

## Restoration Outreach Programs Annual Report for the Year 2011

The Mission of Restoration Outreach Programs (ROP) is *Meeting Needs, Building Relationships and Restoring Lives through Christ on East Colfax.*

Toward that end, ROP is organized under and serves clientele through two principal programs – ROP Resource Ministries (formerly Heart to Hand Resource Center) and ROP Youth Ministries (formerly Prodigal Gatherings). The more specific missions of these programs are as follows:

**ROP Resource Ministries** –Provides resources and develops relationships that lead people to lives of self-sufficiency and wholeness in Christ.

**ROP Youth Ministries** –Provides a consistent, safe, Christ-centered place for teens and children living along East Colfax, thereby building character and stability into their lives.

### Operational Report – Results for 2011

Quantitatively in 2011, ROP's programs continued to experience increase and decrease. The biggest increases were, of course, in two new programs both of which began in January 2011.

**Youth Ministries initiated an after-school tutoring program.** We view this as among our most strategic efforts because academic success is critical to the future of our children. If we lose them academically, chances are high we lose them for life. Consequently, we hope to see this program become a very significant part of ROP Youth Ministries. In 2011, we saw 13 different tutors working with 23 different kids. On average, 15 students received tutoring from 7 tutors each month.



*Working on multiplication tables at after-school tutoring*

**We call Resource Ministries' new program our "Street Ministry".** Every Monday evening, our Street Ministry team serves a hot meal to men and women living in and around a couple near-by motels. The clientele at these motels includes many ex-offenders recently released from prison along with prostitutes, addicts and others who cannot pass a credit check or afford the up-front financial requirements of renting an apartment. In addition to a hot meal, our team provides participants with warm clothing, personal hygiene items and a listening and caring ear. Although the participants are generally quite transient, we have been glad to see many of our Street Ministry clients take advantage of other ROP programs and attend Restoration Worship Center (RWC) on Sundays.

**In 2011, we also saw significant growth in several existing programs.** Perhaps the most growth was seen in our Middle School group mentoring program (Ignite) which, in its first full year of operation, saw participation grow to more than 20 kids each week from seven or eight at the end of 2010. At this point, our elementary (Spark) and middle school programs are at maximum capacity with 23- 25 kids each of the three nights they are open each week. Only our high school program (Impact) currently has room for more kids. Average participation in Impact



*Team-building at Summer Sports Camp with Fellowship of Christian Athletes*

fell to seven to eight per week in 2011 following the departure of the program director. Volunteers filled this role until a new program director was brought on board in September. We anticipate growth in this program in 2012 as the new director builds relationships with our kids and undertakes more outreach initiatives.

**Our GED and Counseling programs (Resource Ministries) also experienced growth in 2011.** The average number of students receiving GED tutoring each month increased to 30 in 2011 from 19 in 2010 and just nine in 2009. The number of students passing all five tests required to receive their GED also increased from

two in 2010 to six in 2011. In the counseling program, 25 different clients received 680 hours of counseling compared to 497 hours in 2010.

Of course, not all programs experienced growth. Our ESL program began with a bang in September 2010 with 68 students. Since then, ESL attendance has declined, but stabilized in the low 40s. Our 12-step addiction recovery program also took most of the year off as the leader of that program, Lucy Bruser, was on extended medical leave. Happily, Lucy has very recently returned to work, and we are looking forward to our 12-step program regaining momentum in 2012.



*GED student gets some help from a tutor*

**Our food bank numbers also came down from 4500 households served in 2010 to 3700 households served 2011. However, success is not always measured quantitatively.**

In last year's annual report, we said that "ROP is seeking to be more intentional in our desire to connect on a personal level with the people who come through our doors rather than simply address a felt need for food, education or training." We also mentioned plans to restructure the food bank in order to encourage the participation of more people from the community we serve. Both of these plans became a reality in 2011.

**Most of our food bank volunteers now come from the community,** and they are being led by ROP's newest staff member and Food Bank Director, Tish Freeman, who also comes from the community, having served at the Food Bank as a volunteer for the past three years. Furthermore, Food Bank clients are no longer simply handed pre-packaged bags of food. Instead, each is paired with one of our volunteer hosts who leads them through the various groupings of food (canned and/or fresh vegetables, canned and/or fresh fruit, beans and rice, breads, cereals, desserts and occasionally meats) and allows them to select items of their choice. In the process, they also try to extend a little hospitality and make the process more relational. Consequently, while the food bank's numbers came down in 2011, it experienced significant success in terms of its alignment with ROP's goals and objectives.

