



PROJECT READ

Changing Lives Through Literacy

FY2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Overview

Adult non-literacy is a social problem that silently affects us all. In Utah alone, more than 250,000 adults are functionally non-literate, and in Utah County, that number is 21,000 adults (Utah Adult Education Annual Statistics Report, 1994). This means thousands of adults cannot perform basic functions such as writing checks, reading instructions on medicine, getting a driver’s license, or finding an address. “It can’t be emphasized enough that there is a huge impact on this country when many people cannot read or write well,” said Robert Wedgewort, President of ProLiteracy Worldwide. “We’ve seen that adults with lower literacy levels do not generate significant incomes. This can cause a decline in personal income per capita, which will, in turn, have a significant impact on the tax bases of many states. Accordingly, there is a higher need for public assistance among low literate adults than for individuals with stronger literacy ability.”

“One adult unable to read is one too many in America,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.

For businesses, non-literacy translates into lost dollars: U.S. businesses lose \$25–30 billion a year due to poor literacy skills of employees and customers. Non-literacy also costs taxpayers millions of dollars due to increasing numbers of people on public assistance (ProLiteracy Worldwide Report on Literacy Programs).

Project Read served almost 100 students this past year to combat the cycle of illiteracy in Utah County. This report details its successes.

Volunteer Contribution

Without a doubt, volunteers are the lifeblood of Project Read. Project Read could not fulfill its mission without the help of the 132 dedicated volunteers this year who helped teach students and train tutors. Volunteers also helped with fundraising, public relations, web site and technical support, web site translation, and general office tasks. Project Read board members are also volunteers.

VOLUNTEER	HOURS
Tutoring	4,556.50
Other Activities	763.00
TOTAL	5,319.50

Asset-based Approach

Project Read focuses on the strengths and skills the adults already possess and then uses those strengths and skills to encourage the development of literacy skills. Tutors are trained to apply reading and writing skills to everyday life so the adults see how what they are learning is applicable and feel successful in their quest for literacy skills. The adults in the program also realize that they are not completely without literacy skills, and they may just need to strengthen the skills they already possess.

Student Successes

In Fiscal Year 2008, Project Read served 78 students. Project Read focuses on retention until a student completes the program or accomplishes his or her goals. Goals and outcomes will continue to be the focus of Project Read services and will be measured through standardized literacy assessments, Individual Education Plans, and monthly tutoring calendars.



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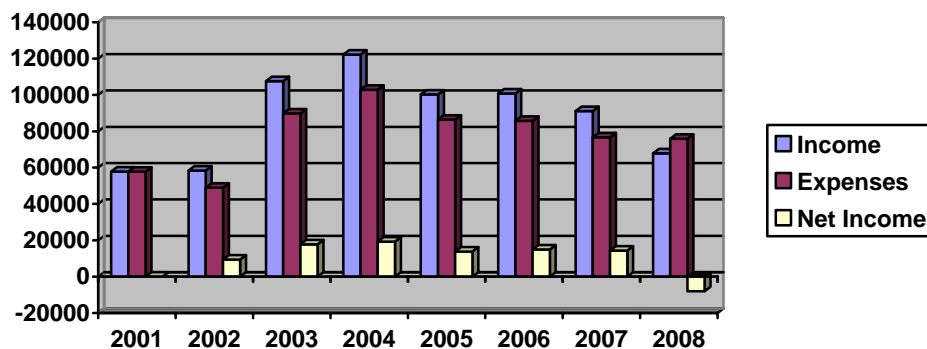
GOAL	STUDENTS
Students entering employment	9
Students retaining employment	33
Students improving employment	9
Students receiving a raise	5
Students achieving level gains	17
Students obtaining a GED	1
Students placed in postsecondary education/training	2
Students passing INEA certification exams	1
Students obtaining a driver's license	1
Students achieving citizenship skills	1
Students increasing confidence	40
Students achieving other literacy goals	2
TOTAL	121

During FY2008, 95 percent of the Project Read students who were retested using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) increased their skills in either reading, language, or math. In addition, in FY2008, 74 percent of Project Read's students achieved their goals, compared to 56 percent in FY2007, 64 percent in FY2006, 63 percent in FY2005, 44 percent in FY2004, 31 percent in FY2003 and 23 percent in FY2002.

