



Collier Youth Services

WHERE SMALL MIRACLES HAPPEN EVERY DAY

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www.collieryouthservices.org

INDICIA
TO COME

2015 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



Our Core Values

RESPECT | EXCELLENCE
SAFE & NURTURING ENVIRONMENT
PERSONAL GROWTH | COMPASSION
PARTNERSHIP

A place of

**BELONGING,
DIGNITY,
and
HOPE**

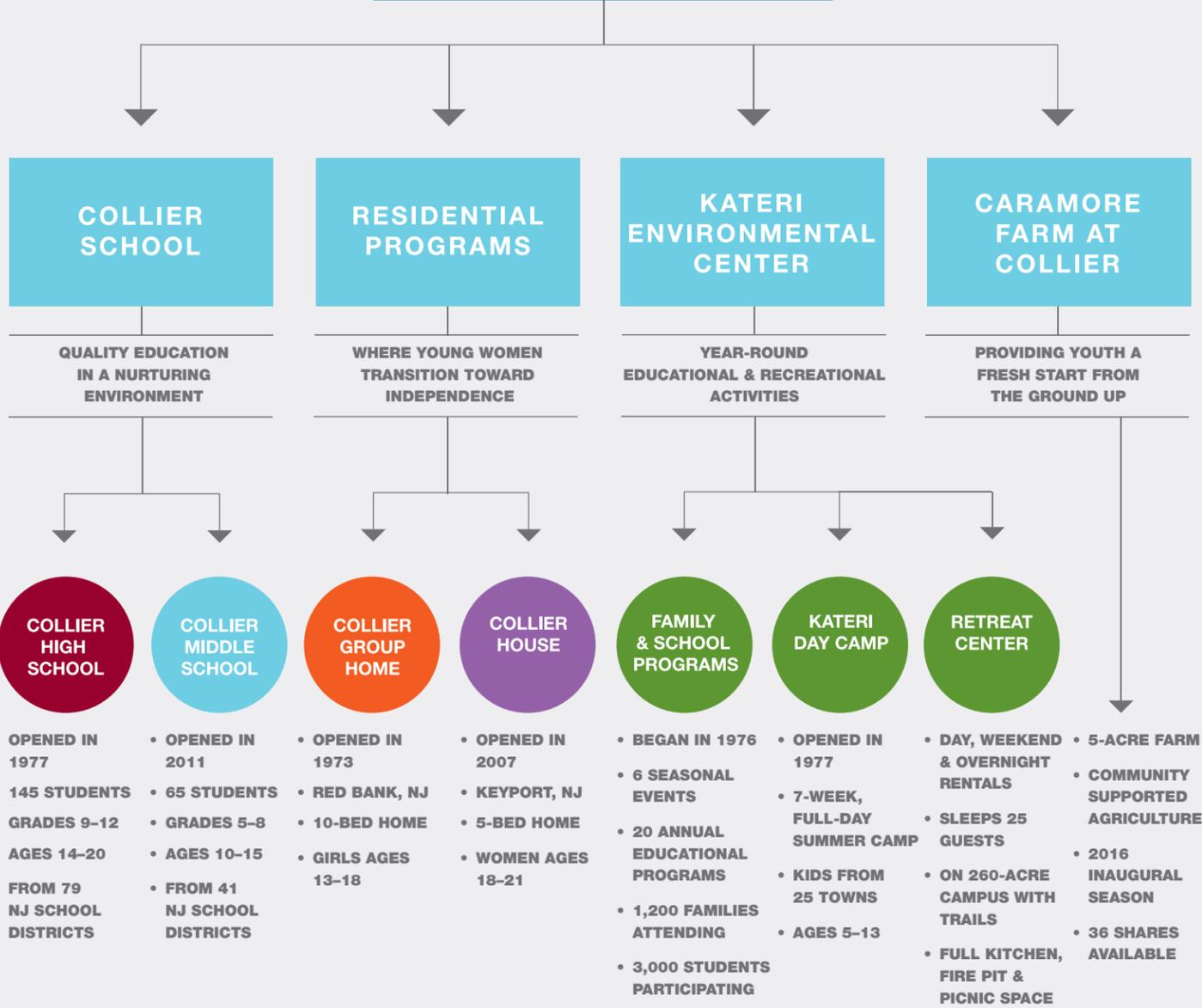
for at-risk youth

COLLIER YOUTH SERVICES

The mission of Collier Youth Services is to provide at-risk youth a chance to grow toward their potential in an environment that promotes belonging, dignity, and hope.