During 2011, Resources Ministries also hosted six large community outreaches. These outreaches increase our visibility within our community, provide holiday-related food/and or other practical needs and give us an opportunity to present the Gospel. We are thankful for the many churches that partner with us to make these outreaches possible. In 2011, we also partnered with the Aurora Police Department in our biggest outreach of the year – the Back to School Outreach. This partnership worked great, and we are already working with the police department in planning for this year's outreach. **Through our 2011 community outreaches, ROP provided back packs filled with school supplies to over 700 children; sponsored 77 families to receive Christmas gifts for their children; and served meals to almost 4200 people (compared to 2800 in 2010).**



*RWC Pastor, Doug Ford, prays with outreach event participant*

Most significantly, during 2011 we saw 25 adults and 28 children make a decision to follow Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We say this is "most significant" because of our conviction that lasting life change only comes through a growing relationship with our creator. However, anyone observing ROP at work would observe that all of our services are offered unconditionally to all who come regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation. We seek to show God's love to all the people who come to our doors for help in any way we can. Usually, this involves providing practical assistance with food, clothing, tutoring, mentoring, counseling or other training, but we also seek the

opportunities God gives us to share His love in word as well as deed with those interested in learning more about the God who loves them.

### **ROP Volunteers and Staff**

**ROP's volunteers are the life-blood of our ministry, and we thank God for each one. Without their commitment to serve God and the disadvantaged living in our community, almost nothing of significance would be accomplished.** During 2011, ROP had 42 "high impact" (weekly) volunteers who served a total of 4,257 hours or 101 hours per volunteer. Total hours served represents an 18.5% from 2010 and reflects mostly the increase in community participation in our weekly food bank. In addition, we had 794 occasional or one-time volunteers that served a total of 4,741 hrs.

At year-end 2011, ROP's staff was composed of seven full-time and two part-time staff members with one open position. During 2011, ROP brought two new staff on board to fill existing positions. Earline Hardy is our new Director of Youth Ministries. She replaced Angelina Hendricks who made the decision to become a "stay at home" mom with the arrival of her second child in August. (Happily, Angelina is now using her many talents to serve our youth and ministry on ROP's Board). Lorah Finkenbine is our new Teen Ministry Director. We are very thankful for the team of dedicated Teen Ministry volunteers who kept this ministry going all year until Lorah's and



*Youth Ministries volunteers, teens and staff celebrate the graduation of one of our*

Earline's arrival in September. The open position was for the new position of Food and Clothing Bank Director and, as mentioned previously, this position has recently been filled by one of our long-time Food Bank volunteers, Tish Freeman. In addition,, ROP is blessed by the volunteer service of two of our program directors – Donna Godfrey who leads our English as a Second Language program and Dan Schweissing who leads our After-School Tutoring program.

We are also happy to report the recent return of Lucy Bruser. From the end of last April to the beginning of March, Lucy spent most of that time on medical leave. We thank God for all who supported Lucy both spiritually and financially during this time. It is great to have Lucy's talents and wonderful spirit back with all of us at 1540 Boston Street.

### **Lessons Learned and Looking Ahead to 2012**

In last year's annual report, we talked about the book, When Helping Hurts – How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor and Yourself, and its impact on our ministry. More specifically, we talked about our conviction to become more relational in all that we do and the need to be more intentional about seeking opportunities to partner with others in our community in meeting the needs of those we serve. These convictions were manifested in 2011 in the following ways:

- Our Food Bank process was made much more relational as we chose to do away with pre-packaged bags and provide our clients with more of a "shopping" experience where volunteer hosts lead clients through our Food Bank and help them select items from various food groups.
- The Food Bank is now staffed primarily by volunteers from the community we serve, and they are being led by our newest staff member who comes from the community and served as a Food Bank volunteer for 3 years.
- ROP partnered very successfully with the Aurora Police Department in conducting our biggest outreach event of the year. In addition to the backpacks we gave away and the meals we served, the police sponsored a biking safety clinic for the kids, a trailer full of clothing was given away, and a variety of other services were provided, including carnival games for the kids. We are looking forward to partnering with the Police Department again in this year's Back to School Outreach and expect to get more agencies and organizations from the community involved as well.
- Significant work was done updating and enhancing our Resource Manual. Now, when people come to our doors looking for help with resources that ROP does not provide, we are in a much better position to refer them to other agencies who might be able to help.



