

2014: A year of hope and healing

"The Well has been something I needed in my life. To start a new foundation, a new life. It has shown me something I found through the people that care." These comments by a member of The Well Community (The Well) summarizes the powerful, life-changing impact experienced by many this last year. As a nonprofit ministry it is our mission to build community, empower lives, and offer hope. What started twelve years ago as a simple worship outreach to a handful of people in North Oak Cliff has continued to mature into a flourishing, holistic ministry for adults recovering from severe mental illnesses. In 2014 hope and healing became even more possible for many through the ministry of The Well.

2014 Review

OUR VOLUNTEERS

254 Volunteers donated 2,664 hours of volunteer time

Total investment of volunteers' time - \$62,338

OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Number of people served – 286

RACE

Caucasian	41%
African American	35%
Hispanic	24%

SEX

Male	63%
Female	37%

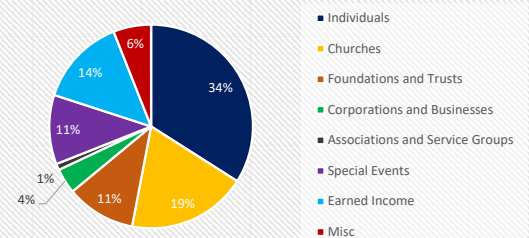
Served adults from 21 to 70 years of age

Direct service hours - 10,280

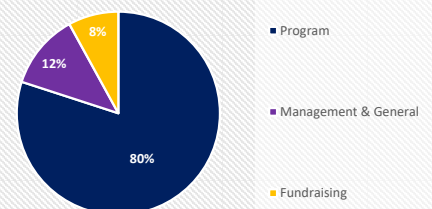
Case management hours - 1, 405

Served 16,483 nutritious meals

Revenue: \$315,840



Expenses: \$339,119



Community

One of the most insidious side effects of mental illness is the destructive impact it has on interpersonal relationships. Many are isolated and lonely, with some having been abandoned by their families and most shunned by society. Feeling rejected and weary of fighting the stigma associated with mental illness, many individuals have simply given up hope.

The Well's **Community Life Center** (CLC) opens its doors each week to those dealing with mental illnesses and who are seeking a place to belong. Here they find acceptance and friendship. They also find new life-skills, access to resources, and renewed self-worth as they become better equipped to manage their illnesses. Here they also have a safe place to develop the necessary social skills to have healthy relationships. Such skills are also needed to secure employment, education, and housing.

Throughout 2014 CLC staff and members worked alongside each other in meaningful activities such as preparing the noonday meal, planning activities and programs, participating in classes, arranging outings and sharing devotionals.

In addition to onsite programs at the CLC, The Well members were able to go on summer swimming excursions and movie outings, experience the Dallas Museum of Art, attend the State Fair of Texas, enjoy

“ I don't get down when I come. I get welcomed and complimented. — A community member ”

Clyde Warren Park, walk in the annual mental illness awareness event NAMI Walk, help in the Community Garden and participate in fall and spring overnight spiritual retreats. A particular highlight for members during September-December 2014 were weekly rehearsals with the Street Choir to prepare to sing with other local groups in the January 2015 performance of the North American premier of the internationally acclaimed *Street Requiem* (to remember those who died homeless). This performance was held at Dallas City Performance Hall, featuring Conductor Dr. Jonathan Palant and the renowned mezzo-soprano Frederica Von Stade.

The Well prepares and serves lunch every day the CLC is open. Through the generosity of volunteers some meals were donated. For example, once a month an entire family comes from Frisco to bring lunch and a second meal, bagged, for members to take home with them. A long time volunteer from Cliff Temple Baptist Church comes every other Tuesday and brings others to serve the lunch she prepares. A Cliff Temple Sunday School class pays for one meal a month. Periodically throughout the year, friends from a local business brought lunch and Baylor student nurse interns provided the noonday meal. At the CLC alone, an amazing 834 hours of volunteer time was donated in 2014!



