



isles
WORKS
2018
Annual
Report



isles

SELF-RELIANT
FAMILIES AND HEALTHY,
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

TRAIN &
EDUCATE



Prepare for
work and life

BUILD
WEALTH



Manage, protect
and grow assets

LIVE GREEN
& HEALTHY



Build gardens,
parks and healthy,
efficient homes

REVITALIZE
COMMUNITIES



Plan and
create safe,
thriving places

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

More and more, we talk – and worry – about social inequality, climate change, authoritarian rule – and can we change these trends?

It's true that, in many ways, the bad 'system is rigged.' But can we rig a good system, too? Yes, and it will take more than talk and worry. It requires action.

For over 38(!) years, we took our youthful energy, ideas and willingness to learn and applied them to Isles' work. We found better ways to strengthen challenged communities and restore the environment at the local, "isles" level. The key: to honor family capacity for self-reliance, provide tools that they can use, create healthy places and then, to a large extent, get out of the way.

Our staff, board, and volunteers honor the wisdom and ideas of local communities. We also test that against smart research and evidence-based data. Out of this messy collision of diverse voices, innovation occurs. The results are highlighted in this Annual Report.

Can others – including policymakers – learn to do this? Of course. Increasingly, we share our lessons with them. This year, Isles influenced statewide policy around lead poisoning threats, violence prevention, and solar and electric vehicle access. I expanded my teaching of future leaders at the Keller Center at Princeton University, and we developed webinars, case studies for the classroom, op-eds, and a draft of Isles' history. All this occurred as we expanded Isles work on the ground.

This 'doing and thinking' are possible because of organized people and organized money. That includes our volunteer board, adeptly led by Michele Minter over the past 3 years. In January, Linda Revelle stepped into the role of Chair of Isles Board of Trustees.

These are exciting, dynamic times at Isles. Beyond talk and worry, we set our sights high and act. But we need your feedback and support. Check out www.isles.org and let us know what you think.

In community,



Marty



Can we
rig a good
system, too?
Yes, but it
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than talk and
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TRAIN & EDUCATE

Over 34% of young adults in Trenton fail to graduate high school on time, compared to a statewide rate of 10%. Isles Youth Institute (IYI) offers disengaged students another path to a diploma, the chance to rebuild their neighborhoods, along with job and leadership skills. For many, this last chance changes the course of their lives.

In addition, Isles trains adults from across New Jersey in future-focused green jobs, like those in energy & environmental fields. The Center for Energy and Environmental Training (CEET) offers contractors, home health visitors and community members training and national certificates in lead safe home renovation, energy efficiency, and environmental health.

— 2018 Highlights —

63

students earned nationally-recognized vocational certifications

290

home visitors trained to assess environmental hazards in home

181

professional energy efficiency and lead workers trained and certified



“It was a feeling I can’t really explain. It’s like your life is declining and you’re doing so bad, but then you finally feel like you succeeded.... For your life to hit a 180 — man, it’s a great feeling, I loved it.”

— Julio

Julio & Christian

When brothers Julio and Christian struggled in school, they and their mother turned to Isles Youth Institute (IYI). A few years earlier, their sister had graduated from IYI and they knew how the tough-love culture worked: individualized learning, hands-on job and internship training, discipline, meaningful community work, and future focus.

In six short months, Julio and Christian overcame the rigorous Mental Toughness orientation, earned pre-apprenticeship certifications in carpentry and fork-lift operation, and graduated together in June. Julio even completed an internship at NASCAR’s Urban Youth Racing School!

Julio learned to thrive at IYI, but it didn’t stop there. He now works at Isles, splitting his time and skills as a construction assistant, testing homes to make them lead-free and healthy.



Alumni Spotlight: Tyreek Kelly

In 2004, Tyreek Kelly struggled in Trenton High School. He dropped out and joined IYI. Ten years later, searching for a new career opportunity, he took Isles’ Warehouse Career Pathway course. Tyreek worked hard, had perfect attendance, and got a job at Blue Arrow Logistics. As Tyreek described, “I applied the things I learned in the class. I went in hungry and made myself valuable.”

Tyreek didn’t stop there. While working at Blue Arrow, he attended truck driving school part-time, and received his CDL license. Today, he works full time driving cross-country for the PGT company. He earns good wages and plans to buy his own big rig.

