Genesis Center, I know exactly what each educational gain demanded of our students and teachers. I'm proud of all they achieved as individuals and as a great institution.

As Chair of the Board of Directors, I also know that our waiting list, like those at other providers of adult education, holds the names of hundreds of learners who are not being served. That's why we spent so much of 2009 thinking about how to do more. The result was our new strategic plan, adopted in October of 2009 and now being put into action.

One year from now, The Genesis Center will be serving more people and achieving even better outcomes thanks to focused investments in our capacity to serve adults taking their first steps toward re-employment, higher incomes and better lives for themselves and their families.

I can make this prediction with confidence because our students and staff members get support from a wide community of caring volunteers, business partners and generous donors. I thank each member of this community for your past and future contributions to this vital work.

Sincerely,



James M. Bower, Chair, Board of Directors



Learn English. Find a job. Make a better life for my child.

For 28 years, The Genesis Center has helped immigrants, refugees and low-income families find the keys to the American Dream. Today, business and government leaders agree that a well-educated workforce is the most critical condition for statewide economic recovery and growth.

At The Genesis Center, our students put those policy issues in very personal terms. They come to us wanting three things above all else: *To speak English. To get a job. To give my child a better life.*

That's their American Dream. The Genesis Center exists to help them achieve that dream through excellent instruction and support services and with high-quality early education and child care programming for their children.

Thanks to your support, hundreds of Genesis Center students realized their American Dreams in 2009: eager adult learners opened the door of English, prepared for new careers and found the jobs they needed to make better lives for themselves and their families.

Thank you so much,



Pheamo R. Witcher, President & CEO



"They universally wanted English. We began by teaching in homes. So many people came that they were standing on tables to learn."



OUR WORK AND RESULTS

English Language and Adult Education

Those who can't speak or read English in Rhode Island suffer frustration and sometimes frightening isolation on the job, in stores and banks, at their children's schools and other community institutions. Mastering the language is the essential first step to a better life.

The Genesis Center's core classes take students from speaking their first English words all the way to completing the GED or National External Diploma Program, an alternative high school degree program. Class content is aimed directly at

the lives of our students with topics like health, good nutrition, parenting and fire safety. It takes extraordinary skill and quick thinking to teach a room of 30 adult students with no language in common and a huge range of prior education. The key to success? "Use every moment," says teacher Leanne Ovalles.

"I want to learn English to help my daughter with her homework. I want to be an important person."

Juana Gonzalez,
External Degree student

Great volunteer partnerships also stretch our resources so more students can learn. A pen pal correspondence project between Genesis Center English adult learners and middle school Spanish students at the Gordon School has blossomed into mutual cross-cultural language learning and friendship

with ongoing visits between the two classrooms as each middle school student researches and writes the biography of one adult learner.

"Taking language learning out of the classroom and into the community has

made a huge impact on my students and me as a teacher," says Gordon School Spanish teacher Tricia Kelly.

Highlights

- Five hundred and five students graduated from English Language programs this year: 434 in four levels of ESOL classes; 69 in RI Works (welfare to work) classes. Test scores show that nearly 50



"Our exchange with the Gordon School enables my students to really write for communicative purpose," says teacher Deb Venator.

percent of Genesis Center students advanced their education by two grade levels or more. The state average is 38%.

- The Department of Education named the Genesis Center Number One Adult Education Agency in Rhode Island based on student progress, pre- and post-testing rates and hours of instruction received.

- The Genesis Center and four partner agencies in the Citizenship Consortium won a federal grant to help students attain citizenship.

Workforce Development

Even before the recession, Rhode Islanders with only basic skills couldn't earn enough to support a family, no matter how hard they worked. Genesis Center graduate Dora Navas was out of work for two years after her employer, a jewelry factory, closed its doors.

The Genesis Center workforce development programs help students like Dora "work smarter" (and earn higher in-

comes) with job training carefully designed to provide skills, experience and credentials most in demand by local employers. Our comprehensive student support services help our students grow in their

"I know it will be a long time. But I know what I want."

Gladys Zapata, Healthcare
Explorations student

positions and advance in their employment. Our Healthcare Exploration partnership with Re-Focus, which operates group homes for people with developmental disabilities, is an example of Genesis Center training that leads to jobs in high demand, high growth sectors.

The program provides classroom instruction in fields that healthcare providers such as Re-Focus, Women and Infants Hospital and Lifespan have identified as high growth/high demand. Each student interns with a partner employer. Students who do well have an inside track to new jobs. Dora cried for happiness when she got her job at Re-Focus. In 2009, she was voted Direct Support Professional of the Year. We have 50 to 60 people like Dora on the waiting list for Healthcare Explorations.



Students love Barbara Alsebek's lively class in basic English. Today's lesson: making complex sentences using the word "when."



"We cleaned out the old Assumption School and began teaching there, assuming that demand would fall off. It didn't. We were OK until winter. Then we were teaching in hats and gloves."



"The demand is there. All we need is money and space," says Health-care Exploration instructor Gienia Kocur right, with Gladys Zapata.

Students in our Culinary Arts program master food preparation, kitchen skills and food safety as they prepare daily meals for our preschool and staff. Strong partnerships with area restaurants and food service providers lead to a high rate of job placement after graduation.

