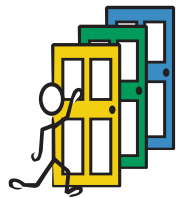


# LEARNING GROWING TRANSFORMING

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## OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Opportunity Knocks is dedicated to providing opportunities and resources for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities so they may pursue their educational, occupational and social interests.

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# LEARNING

## A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTORS

We are always learning, growing and transforming at Opportunity Knocks. Every step of our evolution is driven by an awesome collective of community. Last year was no exception as these collective efforts led to great mission impact.

### THE FARM, SEASON 2

We harvested lessons from season one, transitioning from a trial-and-error crop planning approach, to more strategic crop planning honed on fueling our social enterprises and feeding programs. We also implemented multiple innovative farming systems.

### THE JUNIOR BOARD

We cultivated youth in our community by forming a new organizational board made up of high school students from Fenwick, OPRF and Trinity.

As we reflect back, we also worked hard to learn from our families, supporters and community about how we should go forward in developing our mission.

### LIFE SHOP EXPANSION

During months of preparation for launch of the 3rd day of programming in the Life Shop day program, we engaged Warrior families with in-depth surveys and focus groups. Through this, we honed our programming approach for the launch of the 3rd day in September of 2017.

### A GROWING PARTNERSHIP

OK inherited the Warrior Stars Initiative from Trinity Volunteer Corps at Dominican University where Warriors are teamed up with DU students to work in a variety of roles on campus and in the community.

### FARM CURRICULUM GROWTH

With new systems and new dedicated staff in place, we are growing the farming curriculum to engage Warriors in new learning opportunities.

### HEALTHY WARRIORS

We grew our health and wellness programming by developing Workout Warriors, a program focused on physical fitness and nutrition activities.

### WARRIORS AT WORK

We continued to grow our enterprises, Knockout Pickles and the Warrior Catering Company, connecting both to Warrior-cultivated produce from the farm, while also sustaining 8 paid Warrior jobs.

As we cultivate our programs going forward, we continue to grow our need for support. Strong partnerships, volunteers, sponsors, donors and other supporters will sustain our growth and allow this organization to evolve into what it can ultimately become. We are grateful for your passion and dedication to the mission and hope to have you with us on the journey ahead.

Thank you for your continued support,

  
Phil Carmody  
PRESIDENT

  
Mike Carmody  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2017 WARRIOR  
EMPLOYMENT:

8

PAID WARRIORS

357

PAID WARRIOR  
HOURS

KARISA  
RESPECT

A Warrior is polite, civilized and has a great attitude.

MADDY

A Warrior is a great leader with a great attitude.

LEADERSHIP

MIKE

A Warrior is a good sport and a good team player.

TEAMWORK

KAREEM

A Warrior likes to do fun activities like play basketball.

WELLNESS

PATRICK

A Warrior is welcoming.

COMMUNICATION

NICK

A Warrior helps people when they need help.

SAFETY

## WHAT IS A WARRIOR?

### OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe Milburn | **PRESIDENT**  
Claudia Marciniak | **VICE PRESIDENT**  
Karen Hunter | **SECRETARY**  
Thomas McShane | **TREASURER**

**DIRECTORS**  
Michelle Anderson  
Terry Brown  
John Carmody  
Mike Fair  
William Finn  
Kathy Klaus

John Lawrence  
Jim Lencioni  
Andrew MacGregor  
Mike McGarry  
Jim O'Rourke

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Fiscal Year 2017

# GROWING

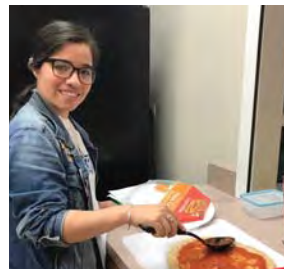
## WE ARE PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF OUR PROGRAMMING AT OK.

Our program methodology is rooted in best practices, and program content is directly guided by the needs and interests of our Warriors and their families. This allows Warriors to take ownership of programs while developing the skills necessary to live self-determined, dynamic and fulfilling lives in the community.



## LIFE SHOP

Life Shop is an adult day program for ages 22 & older. This highly individualized program utilizes small staff ratios to enable Warriors to explore their own independence and skill set, establish appropriate goals and work with peers and Life Shop coaches to achieve these goals.