Financial Highlights

Project Read has improved its financial outlook dramatically since 2001. Although revenues and expenditures have both increased, the amount of income has increased at a higher rate than the rate of expenses, and the amount of unrestricted net assets has more than quadrupled since 2001.

Income, Expenses and Net Income Fiscal Year 2001 to 2008



Fundraising

Project Read relies on grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations to continue offering its services for a minimal fee. Without continued community support, Project Read could not realize the successes it has each year. Give the fundamental gift of reading. Please contact Project Read Director Shauna K. Brown at (801) 852-6654 to donate.

550 N. University Avenue, Suite 215 • Provo, Utah 84601 • www.project-read.com
 Phone: (801) 852-6654 • Fax: (801) 852-7663 • project_read@provo.lib.ut.us • Contact: Shauna K. Brown



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Volunteer Hours Contributed

Volunteer Activity	Hours Spent
Tutoring (English Literacy) – 80	4,168.75
Tutoring (Spanish Literacy) – 6	387.75
Fundraising – 9	300.00
Spanish web site translation – 5	100.00
General public relations – 2	100.00
Board meetings – 12	95.50
Office tasks – 7	80.00
Web site/technical support – 2	50.00
Training/orientation – 9	37.50
Total	5,319.50

Student Level Gains

Level Growth	Decrease	No Change	0–0.9	1–1.9	2–2.9	3+	Totals
0–2.9	0	0	1	3	2	4	10
3–4.9	0	0	1	1	0	2	4
5–6.9	1	0	2	0	0	2	5
Totals	1	0	4	4	2	8	19

Goals Achieved

Goal	Number Achieving Goal
Students entering employment	9
Students retaining employment	33
Students improving employment	9
Students receiving a raise	5
Students achieving level gains	17
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Total	121

**Project Read served a total of 78 students and utilized the services of 132 volunteers
We could not do it without you!**



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FY2008 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Employment Status

Employment Status	Number of Students	Percentage
Employed—Full	36	46%
Employed—Part	11	14%
Not in the Labor Force	20	26%
Unemployed	11	14%

Household

Household	Number of Students	Percentage
Dependent	7	9%
Group Quarters	0	0%
Head: 2 Parent	25	32%
Head: No Dependents	25	32%
Head: Single Parent	6	8%
Living Alone	15	19%

Income Level

Income Level (for 1 person)	Number of Students	Percentage
30% (<\$11,800)	38	49%
Very Low (<\$19,650)	15	19%
60% (<\$23,550)	11	14%
Low/Moderate (<\$31,400)	8	10%
Above Poverty (<\$31,401+)	6	8%

City

City	Number of Students	Percentage
Lehi	1	1%
Orem	16	21%
Payson	1	1%
Pleasant Grove	3	4%
Provo	49	63%
Saratoga Springs	1	1%
Spanish Fork	3	4%
Springville	4	5%

Age/Ethnicity/Gender

Age Group	Ethnicity/Gender										TOTAL
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Black not of Hispanic Origin		Hispanic		White not of Hispanic Origin		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
19–24	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	5
25–44	0	0	1	8	1	1	7	22	4	2	46
45–59	0	0	0	2	0	0	5	10	1	4	22
60+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5
TOTAL	1	0	1	10	1	1	13	37	7	7	78
Males: 23 / Females: 55											



PROJECT READ

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FY2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Changes Completed in FY2008

Spelling Bee Fundraiser: Project Read hosted its first spelling bee fundraiser to raise literacy awareness and funds for Project Read. Community members gathered for an afternoon of friendly competition and community spirit in September. As noted in the *Deseret Morning News* article by Elizabeth Stuart:

Although the competition was tough — spellers struggled with words like "sudoriferous" and "braggadocio" — the mood stayed spirited. If a team was stumped after the allotted one-minute deliberation, spellers could turn to the audience for feedback, ask a panel of three judges for their opinion or look the word up in the dictionary.