Highlights

- In total, 87 students enrolled in workforce development job training programs in FY 2009.
- Thirty-four out of thirty seven students enrolled in Culinary Arts training graduate from the program, a 90 percent graduation rate.
- Forty-two out of 50 students enrolled in Health Care Exploration training complete the program, an 84 percent graduation rate.
- In all, 91 Genesis Center students found work with our help in 2009: 61 from job training programs, 18 from our general ESOL population and 12 from our RI Works (welfare to work) program.



Gloria Santana always loved to cook. Now she knows how to prepare great food safely in a bustling professional kitchen. Someday, she says, she'll have her own business.

Childcare and Early Learning Center

From the very beginning, on-site, high-quality child care has enabled busy moms to attend Genesis Center classes. The Genesis Center offers a full range of early education and

preschool programs for children from 3 to 5 years old. The quality of preschool education makes a huge difference in the long-term educational and life success of children. That's why we support continuous professional development for teachers and staff and embrace our partnerships with Ready To Learn Providence and Head Start. Our new collaboration with Head Start means we will offer case management services for families, dental screenings, lead testing, nutrition education and social emotional services.

Highlights

- In January 2009, we add Therapeutic Child Care services to help children with educational and behavioral problems and create a better learning environment for all.
- In June 2009 we add after-school programming, easing a tremendous burden on parents who are working or attending classes.



"When Viviana wakes up, her first question is 'Am I going to school today?' She even wants to go Saturday and Sunday!" says her mom Yolanda Camacho, who takes English classes while Viviana learns downstairs.

"When we get home, Viviana teaches me all she learned that day."

Yolanda Comacho, mother of an Early Learning student



Preschoolers learn to eat well and brush thoroughly at The Genesis Center. Generous support from The Champlin Foundation helped us expand and renovate bathrooms at the preschool in 2009.

"One day a man rang our doorbell. His name was John Harwood. He asked me, 'What would you do with money if you had it?' I told him I'd open up childcare and zero in on women."



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended August 31, 2009

CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Support	
Government contracts	\$ 841,050
Non-government contracts	104,767
Contributions	15,668
Foundations and corporate grants	189,878
Total Support	1,151,363

Revenue

Program fees	334,483
Fundraising events	43,631
Return on investments	(96,075)
Rental income	20,055
Total Revenue	302,094

Total Unrestricted Revenue 1,453,457

PROGRAM EXPENSES

Adult education program	610,967
Childcare program	392,943
Workforce development	435,253
Total Program Expenses	1,439,163

SUPPORTING SERVICES

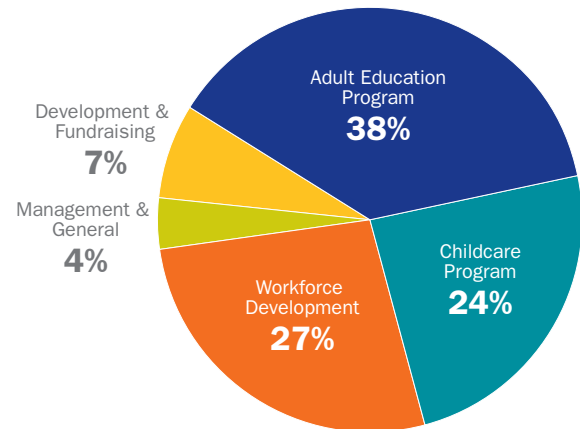
Management and general	72,687
Development and fundraising	117,732

Total Expenses 1,629,573

CHANGES IN TOTAL ASSETS	(176,116)
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	1,361,475
TRANSFERS	0
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$ 1,185,359

See auditors' report and notes to financial statements.

Expenses



GENESIS CENTER VOLUNTEERS (SEPTEMBER 1, 2008 – AUGUST 31, 2009)

Brown University

Amanda Beaupre
Joey Bernhardt
Lucy Boltz
Jaime Brim
Matt Doup
Nicholas Haidemeos
Camilla Hawthorne
Rebecca Jacobson
Sonia Kim
Amber Lee
Sarah Lester
Katie Monzur
Katie Morison
Megan Short
Victoria Sigillo
Michael Wright
Emma Tai
Aditya Volati
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CCRI

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Maria Olivo

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Andrea Klimpt

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Elena Maker

Bay View Academy

Amanda Colafrancesca

Dutemple School

Betty Lloyd

Gordon School

Erin Courtney
Jamison Cote
Patricia Kelly

Simone Leone
Sasha Mandie
Lindsay Noonan
Adrian Stone

Lincoln School

Marilyn Soum

La Salle Academy

Mensah Akosua
Anthony Coccia
Tom Mancini

Met School

Alicia Colon
Endiana Torres

San Miguel School

Jim Bower

Wheeler School

Andrew Bower
Nicholas Bower
Maggie Sawdy

Foster Grandparents

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E. Smith

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“The women could come to child care at any time. They could have lunch with their children. They trusted us.”

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"Later in the 1980s, our student body began to reflect the large number of Latino immigrants arriving in Rhode Island. They needed English, too."





Our Vision

The Genesis Center envisions a world where all people have equality of opportunity to realize their full potential.

Our Mission

The Genesis Center provides the highest quality education, job training and support services to people of diverse cultures so that they may achieve economic independence and participate fully in society.

***“What was different about us was our mission:
to lead people to self-sufficiency and a better life.
That’s what we are still about.”***

SISTER ANGELA DANIELS, CO-FOUNDER AND CURRENT BOARD MEMBER



The Genesis Center

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Providence, RI 02907

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