**828\***  
Program Hours/Year

\*Includes Wednesday program effective September 2017

### PEER-LED PLANNING

**15** Warriors Served

### INDIVIDUALIZED GOALS

**"You feel comfortable in your own skin....the people that come to Opportunity Knocks are so happy and involved. [My daughter] comes home and she feels more independent than ever. She comes home and cooks her own meal."**

— Peggy Huff, Warrior parent

**2:1** WARRIORS TO STAFF RATIO

**"OK's program's are unique because we are always listening to input from key stakeholders. We take the input of Warriors, staff, community and families to do our planning."**

— Joe Hart, Culinary Director

## AFTER OPPTS

After Opps is an after school/work program that offers social and recreational activities of all kinds. Each session's activities are determined through a collaborative partnership between Warrior participants and OK Staff.

**"It's like a family. It's like brothers and sisters, having fun. Chatting with other people you don't know and getting to know them better. You can play basketball in the gym, have dance parties in the KG room, have dinner every Friday."**

— Matt Cox, Warrior

**324**  
Program Hours/Year



**92**  
UNIQUE ACTIVITIES



10% Peer Planned

40+% Dedicated to wellness



**SIXTY**  
WARRIOR PARTICIPANTS

**4:1**

Warriors To Staff Ratio

## WARRIOR WELLNESS

Warrior Wellness is embedded in all capacities of the organization and aims to increase healthy habits through physical activity, nutrition and wellness education, cooking and farming.

**WORKOUT WARRIORS**  
PROVIDES MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITH APPLIED LEARNING TOPICS



**42**  
Program Hours/Year

**15 WARRIORS SERVED**

### WALK TO RUN CLUB

ENCOURAGES WARRIORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO WALK/RUN 1-2 MILES ON THURSDAYS FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER.

**32**  
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

**138**  
MILES LOGGED IN 2017

# TRANSFORMING

Peer-led planning has served as a great opportunity for Warriors to amplify their voice. This expression has created opportunities to build both competence and confidence while also developing an ever-growing sense of autonomy.

## VOICE

Georgia's mom Karen says, "OK After Opps has provided a consistent support system as Georgia navigated community life after high school. She is going to school to pursue her interest in culinary arts, works at Trader Joe's and Warrior Catering and is a fearless advocate for both Special Olympics and Opportunity Knocks." Life Shop Director Kim Meares has known Georgia through OK for 5+ years, "Georgia is a great example of someone who embraces her voice to live the life that she wants to live."

**"I FEEL LIKE GEORGIA IS USING HER VOICE TO LIVE THE LIFE THAT SHE WANTS TO LIVE."**



**"KATRINA IS REALLY STARTING TO BUILD A PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY."**

After Opps programs and working for the Warrior Catering Company has given Katrina a new sense of confidence. "I (like to) help out with the food. It makes me feel happy. I like talking to the people and telling them what food we have." After Opps Director Steve Compere credits both experiences for helping Katrina embrace her strengths, "Katrina is really starting to build a presence in the community. I had the opportunity to work side by side with her at a catering event and she was phenomenal. She was doing her job and conversing with the customers. She was at ease, and it was clear that the customers enjoyed the interaction as well."

The community connection is essential in all OK programming. Establishing the presence of Warriors, as well as strengthening the bond of the Warrior to community, community to Warrior is central to our mission.

## INTERDEPENDENCE



## EXPERIENCE

We encourage Warriors to fearlessly experience life without boundaries. Our Warriors are constantly discovering interest in new activities, new foods and new experiences.

Fear of the pilot light kept Life Shop Warrior Max from using the stove to cook on his own. Through 1:1 cooking lessons, Max overcame this fear. Culinary Director Joe Hart agreed, "Max admitted he was very afraid of the oven and did not want to burn himself. Observation and coaching beat down that fear and led to Max putting in and taking out banana bread from the oven all by himself!"