"I didn't want it to be serious or scary like the National Spelling Bee you see on TV," said Shauna Brown, executive director of Project Read. "It's more fun when the audience gets involved and there's not so much pressure to perform."

Hardly anyone was serious.

"The Nelson Nerds," geeky in too-short pants and suspenders, prepped for each round by gathering in a circle and stretching. "The U-Knighted Way," a team of spellers from the United Way, another nonprofit organization, donned cardboard crowns and brandished tinfoil-covered swords before taking the stage. The director of the Provo Library buzzed around in a yellow-and-black striped bee suit.

For most, picking out a team name and a costume was the most time-consuming part of preparing for the spelling bee.

"I printed out a study guide, but I didn't quite make it to 'W,'" said Jana Clayson, whose team, "Bee's Knees" was eliminated after misspelling the word "wharfinger."

It was a single-elimination competition. One minute spellers were rattling off the letters in "calzone," the next they were stumbling over the word "paradisiacal."

It was a successful event that paved the way for future spelling bees. Everyone involved had a great time, and hopefully that will catapult us toward 2008 and a future event that will raise significant funds. In the future teams will be allowed to use lifelines multiple times per round, but the price will double each time the same lifeline is used in a round. In addition, rather than using a "single elimination" method, there will be 25 words per round; the team with the most correctly spelled words in a round is declared the winner and moves on to the final round. Finally, the audience will be invited to "spell along" and prizes will be awarded at the end of each round to the audience member who spells the most words correctly.

Scholastic Book Fair Fundraiser: Project Read partnered with Scholastic for a two-day book fair held in conjunction with the Spelling Bee fundraiser. The event was successful; however, the ROI was low and this event will probably not be held in the future. The book fair must sell at least \$1,500 to get a cash profit, so we received our profit in book vouchers instead.

Barnes and Noble Book Fair Fundraiser: Project Read partnered with Barnes and Noble for a week-long book fair where a percentage of all purchases made by patrons who presented a Project Read voucher were donated to Project Read. On Saturday, the bookstore featured events such as an Easter egg hunt, story time, games and prizes, and an author signing, which attracted more people to the book fair. Volunteers assisted with the fundraiser, and a public relations student volunteer from BYU planned the event and coordinated news outreach.

TABE Training for Staff: A UVSC service learning volunteer, in coordination with the Project Read Volunteer Coordinator, designed a training for Project Read staff members on how to administer the new TABE (9 & 10). This training is offered to all new Project Read employees, and a refresher course is held for all Project Read employees in April of each year, prior to the annual reassessment of all Project Read students in May.



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FY2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tutor Support: The Project Read staff implemented a tutor support system, including, but not limited to, regular contact, resource materials, ongoing training opportunities, and the setting of instructional goals. Many of these aspects are already in place and are being enhanced to better fit tutor needs.

Background Checks: Project Read now conducts background checks on all current and future staff members and volunteer tutors. Project Read staff has the responsibility to conduct background checks, to review the results of those background checks with other staff members, to eliminate staff and tutoring candidates with convictions for sexual or physical abuse, to ask the staff or volunteer in question for more information as needed, and to feel free to consult with the executive committee for further direction.

Training Certification: Project Read now has a certified ProLiteracy trainer in both basic literacy and ESL (this required the trainer to pass three content exams, receive a positive trainer observation and positive training evaluations, and agree to a code of ethics). Project Read depends on trainers who demonstrate commitment to both quality instruction and their own professional development. A certified trainer is evidence of this commitment. The certification is valid for four years, and to recertify, the trainer will need to be an active trainer during the four-year certification term and complete a minimum of 40 points of professional development during this time. In addition, any volunteer who attends a training conducted by the certified trainer is eligible for a six-month membership in ProLiteracy free. Benefits include:

- Notebook: 16 pages of hands-on, practical, and proven teaching and tutoring techniques to use with students right away!
- Access to the Members Only section of ProLiteracy's Web site with information and resources.
- \$30 off a three-issue subscription to Adult Basic Education & Literacy Journal. Its 64 pages offer research, theory, commentary, and practical information on adult basic education, literacy, and numeracy.