This mission is based on a philosophy of deep respect for the inherent worth of each individual and the belief in the capacity for personal change that is consistent with the ministry of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

COLLIER YOUTH SERVICES
WHERE SMALL MIRACLES HAPPEN EVERY DAY



“I have been doing great. I am back in public school. I never thought that would happen!”
~ J. (Middle School Graduate)



“I was so glad to see the group home is still there and still helping young girls. I was taught life skills that I never would have learned otherwise.”
~ C. (Former Group Home Resident)

DEAR COLLIER FRIENDS,

Restoring hope, building confidence, and realizing potential—that’s what Collier is about. Feedback from our students and residents gives us great pride ... to know that we are making such an impact in the lives of children! That is exactly what we set out to do every day. We provide a safe and nurturing environment where all feel welcome and respected in their uniqueness.

At Collier, we believe that personal growth and positive change are possible for everyone, and we see that happening each day. The pursuit of excellence by our staff, our students, our residents, and our campers—coupled with an overarching spirit of compassion that infuses all of our programs—builds strong and close partnerships with our youth and their families, making success more than likely.

Feeling is believing here at Collier. When you visit our campus, you might not be able to see our culture in action, but you can

certainly feel it. With our incredible team of volunteers, donors, professional staff, and highly skilled board members, Collier provides the support and education necessary for our young people to successfully navigate beyond significant challenges. It is here they begin to believe in themselves, discover and develop their individual talents, and choose a bright and promising future.

In the coming year, we plan to harvest the first fruits of our newest program, Caramore Farm at Collier. Furthermore, Collier’s residential programs are now certified in the rigorous and highly respected trauma-informed and evidence-supported Sanctuary® Model. And due to the enrollment growth in our middle school, an exciting expansion project is under way that will create new classrooms for our students, new offices for

our faculty, and new spaces for our support services. This growth and expansion will allow us to have an even deeper impact on our children.

We are tremendously grateful for your philanthropy and friendship, and we look forward to continuing our partnership as champions for children in the upcoming year. We invite you to continue to invest in the future of our talented and capable young people.

Gratefully,

A. Debbie Drago
Sr. Debbie Drago
Executive Director

Thomas A. Schember
Thomas A. Schember
Chair, Board of Directors

“The world is richer for places like Collier.”

~ K. (High School Graduate)



In April 2008, Sara Serkus was in “drug court,” being held in jail to keep her clean and sober until a suitable placement could be found. She was an 18-year-old girl who had faced far too many challenges in her young life and had slipped into far too dangerous behaviors as a result. Flash-forward to spring 2016, and Sara is now a proud mother who knows who she is, knows what she needs, and knows how to take care of herself.

What happened in between changed her perspective, changed her direction, and changed her life. What happened was Collier House—our five-bed residential home in Keyport, NJ, that helps young women develop the skills they need to live healthy, self-sufficient, and productive lives.

LOST & FOUND

One Young Woman’s Journey to Selfhood

Right from the beginning of her four-year stay at Collier House, Sara felt “a lot of hope” because “it was the first program I’d ever been in where someone asked me about myself—my favorite color, my favorite food, my goals for my life and myself.” The questioner was Kerry Buckman, Collier House Program Manager, who pretty much became the answer to what Sara was looking for based on the concern she showed for Sara as an individual upon their very first meeting.