**"MAX LEARNED TO NOT BE SCARED AND TO GIVE IT A TRY!"**

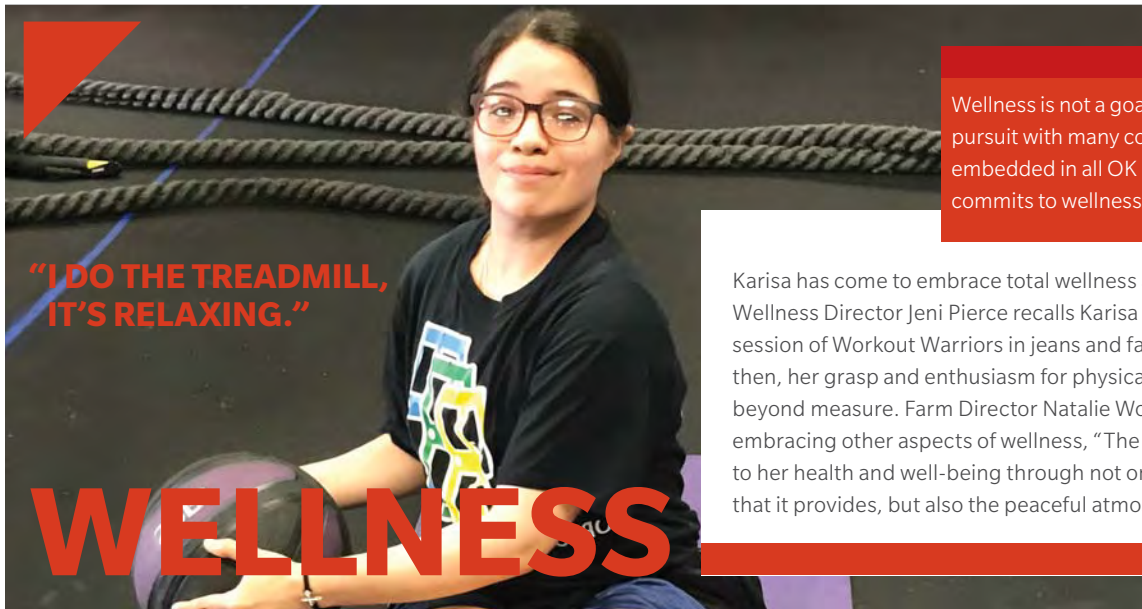


**"I DO THE TREADMILL, IT'S RELAXING."**

Wellness is not a goal to be obtained but a lifetime pursuit with many components. Healthy habits are embedded in all OK programs. The Warrior Way commits to wellness of body, mind and spirit.

Karisa has come to embrace total wellness at OK. Health and Wellness Director Jeni Pierce recalls Karisa coming to the first session of Workout Warriors in jeans and fancy shoes. Since then, her grasp and enthusiasm for physical fitness has grown beyond measure. Farm Director Natalie Woodcock sees Karisa embracing other aspects of wellness, "The OK Farm contributes to her health and well-being through not only the good food that it provides, but also the peaceful atmosphere."

## WELLNESS



**"NICK EXEMPLIFIES CONTAGIOUS POSITIVITY."**

Social experiences that promote safe and healthy friendships are a key part of OK programs. This peer support network gives Warriors opportunity to push themselves out of their comfort zones within programs, but, more importantly, encourages a strong social foundation outside of OK.

Nick loves to socialize. After Opps provides Nick with an opportunity to engage with friends, staff and the community. Program Director Dan Scherer Emunds says, "Nick exemplifies contagious positivity. He lights up a room with his smile and sense of humor! It's impossible to be in a room with Nick and not feel his love."

## SOCIAL



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS IS

# COMMUNITY

## WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE WITH US

We are a community of Warriors and family, staff and local residents, university students and volunteers, municipal servants and park districts, local charities and business owners. At OK, we believe that every one of us has unique and exceptional abilities that strengthen and diversify the fabric of our community. And you've proven that you believe it too!

You, our community partners, are essential to our mission in not only supporting key programming content but also in openly welcoming our Warriors into your facilities, businesses and world. You help us think outside the box to create unique experience for our Warriors, to embrace life in this community. We are grateful for your friendship. We are grateful for your partnership.



**40+**  
PROGRAM PARTNERS

**3**  
UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

**9**  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERS

**8**  
WELLNESS PARTNERS

**“Opportunity Knocks is not only filled with amazing people, but they have an amazing product. We are honored to carry their pickles here and fully support their mission.”**

— Carnivore, specialty meat, seafood and produce market

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS IS

# WORKING

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISE THE OK FARM

The OK Farm was launched in April 2016 through a land partnership with Reuse Depot and a tremendous amount of support from many others in terms of volunteer hours, landscape/garden supplies and equipment. In a short period of time, we turned a 2,500 square foot field off Madison Street into lush, handicap-accessible urban farm.

