

ANNUAL
REPORT
2018-19

Serving up Hope





PRESIDENT & CEO LETTER

It is our mission at STEPS to partner with the wonderful communities in the region to help struggling individuals and families push through their barriers. We believe a little support can help them break through.

We are in the momentum-building business.

There are many facing high walls of need all around us. Our programs include helping children gain an educational foothold through Early Head Start/Head Start, helping someone facing homelessness find a place to sleep, assisting those

about to lose electrical service in the dead of winter, and assisting those with disabilities as well as young and senior adults gain stable employment.

I am proud of our team and the work we do together. We are, as you will see in this annual report, touching lives and serving up hope.

And we get to do this every day!

It's not unusual to see someone being helped hug their case worker, call them a blessing, thank them ... It's the heartbeat of our mission to help people. Their appreciation keeps us

going, fuels us to strive to do more to meet the great need.

It is, as Jesus said, "more blessed to give than to receive." It is truly a blessing to help someone who just needs a little positive momentum to overcome their barrier.

I want to thank all of those who support STEPS and its programs. You share in our blessing. Without you, our support programs would merely be a wish. With you, hope has a chance.

Sharon L. Harrup
President & CEO

1541

**INDIVIDUALS
TOUCHED BY THE
SERVICES OF STEPS**

1063

**INDIVIDUALS
HAD THEIR
HOUSING
AND UTILITY
NEEDS MET**

260

**INDIVIDUALS
EMPLOYED BY
STEPS**



Caring for the Homeless

Community Aids Those In Need

A man walks down a Roanoke street waiting for a homeless shelter carrying his life's belongings in plastic bags. STEPS helped him get to the only shelter that agreed to house him; all shelters were full in central Virginia and local funds were depleted.

The scene is a stark reminder that even in good economic times, there are those who — either through circumstance or through bad personal choices — are still struggling.

“Many people think of homelessness as an urban problem,” reflected STEPS’ Vice President of Program Services Amy Beatson. “But it persists all around us — even in the most rural of communities.”

STEPS Inc., through the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program, provides case management services to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. This non-profit agency that helps people overcome barriers, provides homeless individuals and families hotel stays as well as partnering with other community resources to shelter individuals. They also work to rehouse those receiving assistance, facing court-ordered evictions or reside in homes that are uninhabitable.

From July 2018-January 2019, STEPS served over 150 individuals in the homeless prevention program. And there continues to be a great need.

Meeting the need, of course, depends on funding. And when funding runs out, options are limited.

STEPS — with the sponsorship of Centra Southside Community Hospital, generous support of the Town of Farmville, area businesses and the community — hosted a soup and sandwich luncheon fundraiser on Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019 at the Farmville Train Station. A silent auction was also held with items donated by local business partners.

By the end of the afternoon, greatly needed funds were raised to help STEPS in its continuing mission of Moving Lives Forward.

“This community demonstrated its love to their fellow citizens by attending and giving at this donation-only event,” Beatson said. “The proceeds given from the heart will go directly to assist the homeless in a six-county region that includes Amelia, Buckingham, Cumberland, Nottoway, Lunenburg and Prince Edward.”

THE 2ND ANNUAL

Soup & Sandwich Luncheon

February 12, 2020

11:30-1:30

Farmville Train Station





Saving The Earth Through Teamwork

If you don't believe one person's trash is another person's treasure, visit STEPS Incorporated's Recycling Center at 225 Industrial Park Road.

There's treasure in hearts of gold.

"I love it," one worker says. "I love doing something and being around my co-workers and my supervisors and I love the work, the job."

Recycling centers are not unique, but what makes this one (located next to the non-profit's corporate office) so special is not so much that it saves the environment – which it does – but that it helps people overcome barriers. Here, come sunshine or rain, individuals with physical or mental disabilities work, earn money to pay their bills, have pride in their accomplishments, take their place in a productive society and make a difference in the world in which they live.

It's life.

On any given day, there will be boxes of discarded electronics, stacks of old printers and a collection of big screen TVs – that once cost thousands of dollars—docked at this waylay station between one useful life and another.

Bales of corrugated cardboard are often stacked outside of three-sided metal buildings. There's also a metal bin designated for aluminum cans, a pile of plastic laundry detergent containers that have yielded every consumable drop, and collections of empty soda bottles and milk jugs.

They're all waiting for the currents of the recycling stream to give them a new lease on a useful, consumer life.

A team of six STEPS' Recycling Center workers keep it flowing.

"We are proud of them," said President and CEO, Sharon Harrup.

Down in the operational trenches, workers sift through the cardboard by hand and place it into the compactor.

There are no complaints. Workers tell you the worth of the experience through the smile on their face.

"They care about their work and do an excellent job."