Empowerment

In addition to the challenges of mental illness, over 90% of our members face the daily despair of living in poverty. It does not take much to fracture their stability. Last year at The Well we helped members through case management, access resources such as: Social Security, housing, transportation, health care, mental health care, counseling, finances, food, clothing, legal aid and benefits. The impact of this assistance has been tangible and real. As one member says, *"The Well means people who love me, respect me, stand up for me, help me."*

In addition to ongoing assistance to members, last year The Well sponsored the course, *Faith and Finances*, a NAMI Peer-to-Peer group and NAMI Family-to-Family classes. Each of these opportunities fostered new knowledge, enduring friendships and life-changing hope.

Housing

Decent and safe housing is one of the most challenging issues for those with mental illnesses. A large amount of staff time is directed at helping our members find housing that is affordable, close to a bus line, desirable and handicapped accessible. For eight men with chronic mental illness, The Well's **Jacob's House** provides such an environment. It is located close to The Well so they can participate in Well activities. Each resident has household chores for which they are responsible. Three meals are provided each day. To supplement our daily meals, neighbors, churches and neighborhood groups periodically brought complete meals and snacks for the residents.

One of our residents at Jacob's House said, *"I tried living at many other places but did not find the supportive environment I needed until I came to Jacob's House."* One activity Jacob House residents enjoyed in 2014 was to help with "Pecan Shell and Sell." A generous supporter invited The Well to collect pecans from their home in Midlothian. Along with others from The Well Community, the men gathered, shelled, and sold pecans for The Well.

In addition, in the spirit of "members helping members," Jacob's House residents readily assisted participants at The Well move from one apartment to another, when needed. They also helped a Boy Scout build a much needed shed in the back of Jacob's House.

Faith, Hope, and Love

At The Well, we believe faith is the doorway to God's love, which opens hearts to hope and healing. Our programs are undergirded with prayer and are designed to move members toward spiritual wholeness. Each day, our community focuses hearts and minds upon God through prayer, scripture study, and worship. Our programs are nonsectarian, welcoming all and denying service to none.

Thursday Night Life, provides a worship opportunity to an average of 80 members, families, and friends each week. The Well's own worship band made up of staff and members, The Leaky Faucets, leads the music while a pastor or lay leader from one of our 40 supporting churches gives the worship message. In 2014 there was an average of seven church members each week from churches all over the metroplex that volunteered to provide and serve the evening meal—donating a total of 1,204 hours of volunteer time. Many volunteers are "regulars," coming back time after time to build relationships with our community members.

Recovery Live

The Well presented its second annual fundraising event called **Recovery Live** at The Kessler Theater on October 30. The event featured the Houston-based Christian Contemporary group, The Robbie Seay Band. The Well's Leaky Faucets Thursday Night Life worship band opened the show. Generous sponsors included Greg and Angelia Venker, Bret and Karen Schuch, Good Space, Covenant RV and Boat Storage, Standard Supply and Distribution, RPGA Design Group, Mary Kay, U Cubed, Steven and Dawn Camp, Carolyn and David Dunnigan, Rev. Wes and Dr. Beth Keyes, Susan and Bill Leftwich, Michelle and Rob Collins, Mary and Joseph Borsh, Four Corners Brewing Co., Christian Johnson/Caliber Home Loans, Chicken Scratch, La Calle Doce, Chad Augspurger, Diann Warnock, Roland Warnock, Janis Pulis. The event raised \$40,578!

In just a few words we have highlighted a number of special opportunities The Well community experienced throughout the year in 2014. But what we hope you have also seen is the steady, stable care that has provided firm footing each day for those whose lives are often confusing and chaotic. Through the generous gifts of supporters, the dedicated efforts of professional staff, and the heroic participation of the members themselves 2014 was, indeed, a year of hope and healing.



The Well Community is the only faith-based nonprofit in the Dallas Metroplex working exclusively with those who suffer from **MENTAL ILLNESS.**

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