Andre Thomas, CEET Training Manager, takes personal pride in Tyreek. “His story brings me joy because I knew Tyreek as a young man, as one of my students at IYI. Like others, I’ve personally witnessed him struggle to find his niche. He always had a winning capability, he just wanted some tweaking and coaching. As a result, he is confident, gainfully employed, and prepared to provide for his family and be a leader.”



BUILD WEALTH

Family self-reliance requires financial stability. For most Americans, homes are the most valuable financial asset. Isles counsels and supports families wanting to buy their first home, as well as those facing the potential loss of their home through foreclosure.

In addition, Isles Financial Solutions (IFS) offers a financial wellness pathway for low-wage workers. IFS trains employees to take control of their everyday financial building blocks like budgeting, credit, savings, and debt. Isles offers intensive coaching, credit-building loans, and money management tools to improve decision-making and foster positive, long-term behavior change.

—— 2018 Highlights ——

400

workers received financial solutions and housing counseling

101

first time homebuyer certifications earned

12

families bought their first home

Health is Wealth, and So Are Homes

After hearing how Isles had helped their co-worker save their home under foreclosure, Mr. and Mrs. Perez reached out to Isles. After 11 years in his home, Mr. Perez fell behind on his mortgage when his wife gave birth to twin boys. She had to stop working, and Mr. Perez was in trouble.

Isles housing counselor, Elena, stepped right in. After a few trial payments, Elena negotiated with the bank to modify the mortgage and get him back in good standing.

But the story doesn't end there. When Elena learned that one of the twins had elevated lead levels, she connected them to Isles lead testing and hazard control experts. Isles found flaking lead paint in multiple windows and, within a few weeks, repaired their home, leaving it lead safe. Since the remediation, the child's lead levels are down and more of Mr. Perez's co-workers are coming to us to buy a first home, improve their credit, get a mortgage, or test and clean lead in their home.



Welcome Home

For first time homebuyers, Isles demystifies the process. Isles has helped families buy their first homes for over 25 years. In 2018, 101 families earned the HUD-approved First-time Home Buyer Education Certificate through one of our

8-hour classes. That certificate enables them to access assistance with their down payment and closing costs. Feedback from the classes is great, with 90% rating them as "excellent." As one participant put it, "The class was awesome! The instructors were extremely engaging." Another noted, "You made me comfortable about the home buying process."



Isles hosted our first annual 'Welcome Home Fair' to connect new home buyers with professionals they'll encounter in buying a home. Held at Mill One, buyers heard from an attorney, a home inspector, realtor, and Isles' Housing Counselors. Banks, lenders, and government officials also helped homebuyers answer questions. The event gave 120 residents a no-commitment chance to learn and engage the process. We plan to expand it in 2019.

LIVE GREEN & HEALTHY

Every year, lead poisons thousands of New Jersey children, who ingest it mostly through dust in their own homes. Nearly 50% of Trenton school children have blood lead levels that can affect their IQ, school performance, behavior, and health. The cost to those families and society, for special education, drop-outs, crime, prison and early enrollment in Medicaid, is huge. Isles has developed simple ways to test homes and remove lead and other environmental hazards. We also educate the public, help other community-based organizations, and improve public policies that help kids thrive.

Many communities also lack access to healthy food. Trenton's two supermarkets for 85,000+ people, force too many residents to shop at high-price, high-starch delis and convenience stores. Isles helps residents grow their own food in community and school gardens. Families save money, access great food, learn to work together, and clean and beautify vacant land. Good food improves health – especially when toxins like lead threaten. Elementary school students, the next generation of gardeners, learn to grow and eat their own food in schools and summer camps across the city.

—— 2018 Highlights ——

500+

Trenton homes
tested for lead

45

units rehabbed to be
lead-safe, healthy and
more energy efficient

814

students received
gardening and nutrition education

Testing the Waters

In 2015, a sharp-eyed physician in Flint, Michigan noticed a spike in child lead poisoning, and traced it back to the Flint water supply. How does Trenton compare to Flint? In 2017, we set out to research that question. We had tested thousands of homes for lead in the dust, because we knew that the vast majority of lead affecting kids was caused by old paint in their home. We launched a unique, multi-year project in partnership with Professor John Higgins of Princeton University to test the water coming into homes and apartments, as well as the homes' dust. By 2018, we tested more than 550 homes for lead in paint, water and soil, asthma triggers and other health threats – while educating the residents.