Training Upgrade: The Project Read Tutor Training has been upgraded to a PowerPoint presentation rather than a random conglomeration of board work, handouts, and overhead slides. This upgrade has improved the fluidity of the training and ensures important information is not inadvertently skipped.

Annual Report: Project Read now has a more visually appealing version of its annual report including a brief history of Project Read (including a definition of literacy, history of Project Read, and an explanation of Project Read's core programs and policies); a message from the Executive Director; vision statement; mission statement; and goals. Each of the four main goals are then broken out (providing training and development, designing and implementing a plan for student recruitment, providing quality instruction, and ensuring financial health) and focus placed on the accomplishments Project Read made in each of these areas in FY2007. There were also slides giving an overview Volunteer Hours Contributed, Student Goals Achieved, Contributors and Sponsors, Leadership and Volunteers, and financial statements.

Fund Development: Project Read developed a plan to further diversify its funding sources. One way to do this is to solicit several small corporate donations (\leq \$1,000). Corporate donations typically have no strings attached, unlike grants. Also, the loss of two small donations will not have the negative impact on Project Read's financial stability that the loss of one large grant can have. One of the best ways to get businesses to donate to Project Read is to have them hear directly from the students whose lives Project Read has helped improve. In the past two weeks Project Read, with the help of the local Toastmasters' club, hosted a successful public speaking training for members of the Students Speakers' Forum. We now have a group of trained and confident current and former students who are willing to approach local businesses and pitch for donations.

Summer Intern: Project Read hired a summer intern this year to get its databases up to date. The Utah State Office of Education, which administers the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) federal grant, implemented a statewide online database (UTopia) this year, and the summer intern made sure all of Project Read's data in Utopia was complete and accurate. He also worked on miscellaneous projects such as the Spanish Literacy program, blogs, and small group instruction.



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FY2009 PLANS

Changes Planned for FY2009

Institutional History, Transparency & Governance: Building an organization committed to the highest ethical standards demands more than just following the law: it also requires fostering practices that create an environment of transparency, accountability, and integrity. The Project Read Director has been working to put together an institutional history to facilitate program stability in case of staff turnover, new board members, audits, etc. An institutional history will also help with contingency planning, business continuity planning, consistent policies, controls, and avoiding missed deadlines. Along with the institutional history, Project Read is trying to be more transparent by allowing its donors, volunteers, and staff easy access to key documents such as vision and mission statements, statement of values and code of ethics, form 990, etc.

Accreditation: This year, Project Read is continuing to move toward its goal of national accreditation through ProLiteracy America Accreditation, which is the only national accreditation system in the adult education and literacy field. National accreditation will help facilitate long-term stability, enhance credibility in the community, and increase public recognition of Project Read's services. It provides a recognizable stamp of quality for local literacy providers. Project Read is going through a process of comprehensively evaluating its strengths and weaknesses and bringing about continuous improvement of operations. Accreditation assures students, volunteers, employees, funders, and the community at large that the organization implements high-quality services within a sound management framework.

Tutor Mentor Program: Project Read is working with its training committee to set up a tutor mentor program wherein seasoned volunteer tutors will mentor novice tutors extensively for the first month and then serve as a resource and referral source for the tutors throughout their tutoring experience with Project Read.

Transition Program: The Project Read Director, with direction from the Board of Trustees is investigating the development of a program to help Project Read students who are graduating from the program transition into other programs that will help them meet their goals—including getting a GED or high school diploma, or passing the TOEFL.

Speakers Forum: Project Read is developing a speakers' forum to help Project Read students feel more comfortable speaking at community outreach events, grant presentations, etc. Current Project Read students and graduates will then be used as "champions of literacy" as they tell their story and spread the word about Project Read and adult literacy.