Sara recalls, “It was a really good program for me to be in, and I felt like I was getting the help that I needed. The counselors were extremely nice and understanding. I could always go to them to talk or if I had any issues.” Sara especially appreciated the life skills and self-discipline imparted, which still guide her to this day. As she steadily let go of her anger and let down her guard, she

learned many new things that improved her quality of life, like how to have fun “without drinking or drugs,” how to open up to people, how to manage obstacles without “falling apart,” and how to find enjoyment in everyday pleasures like art and gardening. Most of all, “They showed me that it’s okay to be me and they helped me to find myself.”

Life keeps sending challenges Sara’s way—she now attends a therapeutic day program while her son is in school—but she feels equipped to meet them with the strength and tools she took from Collier. She and Kerry stay in touch regularly, a testament to the incredible bond on both sides, and Sara stays focused on making the best decisions she can for her future. Collier House gave her that focus: “I came in one person and left a totally different person. It showed me that change is possible.”



THE TIES THAT BOND

Collier Programs Are a Family Affair

The family unit is a foundational building block of all we do here at Collier—strengthening family ties, establishing mutually respectful relationships, augmenting communication and connection wherever and whenever we can. And there’s perhaps no greater family to emulate than the Bonds of Marlboro—parents George and Karen and their three kids, Tyler, Nick, and Sarah—all of whom have made Collier’s Kateri Environmental Center (KEC) a cornerstone of their lives.

The Bond family’s involvement with Kateri programs started about 15 years ago, when they heard about the various nature-based family activities hosted on our sprawling 260-acre campus replete with pond, stream, fields, and miles of trails to explore.

“We started coming for the Egg Hunt, then the Night Hike, and then some of the programs held in Smith Hall. Once we’d been coming to them for so long, we started volunteering for them.”

Talk to each family member individually, and you get a real sense of the distinct elements that make Kateri so uncommon. George loves the respect for nature instilled here; Karen most appreciates that Kateri “gives back to our local community, to ‘our’ kids, and that all of the money raised goes right back into the programs.” Tyler, now away at college, emphasizes Kateri’s combination of high-quality programming and high-octane, unique family fun; Nick hones his talents and budding professionalism as the official photographer of the annual Egg Hunt; and Sarah found her work with the at-risk kids at Kateri Day Camp immensely fulfilling.

Talk to them all as a group, and the family values we so heartily endorse become evident: everlasting memories of George’s and Sarah’s birthday parties on the grounds (hers featuring frogs!) ... both sons’ Eagle Scout projects, as well as Sarah’s Girl Scout Gold Award, conducted at KEC ... the irreplaceable time they’ve spent here together in this “place of peace and nature and community.”

When it comes to matters of family, Mom and Dad know best. Karen wants more people to be able to benefit from “this hidden gem in the craziness of the world ... where kids who have had to grow up too early can still be kids.” And George is particularly grateful for how his own family has benefited: “We don’t watch much TV—this is our TV time together, keeping busy outside, enjoying the outdoors. We’re involved with many organizations, but Kateri is always our priority. We get a good feeling in our hearts from giving back. It’s the best!”



Sometimes we all need a push in the right direction. In the case of Mark Jeacoma, it was less about the push itself and more about getting him to not push back.

When Mark was a sophomore expelled from his public high school for fighting, the last thing he wanted in his life was a bunch of adults telling him what he should do and an alternative education program telling him where he should be. But his distraught mother gave him an ultimatum—accept the placement being offered or get out of her house—so Mark decided on the former “to keep my family.” Ultimately, those adults—a handful of teachers he grew to respect immensely—and that program—which turned out to be Collier High School (CHS) from 2002 to 2004—redirected the course of Mark’s entire life.

At first, though, “I was a mess, didn’t want to hear anything from anyone.” Gradually, however, through such experiences as vocational training, group counseling, and playing on the school’s basketball team,

MORE THAN A SCHOOL

How an Alternative High School Led to an Alternate Path

Mark came to value the new skills and self-control he was developing. “The staff got me to sit and do the work. I cannot even say how they did it. All the teachers were qualified to handle people like me. It was a collective effort.”