We found a good news, bad news, good news situation. The *good news* is that only 8% of the homes had lead in water higher than the standard for human health. (Those families received a water filter.) More permanent solutions to their water problems are in the works. Similar to our other tests across the city, however, more than 55% of homes tested positive for lead paint. The other *good news*? Those units can apply for Isles' no-cost lead hazard control services, giving owners up to \$12,000 of lead safe repairs.



Camp Carrot

Exposure to natural, green spaces promotes learning, boosts creativity, improves physical fitness, and reduces stress. Unfortunately, urban kids spend more time indoors when access to green space is limited or unsafe, and as “screen time” increases.

This past August, Isles hosted Camp Carrot, a three-week summer camp designed to excite kids about the environment, nutrition, and physical fitness. Camp Carrot explores the outdoors, developing their connection to the natural world. They water and care for plants, harvest vegetables, and cook lunch together. They also practice mindfulness, collect natural garden objects to create mandalas and stretch bodies and minds with yoga class in the morning sun.

Students explored other natural resources in the county. With a guide, they hiked up Baldpate Mountain to marvel at its views and ecosystem, explored the Abbott Marshlands to learn about water quality and creatively built outdoor shelters. We visited Howell Living History Farm to learn about history, agriculture and animals. Camp Carrot gives urban kids a chance to connect to green spaces and the natural world. They also learn ways to restore the environment where it's been damaged, and learn to be future leaders. If you're interested, help us grow this project in 2019!



REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES

Isles creates fun, healthy places. We partner with residents and other stakeholders to develop community plans, then work with them over time to make positive change. We clean and reclaim green buildings, gardens, and parks, changing how residents and visitors perceive them. We also clean, green, and activate open spaces, integrating mobile recreation, community events, and locally-created public art.

Isles continued to support the new downtown Creative District plan, convening the Creek to Canal Action Committee, acquiring properties in the District to be rehabilitated, and funding the first Community and Arts Small Grant Program with the I Am Trenton Community Foundation in the Old Trenton Neighborhood. We continued to develop the new “Social Profit Center at Mill One,” a historic former textile mill converted into an innovative 70,000 square foot office, studio, and warehouse facility for social profit organizations, artists, and events. In addition to improving places in the region, Isles also played a leadership role in the Trenton Prevention Policy Board to organize the second Youth Violence Prevention Symposium attended by 500 residents, organizations, police, and regional leaders.

— 2018 Highlights —

12

vacant properties
acquired for
rehabilitation

\$68k

distributed to
grass roots organizations

100+

community volunteers
participated in
neighborhood clean ups



A Safer, Stronger Trenton

In 2018, Isles co-organized the second annual citywide summit on violence reduction. Over 500 stakeholders and policymakers, including youth from Isles Youth Institute joined the conference, sharing solutions to youth violence and better ways to tackle this pernicious threat.

The IYI students that had been trained in Isles Leadership Academy, formed a partnership between Isles and the New Jersey Social Justice Institute (NJSJI) to create Trenton's first Youth Council focused on Social Justice. The Council is now developing an Action Plan to bring healing, resilience, and restorative justice practices to Trenton and the state. When students become teachers, they learn more and make our places safer!



Creek to Canal

Public art matters in places like Trenton, and Isles is excited to serve as the driving force behind the new Creek to Canal Creative District (C2C). After a year-long planning process, Isles is working with partners to implement the C2C plan as a tool to revitalize downtown Trenton.

Creating a plan and organizing stakeholders are not enough. We also raise funds and make on-the-ground projects happen in partnership with I Am Trenton Community Foundation. The inaugural round of the Old Trenton Neighborhood Arts & Community Grants funded fifteen projects like murals, community art-making, public art installations, bicycle repair clinics, book fairs, and gardens.

We also support projects like the new Broad Street Bank Gallery, the rebirth of the Studios at 219 East Hanover, the Orchid House, and Trenton Community A-Team studio and exhibition space at 51 North Stockton. We acquired two vacant buildings and four vacant lots with the goal of developing live/work space for artists. The Creek to Canal Creative District offers a great example of a healthy way to reactivate and reimagine public space through urban agriculture, real estate development, creative arts, and community beautification.