Funding, mostly driven by cardboard recycling, supports the operation and the jobs for workers with disabilities. The Town of Farmville, Prince Edward County and other contributors deliver a steady stream of recyclables that keep the business flowing.

It's a community partnership.

Down in the operational trenches, workers sift through the cardboard by hand and place it into the compactor. There are no complaints. Workers tell you the worth of the experience through the smile on their face.

Nancy Conner, STEPS' Employment Services Case Manager, has seen the impact of having a job has on self-esteem. She has been watching STEPS workers with disabilities grow through the process for 20 years.

"It really unfolds right in front of your eyes," she said.

Conner added, "The money is very important to them. They're like everybody else, we've all got to live. Disability or no disability, we've got to have money to live in this world."

Dealing with The Unplanned: Adapt, Adjust, and Press On

CHARLOTTE COUNTY WOMAN PERSEVERES



Seventy-nine-year-old Urla Morton knows how to adapt to change.

Sometimes life throws a “curveball.” For Charlotte County resident Urla Morton, the “curveball” came when her granddaughter started tracing Nana’s family tree. She submitted a DNA sample for research and was notified someone was looking for her grandmother.

Seventy-nine-year-old only child Urla Morton was now a sister and an aunt.

Urla’s life is full of unplanned changes and adapting to “curveballs.” Sometimes it has been good. Sometimes it’s painful.

Her parents divorced before she was born in Wyoming in 1939. She has lived in Wyoming, Ohio and in New Mexico, where she met and married gentleman Bob Morton, from Phenix, Virginia. She and Bob settled in Charlotte County in 1962.

She’s the mother of three, a grandmother, a woman of faith, a kind soul that people of all ages connect with at the counter of Southside Virginia Community College’s library.

It is there she is also going through more change, learning new skills as part of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a federally funded program providing job training for seniors that is administered in the region by STEPS.

Urla spent 25 years working in the Bank of Charlotte County. Now she’s immersed in the library’s operations stretching her ability to learn new technology.

Ever leaning forward into the winds of time and change.

Urla’s extended family searched for decades but had given up hope that she was still alive. That changed when her granddaughter made the call to the surprise of her new-found family.

“She (Urla’s niece) just screamed to her mama,” Urla said, recounting her granddaughter’s conversation. “Mama, we found her! We found her! It’s her!”

Urla’s biological parents both remarried after the divorce. Urla dearly loved her stepdad, John Hickey, but never reconnected with her biological father, Don. Time and distance helped to expand the rift and Don passed away with cancer in 1980. He did tell his daughters about Urla, but Urla had no way of knowing she had sisters.

Urla was told that her stepdad was not her biological father when she was about 10, but not much else.

So many questions—so much time to make up.

Urla traveled to meet one of her sisters and a niece. She learned her biological father was a quiet, hard worker, who provided for his family, loved his children and was successful (having owned his own business). He was also strict.

“Those aren’t bad characteristics. It speaks well of him,” Urla assessed.

Behind the library counter, Urla has found that participating in SCSEP has been a way to learn some job skills and given her life more purpose.

Adapt. Adjust. Press on.

Urla retired from the bank at 62 to care for her husband. They would have three years together before he passed.

Years she’s glad they shared.

Life, despite the hurt, goes on. It had to. Urla needed to get back into the workforce and STEPS opened the door. SCSEP offers those meeting income guidelines and facing other barriers, a chance to upgrade their skills and earn a stipend. Participants are placed in a non-profit or government agency.

“They earn while they learn,” explained STEPS Inc. Vice President of Workforce Development Christin Jackson. “The goal is that they will grow their abilities, gain marketable skills and—with the help and support of our case managers—find unsubsidized employment.”

For Urla, that journey continues.

“...You know, I’ve always believed, and still do, that when you’re retired and you give up and you sit down, you don’t last long. You’re gone from here. And I’m not the kind to sit down,” she said.

**“She (Urla’s niece)
just screamed to her
mama,” Urla said,
recounting her
granddaughter’s
conversation.**

**“Mama, we found her!
We found her! It’s her!”**

Moving Lives Forward

One Child At A Time

Zakeyia Bacon's life is a story of perseverance. She's nearly 24, a single mom of a bright-eyed wonder named Ava. The Charlotte County resident has overcome barriers to reach her dreams of a bachelor's degree through Old Dominion University online courses.

And Bacon, like every parent, wants the best for her child. She is one of many children across Southside Virginia receiving a boost through STEPS Head Start early education program.

It helps Ava, but it also helps her mom, too.

"It amazes me every day ... what she learns and...how well she communicates and how well she interacts with other kids," Bacon said.

STEPS Head Start provides early childhood education at no cost to three and four-year-old children at centers in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward counties. Additionally, STEPS offers an Early Head Start program for children six weeks up to three years of age in Amelia, Charlotte, Lunenburg and Prince Edward counties that steadies baby steps of growth.

