



Old Stone Education Center



Annual Report 2009



Cleveland | Ohio



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The staff, Board of Trustees, and our students would like to thank you for your interest and support of the future of the student/families of greater Cleveland. We very much appreciate your on-going financial and volunteer support of our program. With the encouragement of area foundations, corporations and individuals, we are determined to provide the best possible education in academics, parenting, and workforce skills for the mothers of Cleveland who did not complete their high school experience due to childcare issues and economic hardships.

We completed our first ever Strategic Plan in 2009. The planning process was facilitated by Janus Small and Associates. The process included an online Board survey, an online staff survey, interviews with funders and partners, research on selected related local and regional organizations, and four roundtable discussions with current students, current student family members, alumnae, and student drop-outs.

During the planning process, the Strategic Planning committee unanimously made the following immediate changes:

- **Revised mission statement:** The mission of the Old Stone Education Center is to improve lifetime opportunities for women in greater Cleveland who have not completed their high school experience due to childcare needs and economic issues. We enhance the potential of each of our students by providing education in academics, parenting and workforce skills.
- **Revised the name of the organization:** Due to the importance of our name more easily defining our mission and our desire to honor our founders and the home of our organization, the Board of Trustees approved a name change; Old Stone Education Center.

The following are the Old Stone Education Center's goals and key objectives for 2009-2011:

- Build visibility for the Old Stone Education Center
- Deepen and diversify financial base of support
- Clarify and solidify current partnerships and develop new partnerships
- Deepen service to our students
- Secure the governance and administrative core of the organization to best support current and future operations.

Our community and those we serve continue to face many challenges and obstacles in their quest for a life of independence and self-sufficiency. "The data is overwhelming that teen pregnancy has a negative impact on education and employment," says James Wagoner, president of Advocates for Youth, a Washington D.C.-based non-profit. "While that is a problem during any economic cycle, it becomes even more negative during a recession." The amount of students not completing their high school careers within the Cleveland School District and around the country is alarming. Nearly a third of the nation's graduating class each year drops out of high school, affecting 1.2 million teenagers. In Cleveland it is much worse with almost two out of every three students not earning a diploma. The reasons for this huge drop-out rate ranges from pregnancy and poverty, to discipline problems, and for many a simple lack of interest in the curriculum. Research shows that people who have children in their teens are less likely to get a high school diploma or go on to college. After declining for 15 years, the teen pregnancy rate is now on the rise in the United States, which has by the far the highest rate in the industrialized world. Only 40 percent of teen moms who give birth at age 17 or earlier finish high school according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

As a staff and community, we continue to search for ways to ensure greater participation and successes for our students. We have added components to the program and to the marketing arm of the organization to best serve the families of Northeast Ohio:

- In partnership with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland we are offering a Big Sister/Mentoring Program to our students with area volunteers. The program began in the spring of 2009. The goal is to match students with area women who want to make a difference in a family's life. Our hope is that by providing a positive role model in our student's lives, they will understand the correlation between attitude, attendance, education, and success! We currently have 22 Big Sister/Student matches.

- In collaboration with the Heights Parenting Center, home visits have become a piece of our Parenting Program offering. The visits include the following topics: Children learning through play, choosing the right toys for your children, how to transition your child from one activity to the next, language development, and black history for children.
- We will be presenting our first ever fundraiser on March 19th, 2010. The event is being called "A Day of Caring-Volunteer Fair"(see a feature on our website, www.oldstoneeducationcenter.org under NEWS - WKYC/NBC) and will take place at the Intercontinental Hotel. Eighty non-profits will be attending and will share their missions and volunteer/mentoring opportunities with the caring community. Following the volunteer fair there will be a luncheon and a keynote address by the former editor-in-chief of Essence Magazine, Ms. Susan L. Taylor. Ms. Taylor will share her views on the importance of mentoring, and encouraging our audience of over 450 people to get involved and make a difference in our community.

Our students and staff completed a very successful 2008-2009 academic year. We had 125 participants compared to the 2007-2008 academic year of 98, a 28 percent increase. We had 73 students improve their academic standing and/or pass their GED practice or official test. We saw 22 students pass their GED test, two passed their OGT test (Ohio Graduation Test), and four others passed the GED practice test. We had an 83 percent increase in GED graduates over the previous academic year. Four of our graduates enrolled in Kent State University's Life Program, a program designed specifically for single mothers. In addition, six graduates began their college education at Cuyahoga Community College in September.

The staff and the Board of Trustees sincerely thank you for your continued interest and support of our program and our students as we strive to improve lifetime opportunities for women in the greater Cleveland area who have not completed their education due to childcare needs and economic hardships. By providing education in academics, parenting, and workforce skills, we together will allow each student's full potential to be realized.

Sincerely,
Marc Nathanson
Executive Director



Jerry Jarzabek
Board President



THE OLD STONE EDUCATION CENTER STAFF

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Hortensia J. Rodriguez – Assistant to Director

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Jennifer Caraballo – Day Care Instructor	Lynette Tinker – Computer Instructor
Bruce Chambers – GED Instructor	Selena Reed – Day Care Instructor
Manuel Cruz – GED Instructor	Marlene Ward – Career Readiness Track Counselor
Linda Durham – Health Care Instructor	Janet White – Day Care Instructor
Karla Henderson – Big Sister/Mentoring Program Coordinator	Kriss Wiant – Psychologist

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THE REALLY GOOD THING ABOUT THE OSEC TEACHING TEAM

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." Henry Adams. This quote keeps in the forefront the power of our family of educators here at The Old Stone Education Center. Some days it may feel that we are not making an impact. It is on those days that we draw on each other with greater intensity. Our family of educators, while a unit, each brings a special gift that strengthens the Old Stone Education Center.

