

# OPEN AVENUES

CAPABLE PEOPLE. QUALITY WORK.

## FY 2013-2014

*Open Avenues had a challenging year but a year with many successes. We were in the first and second year of our 4-year Strategic Plan. Although some goals and objectives were achieved, we learned we had been a bit ambitious when writing the Plan. The traditional Adult Development program came to an end and the new Pre-Vocational program got its start. Our growing pains didn't go away as we simply ran out of space in the Work Center and the shipping and receiving area. Two hundred sixty-five individuals were given the opportunity to participate in employment training through the many vocational tasks performed daily. We ramped up our marketing strategies through social media and advertising. United Way funding was once again lower. We purchased a client data management system that we had needed for some time. We hired a Development Coordinator to fill the newly created position. We had a successful "Sponsor a Ride" campaign as well as another successful "Spring Fling". Our Work Center Manager of 27 years left Open Avenues. Nine of our clients were hired in competitive jobs in the community.*



*During this very busy year, our management team found it challenging to devote time required to complete actions from the Strategic plan. The first and second year of the plan was heavily loaded and it was necessary to ask the Strategic Planning Committee to revise some of the target dates. There is significant dialogue within the industry of changes coming down the pipe*

*at both the State and Federal levels. No one is certain what the changes are or how those changes will impact programs like ours. So for the time being, our Strategic Plan remains our road map for the future. We're just traveling a little slower and keeping an eye out for detours.*



*On August 30<sup>th</sup> we said goodbye to some old friends who had been clients at Open Avenue since its inception. The clients were in our Adult Development program but were unable to fully participate any longer. We had notified the families/guardian months in advance in an effort to make the transition easy. The AD program was being restructured to include Pre-Vocational activities that might better prepare individuals for working in the Work Center. The restructuring was part of the Strategic Plan. The new program started on October 1<sup>st</sup> with 11 clients and can have as many as 12 participate.*

*The growing pains experienced since we moved to the new facility haven't gone away, even though we served slightly fewer clients than the previous year. The Work Center is overcrowded, the shipping and receiving area is almost always jam-packed and the buses are at capacity. As outlined in our Strategic Plan, it's time to add additional staff. During FY 2013-14, Open Avenues served 265 clients compared to 281 the previous year. Our average daily attendance was 96. Our Adult Development/Pre-Vocational program served 23 clients, while the Work Activity component served 25. There were five Public School students who worked for the summer but they were not funded through the Work Experience program. We enrolled 42 new clients during the year compared to 63 last year. Thirty-five clients entered as referrals from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), down from 54 the previous year. ARS referrals came from the following counselors:*

<i>Lorraine Miller:</i>	<i>1 from Washington County</i>
<i>Sarah Jones:</i>	<i>2 from Benton County</i>
<i>Arlis Young:</i>	<i>1 from Washington County</i>
<i>Renisha Rivers:</i>	<i>1 from Washington County</i>
<i>Cathy Thomas:</i>	<i>20 from Benton County</i>
<i>Jennifer Ragsdale:</i>	<i>11 from Benton County</i>

*Thirty-five were enrolled in Assessment. Twenty-nine clients moved from Assessment into Work Adjustment training. Thirty were discharged from Work Adjustment and moved into Extended Services. Nine clients advanced to competitive employment*



positions in the community. We averaged 64 Work Center sponsored or unfunded clients during the year, up from 59 the previous year. Eight clients entered the program directly into the Work Center sponsored category because we were unable to get them into a funded program. This year we served clients from the following communities:

Rogers	Bentonville	Bella Vista	Fayetteville
Lowell	Gravette	Garfield	Pea Ridge
Springdale	Avoca	Centerton	Farmington
Gentry			

The work center continued to provide valuable job training as well as meaningful work through sub-contract jobs for local business and industry. After the previous year's record Work Center sales, we began this fiscal year even stronger. During the first two quarters we exceeded expectations but then fell a bit behind our projections during the third and fourth quarters but still exceeded our annual forecast by \$33,524. Work Center sales ended the year at \$474,779. That was an 11% increase over the previous year. Client training allowances were also up 8% to \$304,043. The labor/sales ratio was 64% with 50% being the benchmark.