Mark’s most impactful memories at CHS include wood shop and gardening class (“so peaceful for me”) with Mr. Staggard, meetings with his “always supportive” social worker Barbara Raffel, and anger management therapy with Mr. Hennessy, where Mark learned to talk about his feelings and recognize his triggers. “I didn’t want to be angry all the time anymore. Collier was where I was able to change. They kept me in line. I left without anger issues. I stopped using drugs my junior year. I left feeling like a person again and not an animal.”

And not just any person, but the person he wanted to be, which Barbara steadfastly nurtured in him—and still does, actually, in their regular email exchanges. Now married to his high school girlfriend, Mark says, “I work for a giant company that is hard to get into; I have two amazing kids I’m able to be here for, not on drugs; I live in a nice home. If it weren’t for Collier, none of this would have happened. I couldn’t have gotten my life together. They wanted me to do well.” And he has. Pursuing his business degree while he holds a management position, Mark is grateful for the “amazing” program that altered his mind-set and “taught me to be a dad and a better person.” In Collier’s “safe, hands-on, and understanding” environment, Mark “was able to be who I wanted to be, didn’t have to be anyone I wasn’t. It’s more than just a school.”



PUTTING HIS EXPERIENCE TO GOOD USE

A Collective Vision for the Individual Good

Tom Herr is the chair of Collier’s Audit & Risk Management Committee, a role in which he’s served since 2012. But it’s not his 31-year professional career that led him there ... not his fiscal expertise, his management skills, his business savvy.

What led Tom to devote his considerable talents and time to Collier was a child—one of his own four children, in fact, who volunteered at Kateri Day Camp in the mid-1990s and came home raving to her parents about “the wonderful set of activities” going on there.

“My daughter brought me a set of materials so that I could become more knowledgeable about all of Collier’s programs,” Tom shares. “During that learning experience, my wife, Mary, and I decided to become contributors to send a kid to camp at Kateri each summer.

We did that for a while, then decided to give a little more.” That “little more” turned out to be a lot more once the organization’s operating body asked Tom if he’d be willing to serve on the board, helping to refine its mission and extend its reach for funding contributions. A meeting with Collier’s then Executive Director Sister Ellen sealed the deal.

Since then, Tom’s commitment to Collier has only deepened, inspired by his admiration for what he calls “the Collier experience”: “Collier makes a huge difference in the lives of the children it helps, not only through the high school and now the middle school, but through the group homes, the summer programs, the curriculums. ... And it’s not just the progress the kids themselves make—it’s how that impacts the parents, the siblings, the whole family.”

To more fully realize Collier’s vision, Tom and his fellow committee members are supremely dedicated to optimizing the organization’s finances: “The better we manage ourselves financially, the better we’re able to step up to the plate to increase the number of kids who can have the Collier experience.” For his part, Tom feels fortunate that his post-retirement service here allows him to “put my experiences to good use.” Particularly concentrated on our campus’s construction projects right now, Tom always has his sights set on fortifying Collier’s future so we can keep reaching more children in need. To do that, Tom is passionate about getting the word out about the positive impact Collier programs have on the whole family. A passion that started more than 20 years ago with his own child.



LEAVING OUR MARK

Where We've Been & Where We're Going

Since 1927, when Mrs. Robert Collier first bequeathed our Wickatunk property to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to establish a residential school for young women in great need, we have been steered by the guiding philosophy of Saint Mary Euphrasia: "One person is of more value than a world."

Today, Collier Youth Services has grown into a multi-component organization that not only sustains that commitment to nurture the potential of each person we serve and honor their individual worth, but also responds to the changing needs of our service base with educational, residential, and recreational programs of the highest caliber.

Nothing is more important to our vitality than making a positive and lasting impact on our community, and that's why we're always elevating our quality, amplifying our goals, and widening our horizons. Here are three of the latest developments we've implemented to keep our campus growing and thriving.