The lessons learned from our pilot 2016 season were instrumental in planning and operating the Farm in 2017:

**\$26,500**  
IN-KIND DONATIONS FROM 15 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Intentional planting and greater varieties to serve programs and feed pickle production at Knockout Pickles
- Installation of a rain catchment system to reduce water usage by 50%
- Installation of composting system to achieve zero farm waste

**35**  
PLANT VARIETIES

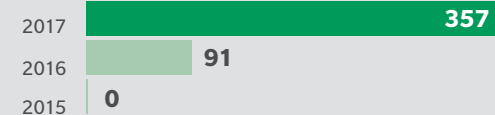
**1330lbs**  
TOTAL HARVEST

**714lbs**  
CUCUMBER HARVEST

### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE REVENUE



### PAID WARRIOR HOURS



### KNOCKOUT PICKLES

We deliver Warrior-made small batch, artisanal pickles to local area restaurants and retail outlets. Our customers not only support our pickle business but invest in our mission and paid Warrior employment.



### WARRIOR CATERING COMPANY

We operate a seasonal business that provides high quality, small-scale catering for community and private events.



# 2017 FINANCIALS

**\$868,525**

OUR RESOURCES | Revenues and Support



**41% SPECIAL EVENTS (NET)** | \$353,563

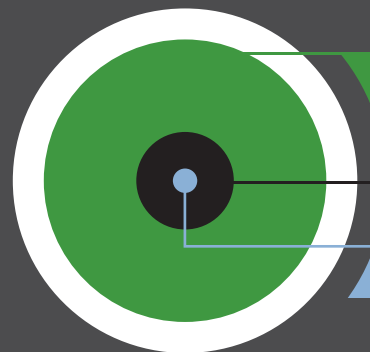
**28% GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS** | \$241,435

**18% PROGRAM INCOME** | \$158,255

**13% IN-KIND DONATIONS/OTHER** | \$115,272

**\$845,556**

HOW WE USED OUR RESOURCES | Total Expenses



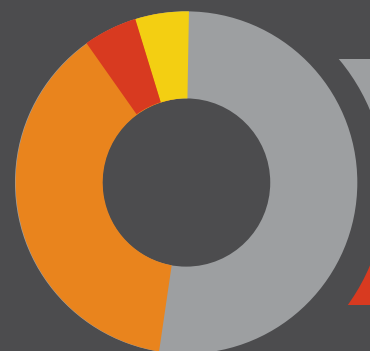
**82% PROGRAM SERVICES** | \$695,602

CORE MISSION SUPPORT

**16% FINANCE, HR, BOARD** | \$135,673

**02% FUNDRAISING & PARTNERS** | \$14,281

WHERE WE USED OUR RESOURCES | Programs



**52% LIFE SHOP**

**38% AFTER OPPS**

**05% MORNING OPPS**

**05% SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

EVERYTHING WE DO IS MADE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF YOU.

Our generous, enthusiastic and dedicated supporters give online, write checks, volunteer at events and find 100 other ways to support us each and every year. Our mission simply couldn't move forward without you...

**355** SOFTBALL PLAYERS RAISED MORE THAN **\$100,000** AT OUR ANNUAL OK CLASSIC

**550+** WARRIORS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS GATHERED AT OUR NIGHT FOR OPPORTUNITIES GALA

**86** RUNNERS FROM **14** STATES PARTICIPATED IN OUR VIRTUAL WARRIOR MILE FUN RUN.

MORE THAN **200** DONORS CONTRIBUTED TO OUR GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN, INCLUDING **112** 1ST TIME DONORS

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD PALS RAISED MORE THAN **\$5,000** AT THE KNOCKTOBERFEST HOT CIDER STAND

MORE THAN **900** HOURS WERE GENEROUSLY DONATED BY EVENT VOLUNTEERS





# LEARNING GROWING TRANSFORMING

## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

We know that we can't fulfill our vision of community on our own. Your generosity and support are critical, and there are many ways to get involved and make a difference.

**Visit [opportunityknocksnow.org](http://opportunityknocksnow.org) for details.**

**CONNECT** | Like us, love us!

We love social media! Follow us to keep up with the latest Warrior happenings in programs, special events and much more. We also maintain a blog on our website where we feature the voices of our Warriors, staff and volunteers.



**OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS**  
8020 Madison Street  
River Forest, IL 60605