"We recognized the need for such vital services in the region and launched Head Start in 2015," noted STEPS President and CEO Sharon Harrup. "We, as a community action agency, want to help improve the lives of those facing barriers in the counties we serve. Head Start is the perfect fit for us. By strengthening each link in the community's educational chain, children and families have a greater chance for success."

Head Start is exactly that — a "head start" for children in the educational race of life. It gives children learning opportunities ahead

of kindergarten, sowing seeds that will grow and be harvested over a lifetime.

"STEPS Head Start is an inclusive environment with a holistic approach to serving the entire family," explains Jessica Lehman, STEPS Head Start's Vice President of Early Childhood Education. "We offer a variety of services for parents, expectant mothers, other caregivers and children."

She added, "What attracted me to the program is the systemic impact on multiple generations of a specific family."

Such as Zakeyia and little Ava.

Bacon learned of the STEPS Head Start program through a co-worker whose granddaughter was attending the Charlotte center. Bacon was initially hesitant to relax the protective barrier to let someone other than family care for her child.

The apprehension was understandable. Ava, born premature

"It amazes me every day ... what she learns and ... how well she communicates and how well she interacts with other kids," Bacon said.



From left are Cheryl Branch, STEPS Inc. Head Start teacher at the Charlotte County site, Ava Bacon and her mom Zakeyia Bacon.

(approximately 27 weeks) through emergency C-section, weighed one pound and six ounces when she arrived June 2, 2015. Bacon developed HELLP Syndrome when her daughter was born, which is a severe form of preeclampsia, and her little one would spend the first three months of her life in the hospital.

Despite the challenging start, Ava is blooming in life and Head Start. Bacon says her daughter is learning nursery rhymes, imaginary play...many, many new things. Bacon says she's seen exponential growth.

"I feel like if the STEPS program wasn't there, it might ... have been a little bit harder...for her to...interact with kids once she got to the point she needed to go to pre-K, (or) kindergarten ... So the STEPS program has eased that process," Bacon said.

"Head Start fits perfectly with STEPS vision to positively impact our citizens to succeed, families to thrive and communities to improve," Lehman said.

Head Start

There were no reviews by the Secretary conducted during the 2018-2019 fiscal year. A financial audit was conducted with no findings noted.

The total amount of public funds received from:

- United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Administration for Children and Families \$ 3,189,756
- United States Department of Agriculture \$ 234,422

HEAD START BUDGET

	2018-19 Proposed Budget	2018-2019 Actual
Personnel	\$ 1,962,340	\$ 1,940,124
Fringe	\$ 345,218	\$ 312,601
Travel	\$ 13,500	\$ 9,571
Supplies	\$ 100,825	\$ 146,049
Contractual	\$ 220,240	\$ 238,640
Other/Admin	\$ 496,727	\$ 491,865
Training & Technical Assistance	\$ <u>50,906</u>	\$ <u>50,906</u>
Total 2017-2018	\$ 3,189,756	\$ 3,189,756

CHILD OUTCOMES RELATED TO SCHOOL READINESS (SPRING, 2019)

	% Meeting Widely Held Expectations	% Exceeding Widely Held Expectations
Social Emotional	73%	16%
Physical	72%	15%
Language	78%	10%
Cognitive	63%	16%
Literacy	69%	7%
Mathematics	70%	11%

*According to Teaching Strategies GOLD assessments.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED

HEAD START

261

83%
Average
Monthly
Enrollment

80%
Eligible
Children
Served

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED

EARLY HEAD START

87

74%
Average
Monthly
Enrollment

86%
Eligible
Children
Served

THE PERCENTAGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN THAT RECEIVED MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAMS

Head Start Medical Exams **99%**

Early Head Start Medical Exams
100%

Head Start Dental Exams **92%**

Head Start Dental Screening/Exams
88%

STEPS Head Start coordinated

148

parent involvement events. These included events focused on male involvement, multigenerational family activities and access to community partners.





Statements of Financial Position

JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019

ASSETS	2019
Current Assets	333,569
Property and Equipment	<u>1,911,203</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	2,244,772
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	327,210
Long-term Liabilities	<u>371,290</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	698,500
NET ASSETS	
Without donor restrictions	1,546,272
With donor restrictions	-
Total Net Assets	1,546,272
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 2,244,772

Thanks to our Supporters

JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019

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*NAP DONOR

Jean Pierre Elkhoury

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list of monetary donations. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please send inquiries to: Cynthia A. Saunders 434.315.5909 or csaunders@STEPS-inc.org. "STEPS is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATION DONATIONS

Barrett and Company LLC
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For information about STEPS call 434.315.5909 or email us at: info@STEPS-Inc.org