SANCTUARY CERTIFICATION A MODEL FOR A SAFE & SECURE ENVIRONMENT

Collier House and Collier Group Home have been serving young women with a variety of emotional challenges for more than 30 years. Over that span, these challenges have only grown more complex for the women who enter our residential programs, such as psychiatric issues, substance abuse, and histories of trauma.

Recognizing the need to address these concerns as professionally and compassionately as possible, Collier began the four-year process of attaining Sanctuary certification in 2012. In February 2016, we were granted Sanctuary Institute status—an advancement being embraced by our residents and being lauded by our staff.

The Sanctuary Model® of care is actually a blueprint for organizational change that creates a trauma-sensitive culture in which the question shifts from "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" The positive implications of that shift cannot be overestimated. Through the seven commitments of the model—(1) nonviolence; (2) emotional intelligence; (3) democracy; (4) social learning; (5) social responsibility; (6) open communication; and (7) growth and change—our residential staff is becoming ever more aware of how to best treat our residents, and our residents are given growth-enhancing opportunities to help shape the environment in which they live and experience healing.

CARAMORE FARM ROOTED IN OUR YOUTHS' FUTURES

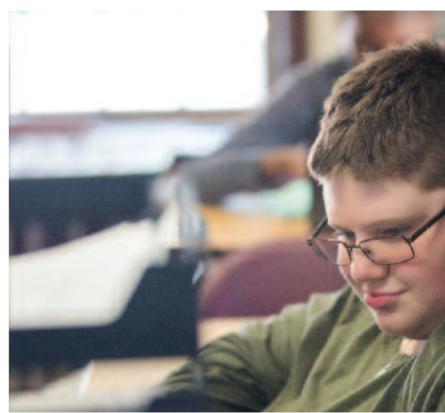
This year, Collier is—quite literally—branching out our service line with the addition of Caramore Farm, a community supported agriculture (CSA) program that brings families and friends together over natural, locally grown food while using the environment as a teaching tool for children. As one of only three CSAs in Monmouth County, we're extremely excited about our inaugural crop in this groundbreaking place of learning, healing, and connection.

At Caramore Farm, our students and residents will have the opportunity to learn where their food comes from, how food gets from the ground to the plate, the amount of care it takes to grow fresh vegetables and fruits, and the business of farming. Students of Collier High School's culinary arts program will also reap the rewards of our new farm, where they'll have access to ingredients for school lunches that are grown right in their backyard, directly participating in the

farm-to-table movement. And we're even enlisting the help of students in our building trades program, to build planters for growing seedlings in our greenhouse during the winter.

Caramore Farm manager Kristin Hock notes an additional fringe benefit: "Kids are more likely to eat their vegetables when they help in the growing process. So not only will we be growing delicious food, but we will be growing healthy kids too! And kids who eat healthy are known to excel in school. Having a farm on the property is a win-win for all."

Yet another highlight of Caramore Farm is that it offers a serene setting for our social workers to take our kids to help get their minds off their problems. Being outside, getting their hands dirty, helping nurture life ... the cathartic release of it all will be of invaluable help to our students as well.



Initially, shares of Caramore Farm will be open to Collier faculty and internal community members, with the future goal of expanding access to the external community. Collier Youth Services is dedicated to stewarding the environment and using our property as a place of healing, teaching, and nurturing. We can't think of a better way to underscore that responsibility than to pioneer local farming in our own natural habitat.

CAMPUS GROWTH

EXPANDING OUR WALLS TO EXPAND OUR REACH

Collier Middle School opened its doors to six students in September 2011 to deliver much-needed special education for middle-grade students too young to attend Collier High School. As the program expanded over the next few years, space was made wherever we could find it, with larger rooms reconstructed into smaller rooms to accommodate the ever-increasing need for alternative education for grades 5–8.

Once enrollment grew to 60+ boys and girls in our middle school, however, it became apparent that our makeshift solutions had to give way to making something entirely new.