*Volunteers grilling burgers at Back to School Outreach*

**Partnership and collaboration continue to be points of emphasis as we move forward into 2012.** This year, we are also being intentional in reaching out to the many small churches ministering along the East Colfax corridor. Most of these minister in isolation with an inward focus, but **we know that if all these little parts of the Body of Christ would work more effectively together, we would have a much more significant impact on our community.** Consequently, ROP is reaching out to these churches, making sure they are aware of the

resources we offer, but also with an eagerness to learn more about their ministries and to explore ways that we can partner with one another.

In 2012, we plan to take further steps in making our Food Bank more relational rather than just a place to get food. There are reasons why people end up standing in line at our Food Bank. In order to better help people, we need to have a better understanding of those reasons. Therefore, **we will soon be implementing a simple semi-annual assessment process that will help us understand where our clients may be struggling beyond the issue of hunger and make referrals to resources inside and outside ROP that can help address those needs.**

**Another point of intentionality for 2012 is evangelism.** We know the "E-word" is looked upon with concern by many and even disdain by some. But honestly, it is the reason ROP exists. We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of all people in order that we might receive the free gift of salvation and the forgiveness of our sins that only a personal relationship with Jesus Christ can bring. This is what motivates us. God has brought healing, hope, joy and a sense of purpose to our lives, and the gratitude we feel compels us to share this gift with others. If this results in our disqualification from support in one form or another, so be it.

Having said that, we also want to be intentional about doing evangelism sensitively and effectively. Too often Christians, as individuals and organizations, err on one side of the evangelism spectrum or the other, i.e. we are either way too quick to preach the gospel with anyone and everyone regardless of their interest level, or we never get around to sharing the good news with someone eager to hear because we are afraid of offending or being rejected. At ROP, we like to say that we do not want to be either ahead of or behind the Holy Spirit when it comes to evangelism (or anything else for that matter). Rather, **we want to prayerfully seek the opportunities that the Holy Spirit gives us to share the gospel with those whom He has prepared to listen.** Admittedly, this requires a lot of prayer and discernment. We also think training would be a good idea to go along with these. Therefore **plans are already underway to offer evangelism training to all of our regular volunteers. In addition, our Director of Outreach and Discipleship, Lucy Bruser, is in the process of recruiting and training a team of volunteers who will specifically be focused on sharing the love of God with sensitivity and skill with those truly seeking answers for their spiritual questions and needs.**



*80+ volunteers provided Thanksgiving food boxes to more than 300 families*

### **Financial Report – Results for 2011**

2011 was another good year financially for ROP. However, we did see a modest decrease in cash reserves as a result of expenses exceeding revenue by \$7.9k or just 2%. Available cash at 12/31/11 was \$67.5k.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
Revenue	\$361.4k	\$363.4k	\$362.3k
Expenses	\$369.3k	\$347.9k	\$300.5k

Increases in expenses from the previous year were primarily staff related - \$11.4k (supplemental staff support – funded 100% by a grant), \$5.0k (health insurance) and \$4.7k (staff training).

**Donations from individuals continue to be the primary source of funding for ROP's ministry.** Sources of revenue for 2011 were as follows: Major donors >\$1,000 (35%), Other Individuals (23%), Fundraisers (12%), Foundations (17%), Churches (10%), and Rents (3%).

In addition to financial gifts received, ROP received gifts in-kind (food, clothing, household items, furniture and building materials) totaling approximately \$42,000.

### Summary

By God's grace and provision, 2011 was another fruitful year for ROP's ministry to the underprivileged living in northwest Aurora and east Denver. Our third year in our new building saw two new ministries get off the ground (after-school tutoring for our kids and our Street Ministry for the homeless and near-homeless), existing ministries grow (GED, Middle School and counseling programs) and a couple existing ministries decline, albeit modestly (Food Bank, ESL and the High School programs).

As we look forward to 2012, we are excited to see what God has planned. We anticipate that our partnership with the City of Aurora and its Police Department will continue to grow, and we are especially eager to see what develops as we reach out to the local churches in our community in an effort to explore how we can work together more effectively. One thing we know is that God has plenty of room to work as we step forward in obedience and faith. With the partnership of our volunteers, supporting churches and organizations and donors, we look forward to meeting the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of many people in our community. In the process, we know we will be the ones most blessed. **Our commitment to God and to all of our ministry partners is to faithfully seek his direction and to exercise good stewardship over all the resources – human and financial – that he entrusts to our care. To God be the Glory.**



*Immigrants learn to speak English at one of ROP's English as a Second Language classes*