These gifts have been brought together through our program to create an atmosphere of strong academics and holistic healing that will impact the women of our program and generations to come. Each educator is charged with ensuring that each woman of Old Stone is exposed to skills that will ensure success now and across their lifespan. It has truly been a lesson of growth to be a part of this family of educators. These lessons have made me a stronger educator and for that I will be forever grateful.

The family of educators at the Old Stone Education Center extends a sincere thank you to the women of the program, their children, and our supporters for giving us a chance to be a part of such an enriching experience, an experience that will be felt not only now but for generations to come.

— Dionne Jones, Director of Education



HOME VISITING PROGRAM

The goal of the home visiting program is for parents to be empowered to become their child's first teacher by increasing their parenting skills and by increasing their comfort level as a parent. Parents will begin to value education and pass that value on to their children. The home visit specialist strives for children to be ready to learn when they enter school. These goals are accomplished by making monthly home visits that integrate parenting education and interactive literacy techniques. Parents learn to read, talk and play more with their children. All Activities are both fun and educational for the child. Parents gain confidence in their ability to teach their children by discussing barriers with the home visit specialist. Parents start to demonstrate positive interaction with their children. They also begin to understand and express the importance of preparing their children for educational success.

CHRISTINE HUDSON-STUDENT AND PARTICIPANT OF THE HOME VISIT PROGRAM

I started the home visit program in September of 2009. When I first started the program I rarely read to my son. My home visit specialist taught me that there are many benefits from reading and interacting with my son on a daily basis. She taught me that if I increase my one on one reading time with my son that it would help increase his vocabulary. So I did it. I started reading to my son at least four times a week and it worked! My son is talking much better than he was before I started to read to him regularly. He enjoys our reading time together and I enjoy it as well. Reading to my son daily is one of the many benefits of participating in the home visiting program at Old Stone Education Center.



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MENTORING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES IN 2009:

March Mentor/Mentee Kick-off

Mentors/Mentee Luncheon at AT&T

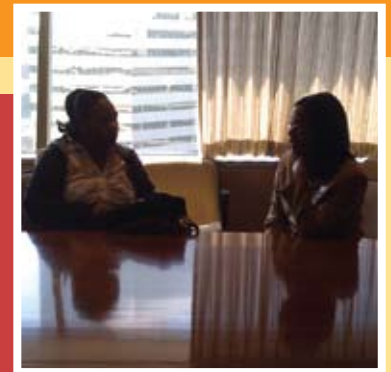
Mentor/Mentee Catch Your Dreams Workshop

October Mentor/Mentee Kick-off

BIG SISTER/MENTORING PROGRAM

"Our mentoring program has proven effective in providing 'real world' information, encouragement, advice, and access to resources and experiences that are otherwise unavailable to the women we service. Students involved in our mentoring program may be going through a difficult situation, a period of life in which they need extra support, or they may simply need to have another significant adult present in their life. Our goal is to help students involved in the mentoring program to gain the skills and confidence to be responsible for their own futures." — *Karla Henderson - Big Sister/Mentor Coordinator*

"My experience with the program has helped in many ways. Having the extra support in my life has put a comfort in my life. One of my best experiences with my mentor was when she invited me and my son over to her house during the holidays to bake cookies. I felt joyful to know that my mentor trusted me that much." — *Christine Hudson*



My experience in the Big Sister mentoring program has been an extremely rewarding experience! My Little, Lecres Moncado, is a wonderful young lady and has done a wonderful job meeting the demands and responsibilities of motherhood. Her and I spend time together discussing her goals for school and how important it is to get her GED. Also, I have been able to share my life experiences and give her guidance on the things that are important for young females growing up in today's society. Being there for her as she experiences the ups and downs of motherhood, is also a very vital role I play in her life. Being a teenage mother myself, I feel the advice and guidance I can share will help her make wise decisions as she herself, continues to learn and mature.

In addition, we spend valuable time together with my family and her daughter enjoying quality time together. We have spent time together going to a Cavaliers basketball game, shopping, attending the Big Brother Big Sister picnic and just hanging out at my house watching movies and relaxing. Recently, we attended the Day of Caring-mentoring event with keynote speaker, Susan L. Taylor. Lecres was able to experience the joys of volunteering as well as learning about the various non-profit associations in the Cleveland area. — *Sandy Baynard - Bank of America*



I love being in the program. I love my big sister and hanging out with her and her family. My daughter loves her family as well; they spoil her. I enjoy the talks we have even though I may not like hearing what she has to say but I know it's good advice. The Big Sister mentoring program is a good program and I enjoy being involved. — *Lecres Moncado - Old Stone Education Center student*

The mission of the Old Stone Education Center is to improve lifetime opportunities for women in greater Cleveland who have not completed their high school experience due to childcare needs and economic issues. We enhance the potential of each of our students by providing education in academics, parenting and workforce skills.



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