*Open Avenues' Work Center sub-contracted with 20 companies for 54 different jobs. The largest contract (Ring Snuggies) made up 27% of sales and the top five made up 80%. We did business this last year with the following companies/businesses:*

Assembled Products Corporation

AXIA3PL

Bentonville Chamber of Commerce

Cumberland Concepts

Daisy Outdoor Products

Deffenbaugh

Earest, Inc.

Freeosk

Hart Tackle, LLC

Hillshire Brands

Kennametal

Ring Snuggies/Springdale Acoustics

Rogers/Lowell Chamber of Commerce

The Boutique

The RoArk Group, Inc.

United Way of Northwest Arkansas

Walmart

Walmart Print Solutions

Walmart Reverse Logistics

Whistler Group



*Empowering adults with disabilities by providing employment education, life skills training and meaningful work*



*Supplementing area business and industries' workforce and production capacity*



*One of the actions outlined in the Strategic Plan was the purchase and implementation of a new client data management system. We received a grant to pay for the system's first year from the Carl and Alleen McKinney Charitable Trust. After significant research, the system chosen was Vertex. Our management team began training on the Client Payroll Manager section July 1<sup>st</sup> and we went live with that on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The system wasn't as intuitive as we had hoped and proved to be more challenging than we expected. A great deal of time and energy went into the execution and as a result, we fell a bit behind on other objectives in the Strategic Plan. But our excellent staff hung tough and made the best of it. We will be learning the Case Records Manager section of Vertex in the coming year.*

*Our Foundation Director finally got the help she needed in a Development Coordinator. This too, was a goal from our Strategic Plan. We feel we hired the perfect person for the job and a great addition to the Open Avenues team. The Foundation Director and Development Coordinator are also responsible for our marketing efforts and are doing a remarkable job keeping Open Avenues current in social media. Open Avenues has a Facebook page and LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. Throughout the year the Foundation Director and I continued to work with our Hartsook consultant developing strategies for future campaigns for programs and other strategic planning initiatives. The "Sponsor-a-Ride" campaign raised \$66,709. The proceeds from Spring Fling was a net of \$125,000. We appreciate the board members and many volunteers who help to make Spring Fling a success. We were able to successfully apply for Local Choice Grants. The combination of Open Avenues investment funds now total \$161,527.*

### **GRANTS RECEIVED:**

*AFP Northwest Arkansas Chapter*

*AHTD 5316 Grant*

*AHTD 5310 Grant*

*Carl and Alleen McKinney Charitable Trust*

*Jarden Consumer Solutions*

*The Allstate Foundation*

*United Way*

*Walmart Foundation*

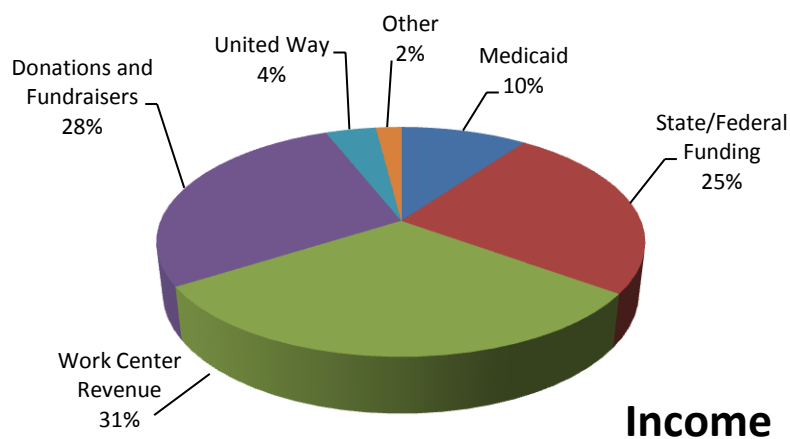
*Walmart/Sam's Club Local Choice Grants*

*Walmart Supercenter Store #1*

Open Avenues operated a fleet of eight buses, averaging over 8,000 miles a month. We applied for a grant for another bus from the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) and were awarded a bus grant, although we didn't receive delivery of the bus during this fiscal year. We continued to receive some operating reimbursement funds through the Job Access 5316 program at AHTD on the buses we have. The 5316 program grant provided \$93,951 for operation of our transportation system. This program was scheduled to end October 1, 2013 but was extended through this fiscal year. Eddie Duncan, our fleet and driver manager, continues to do an excellent job seeing that our equipment is well maintained, repaired, clean and above all, safe. Because our buses are kept in such good shape, the AHTD has kept us on the two-year cycle instead of annual inspection.