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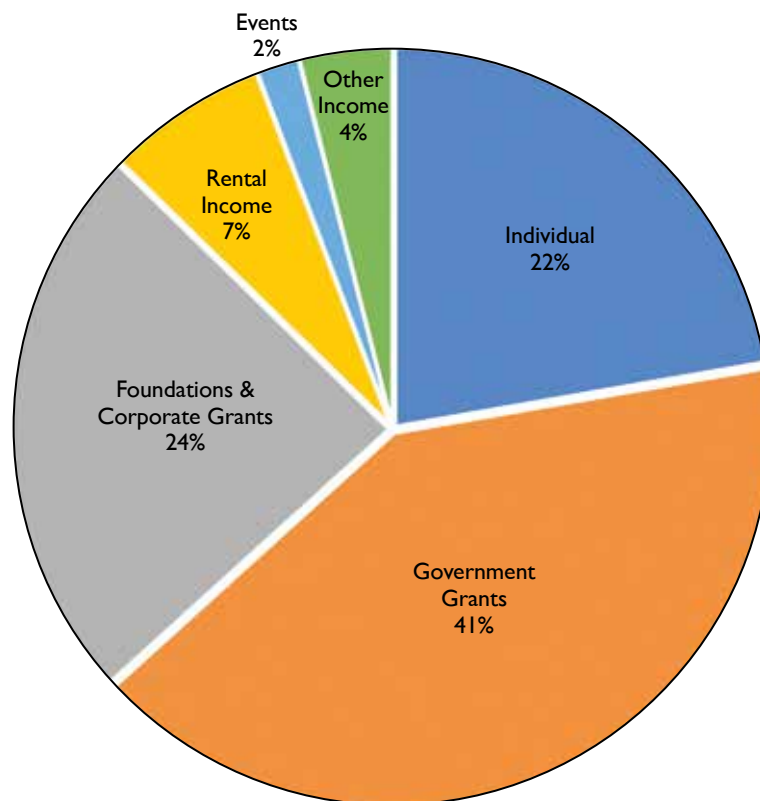
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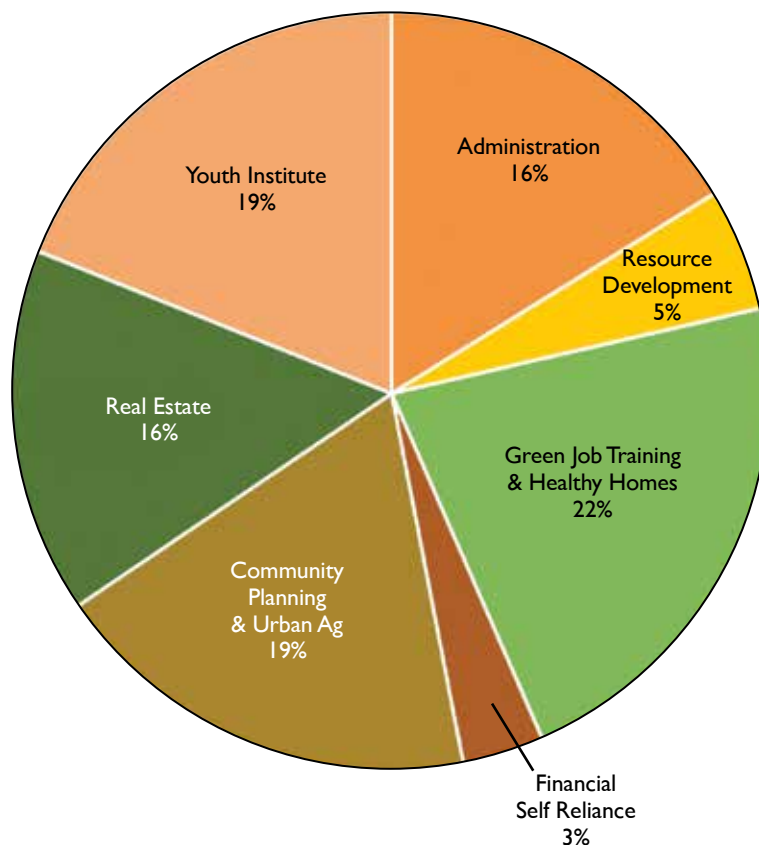
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FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2018

**2018 Actual
Revenue
\$5,710,716**



**2018 Actual
Expenses
\$5,575,391**



A complete audited financial statement will be available
at our office or at isles.org/financials.