Small Group Instruction: In addition to the one-on-one instruction that is the hallmark of the Project Read program, the staff is developing several small groups that will enhance students' learning experiences. Small groups might include a book club, writing group, computer group, conversation club, and speakers' forum. These groups will allow students to start learning as soon as they enter the program rather than having to wait to be paired with a tutor. Then, as soon as a tutor becomes available, they will be able to receive the benefit of both one-on-one and small group instruction.

Tutor Best Practices: A Project Read staff member will attend two to four tutoring sessions each month to get a feel for what's happening "in the field." Staff members will have an opportunity to observe what is going on in tutoring sessions as well as offer suggestions for "best practices" and glean ideas to share with other tutors in the program.

Student Newsletter: The Project Read Program Coordinator is in the process of developing a quarterly student newsletter. The newsletter will be printed in English and Spanish and include a brief calendar, incorporating both Project Read and community events relevant to Project Read students. The newsletter will also contain a spotlight of a community resource and a spotlight of student successes. Eventually, we would like a Student Writing Group to handle the quarterly publication.



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FY2009 PLANS

Blog (Tutors, Students, Supporters): Project Read is in the process of creating three blogs that can be accessed from its web site. The first blog will be targeted at Project Read volunteers, specifically tutors, and will be a place where they can interact online—asking questions, sharing answers, experience, frustrations, and successes. The second blog will be designed as an educational tool for Project Read students—a place where they can interact with their tutor and other students, as well as provide publishing opportunities for student work. The final will be an informational blog about Project Read designed to target current and potential Project Read supporters. Blogs will greatly enhance Project Read's ability to stay connected with its tutors, students, and supporters as well as enhance the educational experience available through Project Read.

Student Goal Research: As part of its strategic planning this year, the Project Read board decided to identify outcomes it values and possible measurements for those outcomes. Outcomes are benefits for participants during or after program activities and usually answer the question, "What change occurred?" Outcomes are about change and may include new knowledge, increased skills, changed attitude or values, modified behavior/practice, and/or change in conditions. In order to identify outcomes valued by Project Read students, information from the goal form students fill out upon intake will be compiled and analyzed for program-wide trends. The goal form is broken into sections such as general, transportation, education, religion, government and law, health, recreation, food, money, employment, and children.

Health Literacy Initiative: When a person cannot read instructions for medicine or instructions from a doctor, it is detrimental to the community. Parents cannot adequately care for the health of their families if they cannot read. More importantly, Project Read serves several students with varying degrees of physical and mental disabilities. By helping these people become more self sufficient and more responsible members of society, Project Read promotes health for the community. The Project Read Health Literacy Initiative will specifically focus on health literacy and the ability to read and understand information relating to health and health care. The initiative will develop a health literacy curriculum that will initially be taught in small groups and eventually adapted for one-on-one instruction.



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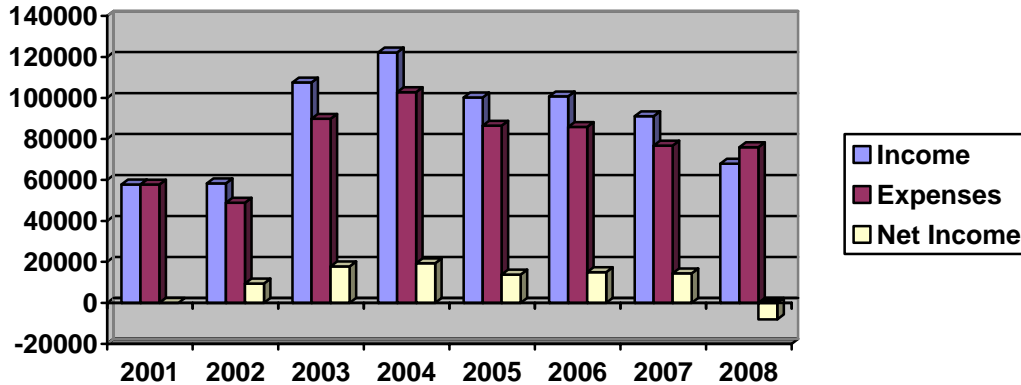
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FY2008 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Project Read Financial Resources

The chart below demonstrates Project Read's financial growth since 2001.