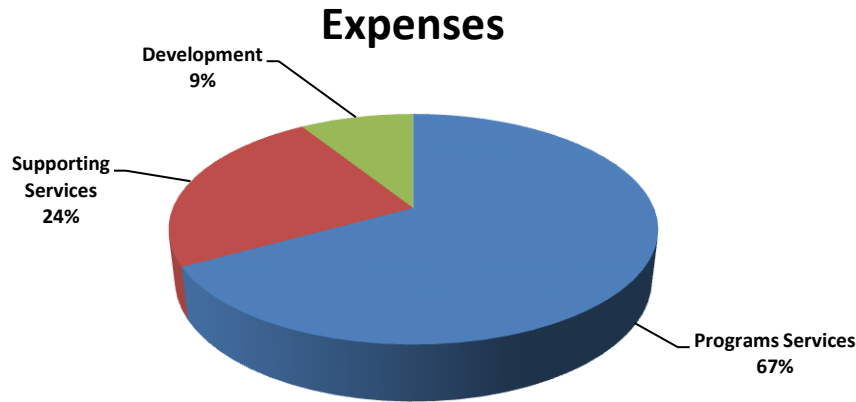


Total support and revenue was down \$239,186, due largely from the sale of the 1906 Town West Drive facility in the previous year. State and federal grants were down \$92,663 due to fewer referrals and because we received no Community Development Block Grant monies. We had a slight increase in Medicaid funding. United Way funding was down \$10,521. It's easy to see one of the reasons it was a challenging year. But as previously noted, Work Center revenue was up 11%.



The New Market Tax Credit transaction results in a quarterly distribution from the Open Avenues Investment Fund at Heartland Renaissance Fund. We applied those distributions to reduce the principle of the GAP loan. The principle was reduced from \$637,343 to \$357,252.

Total expenses were up \$38,675 from the previous year. The major contributing factors for the increase were staff salaries/wages, client wages, health/life insurance, bus maintenance/repairs, and building, vehicle and liability insurance.



We appreciate you who are willing to give your time and talents to Open Avenues as board members. The staff and the people we serve thank you for your advocacy, support and leadership.

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Nine clients left Open Avenues for competitive employment in Northwest Arkansas. We hope the preparation they received in our training program will help them to be successful in their new jobs. While it isn't the goal for everyone who receives our services, it is the ultimate goal for many. We continue to help each individual achieve the level of independence they are capable of and to prepare them for the type of work for which they are suited.

*Before the year ended, we hired a new Work Center Manager who would take the helm July 1<sup>st</sup>. Once again, we feel we found the perfect addition to our team and look forward to his contribution to our successful Work Center.*



*Open Avenues continues to improve the lives of people with disabilities in Northwest Arkansas. We open avenues to learning and success for our clients. For their families and friends we open avenues to support. For our business and industrial partners we open avenues to an exceptional workforce and the opportunity to support our training program.*



# Thank you for your support!

Donors from  
July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

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3W Magazine  
4C Foods Corp  
Abide Furniture and Interiors  
Abuelo's Mexican Food Embassy  
Adele Swilley  
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The Clorox Company Foundation  
The Creeks Golf Course  
The First Tee  
The Frame Shoppe  
The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.  
The Hershey Company - United Way Matching Funds  
The Patio  
The Tan Company  
Thrasher & Chambers, Inc.  
Three Dog Bakery  
Todd and Kathy Matherly  
Tom and Becky McCoy  
Tusk & Trotter American Brasserie  
Ty and Janet King  
Tyson Foods, Inc.  
United Methodist Women  
United Way of Northwest Arkansas  
United Way of Tampa Bay  
US Nutrition  
Vanessa Sidwell  
Vickey Boozman  
Vicki S. Vasser  
Vicki Waldon  
VTech  
Waco Title Company  
Walker and Associates Realtors, Inc.  
Walmart Financial Services, Dept. 8768  
Walmart Foundation  
Walmart Small Formats Dept. #01-9690  
Walmart Store Layout #8805  
Walmart Supercenter #1  
Walmart Transportation  
Wealth Path Investment Advisors  
Welspun USA, Inc.  
Whistler Group  
Woodland Photography  
Zac and Jennifer McCool  
Zelda Capehart