So in 2015, Collier launched an ambitious construction project that will create on our existing campus eight new classrooms, six new offices, and a designated space for our social workers. Not only that, but all of the middle school classes will now be housed in one building, forging a sense of community all their own.

“We are thrilled by the rapid growth of the middle school,” reports Cindy D’Arcy, Assistant Executive Director of Education. “The addition of related services, extra clinical support, enhanced academics, and an overall individualized approach will foster accelerated success with our students.”

The expansion project additionally affords a more formal gymnasium for middle schoolers, as well as bigger spaces for occupational therapy, speech therapy, and other related services. Cindy adds, “As the

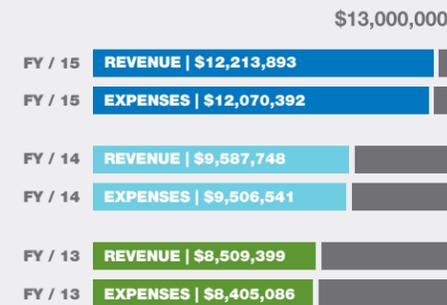
extra space gives the middle schoolers a separate identity, it simultaneously allows them to continue their daily practice of morning meeting, where staff and students come together as a community to start their day. This is a valuable and critical component of our program.”

Also under consideration is the addition of a new arts building, which would be shared by the high school and the middle school and would promote theater, music, video production, and visual arts—all programs that have therapeutic qualities for students. This space would feature state-of-the-art computers, printers, a recording studio, and practice rooms.

Once the school expansion project is complete, there will be ample room for the youth served by Collier to grow on multiple levels while receiving a quality education that will lead them to great opportunities in their futures.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

TOTAL AGENCY FINANCES



Average annual surplus = 1%

High school and middle school growth has driven our revenue, though it should be noted that agency revenue includes an average of 4.3% of private funding, which balances the budget. Students come from more than 79 school districts across the state.

RESIDENTIAL HOMES

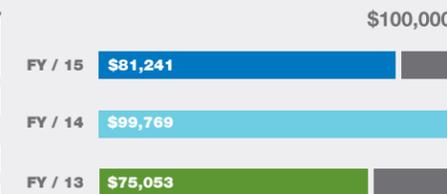
STATE CONTRIBUTIONS



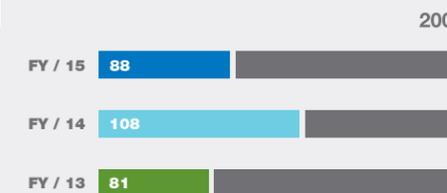
The state has not increased funding for our residential homes since 2007, whereas our service costs and costs to run the homes have gone up over 15%.

SUMMER CAMP

STATE FUNDING FOR QUALIFIED CAMPERS

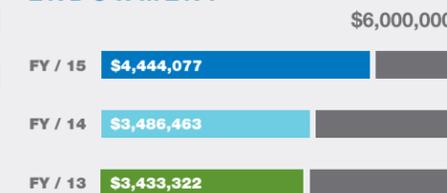


STATE-FUNDED CAMPERS



Camperships and scholarships for campers are key drivers to fund our increased enrollment of campers since state funding has not increased in at least 3 years. Campers come from 25 towns throughout Monmouth County.

COLLIER YOUTH SERVICES ENDOWMENT



Endowed investments have increased by 29% over 3 years, helping to offset our annual financial challenges resulting from flat state funding over the last 7 years. At a 4% spend rate, every \$1 million in investable assets provides \$40,000 in operating funds.

ELECTRONIC LIST OF DONORS

We are very grateful to and appreciative of all those in the community who partner with us, invest in our children, and support our mission. In our diligent effort to keep our roster of benefactors as accurate and timely as possible, we are now listing all investors on our website. To view the list, please visit www.collieryouthservices.org/2015_Donors. If there are any errors on this list, please accept our sincere apologies and please notify us immediately by email: mtonohue@collieryouthservices.org.

COLLIER YOUTH SERVICES

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