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Anonymous
TD Charitable Foundation
Wells Fargo Foundation
Wells Fargo Housing Foundation
Wells Fargo Regional Foundation
Wendell Family Foundation
Whole Kids Foundation
The William Penn Foundation
Anonymous
The Henry Farber Foundation

CORPORATIONS AND COMPANIES

A. Pennacchi & Sons, LLC
Abalene Termite & Pest Control
Adams Party Rental
AmazonSmile
Atlantic City Electric
Bank of America
The Bank of Princeton
Bed, Bath and Beyond
Bloomberg LP
Borden Perlman Salisbury & Kelly
Capital Health System
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Church & Dwight
Church & Dwight Employee
Giving Fund
Citizens Bank
Connect One Bank
Cranecoach, LLC
Credit Union of New Jersey
Foundation, Inc.
D&N Electrical Contractors
DaVita
Den Norske Bank

First Bank
Gaea Global Technologies
Google, Inc.
Integra LifeSciences
J. Lestician Warehouse, Inc.
Janssen Pharmaceuticals
Jerry's Vodka
Johnson & Johnson Consumer
Companies
KEEN, Inc.
KPMG
M&T Bank
Mareana
Anonymous
Merck Gives Back Employee Giving
Program
Miles Technologies Inc
Morgan Lewis
Neshaminy Creek Brewing Co.
NJM Insurance Group
Northwestern Mutual
Novartis
Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals
Oracle America, Inc.
Penn Investment Advisors
PNC Bank
Prettybrook Partners
Princeton Public Affairs Group
Protiviti Inc.
Public Strategies Impact, LLC
PwC LLP
Regen Partners LLC
DBA Equivet Feeds
Richard Conti Realty
Security Dynamics Inc.
Sobel & Co., LLC Certified
Public Accountants
Sourland Mountain Spirits
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
Taft Communications
Takeda Pharmaceuticals U.S.A., Inc.
The Gazelle Group, Inc.
The Referend Bier Blendery
THS Electrical Contractor, Inc.
Unionville Vineyards
Valenzano Family Winery
Wells Fargo Healthcare Corporate &
Investment Banking
Wells Fargo Bank N.A.
Wipro Technologies

NONPROFITS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1911 Smoke House
Charity Service Centers, P.A.
Community Loan Fund of
New Jersey, Inc.
Dogwood Garden Club of Princeton
EarthShare New Jersey
FoodCorps
Friendly Sons & Daughters of St.
Patrick of Mercer County
in honor of Patrick L. Ryan
Garden Club of Trenton
GreenLeaf Painters, LLC
Green and Healthy Homes Initiative
Habitat for Humanity of
Burlington/ Trenton-Princeton
Housing and Community
Development Network of NJ
Howell Living History Farm
Internet Creations
Jones Farm - NJ Department
of Corrections

Lady and the Shallot
LiLiPiES Bakery
LinkedIn Local Princeton
Master Gardeners of Mercer County
NJ Business and Industry Association
NJ Council for the Humanities
NJ Employees Charitable Campaign
NJ Healthy Communities Network
Northeast Organic Farming
Association of NJ
The Pennington School
Presbyterian Church
of Lawrenceville
Princeton Community Action
Princeton Environmental Institute
Princeton Friends School
Princeton University
Princetonian Graphics, Inc.
Rare Find Nursery
Renewing the Mind, LLC
Sweetly Spirited Artisan Desserts
The Arts Council of Princeton
The College of New Jersey
Bonner Center
Thomas Edison State University
Trenton Health Team
Trenton Makes Inc.
Trentypoint Inc.
Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of Princeton
Vernon's Penn Supply
YouthBuild USA

GOVERNMENT

City of Trenton
County of Mercer, New Jersey
NJ Department of Community Affairs
NJ Department of Children
and Families
NJ Department of Health
NJ Department of Labor and
Workforce Development
NJ Department of Transportation
US Department of Agriculture
US Department of Housing
and Urban Development
US Department of Labor
US Environmental Protection Agency

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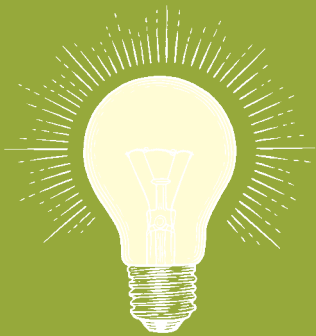
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