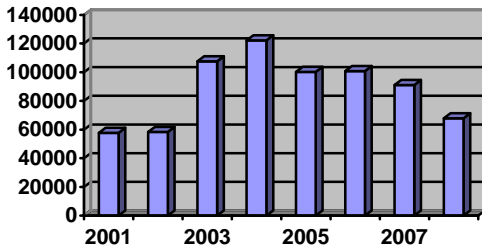
Income, Expenses and Net Income Fiscal Year 2001 to 2008



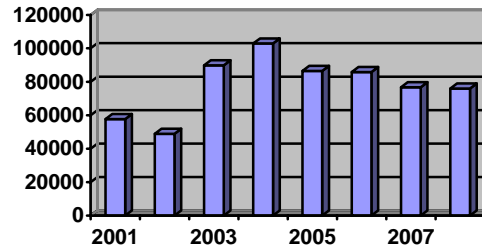
Use of Resources

The following graphs demonstrate how Project Read has improved its financial position since 2001:

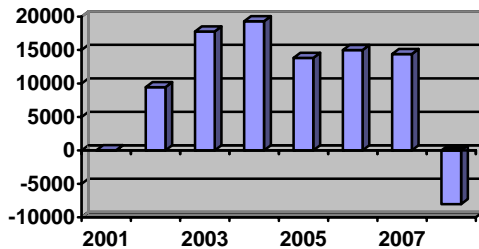
Total Revenue



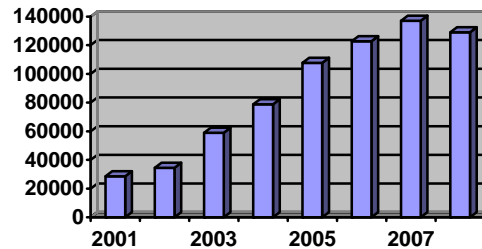
Total Expenses



Net Income/Loss



Unrestricted Net Assets





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FY2008 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial Accomplishments for the Organization

- FY2007 Goal: Annual commitment of placing \$10,000 a year in an endowment fund, without touching the principle; build the endowment to contribute 10% of annual operating expenses. Report: This year, Project Read took \$8,043 from its endowment fund. This year, Project Read took \$8,043 from its endowment fund. This was a rough year, financially, for Project Read. We will continue with our goal to place \$10,000 a year in the endowment fund and hope not to have to touch it in the future until it is contributing at least 10% of annual operating expenses. The endowment is not yet enough to contribute 10% of annual operating expenses, but it is growing and once again raised almost \$5,000 in investment income—this is approximately 6.4% of the cash expenditures for Project Read in FY2008.
- FY2007 Goal: Corporate support currently provides 9.7% of annual cash income. Next year, corporate support should provide at least 15% of annual income. Report: This year corporate support provided 12.4% of annual cash income—a 2.7% increase from last year. We are still not at the 15% we hoped for, but it is a goal to continue to work toward.
- FY2007 Goal: Increased diversification of fundraising sources, decreased reliance on grant funds. Report: Corporate and individual contributions increased slightly this year, and the creation of the annual Spelling Bee fundraiser further diversified funding sources. As grant funding is increasingly difficult to find, diversification of fundraising sources is essential. Project Read is further working on its goal to find 25 businesses in Utah County to contribute \$1,000 apiece—this is a work in progress.
- FY2007 Goal: All board members become actively involved in fundraising efforts. Report: Most board members were involved in the Spelling Bee fundraiser, and members of the fund development committee also helped design a plan to solicit small corporate donation—this plan is set to be implemented in FY2009.

Financial Goals for the Organization

- Annual commitment of placing \$10,000 a year in an endowment fund, without touching the principle; build the endowment to contribute 10% of annual operating expenses.
- Corporate support should provide at least 15% of annual income.
- Increased diversification of fundraising sources, decreased reliance on grant funds.
- All board members become actively involved in fundraising efforts.