

Erie DAWN 2011 Annual Report



Changing Seasons,

Changing Lives.



Who We Are

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1995 as a shared ministry of the Sisters of St. Benedict, Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St. Joseph, Erie DAWN addresses the underlying root causes of homelessness by working with women to build assets—both tangible and intangible—for their future. Our goal is to provide homeless women and their children with a home, while giving them the support, resources and tools they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

WHO WE SERVE

Erie DAWN welcomes any adult woman who meets the following guidelines:

- Is single and homeless, with or without children, and has a job earning a minimum of \$1200 a month
- Is committed to following strict requirements
- Has rehabilitation in place for any mental health, drug or alcohol issues and is drug-free

WHY IT WORKS

Erie Dawn has developed relationships with Erie area landlords and various agencies to provide services for over 400 women and children. These women and children are a living testament to Erie DAWN's strengths. The results: 79 percent of participants paid their rent on time, 90 percent of participants followed a monthly budget and 46 percent participated in job training/continuing education.



Erie DAWN provides fun family events for moms and kids

Changing Seasons



A change in seasons is always time for reflection. Summer to fall, winter to spring...these are the transitions that mark our lives and often provide us with an opportunity to pause and take stock of where we are—as individuals, as families, and as a community.

At Erie DAWN, we recognize that these transitions are not always painless. Sometimes, they are borne out of desperation and come at moments of uncertainty, hopelessness and often, despair. The women who come to Erie DAWN for help are certainly in the “winter” of their lives. They face daunting circumstances—homelessness, bankruptcy, addiction, loneliness. At Erie DAWN, we work with them to begin the hard work of surviving that winter. Like the gardener, we recognize that life is hidden under the frozen surface and we work with our women to nurture that life back to health. During the “spring” of their time with Erie DAWN, the seeds of growth are planted—relationship-building, budgeting, home inspections, job training and social/emotional skills.

But, also like the gardener, we know that the fruit of this labor won't be visible right away. We continue to work through Erie DAWN programming to cultivate the seeds. In her “summer,” each woman basks in the warmth of new mentor relationships, a safe and affordable apartment and newly acquired skills to maximize her personal growth.

And by “fall,” the harvest is ready. Having done the hard work, each woman is ready to experience the glorious tapestry of a full, self-sufficient life. She has reached her fullest growth and blossoms with the self-confidence and resilience needed to make it through the next winter. Leaving Erie DAWN for the next season of her life, we know that she will be able to turn any season into a season of hope. To everyone who makes this new dawn possible—every day, every season, every year—we thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen Dunn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maureen Dunn
Executive Director

Changing Lives

“[DAWN] taught me how to work myself out of my situation — to be better, be greater and give back to others while doing it”

Naomi Duke

Former Erie DAWN participant



Naomi Duke and her husband, Michael

Naomi

FALL

After walking out on an abusive stepfather and helpless mother in 1995 at the age of 16, Naomi Duke found herself alone, pregnant...and homeless. She came to Erie DAWN for a hand up to help put her life back together. She met Sr. Phyllis Hilbert, SSJ who agreed to allow her into the newly developed Erie DAWN program, despite the fact that she didn't fully meet all of the entry criteria. Sr. Phyllis worked directly with Naomi. After a period of moving from shelter to shelter and being introduced to program after program, Naomi had developed a “survivalist” mentality-- she learned that the best way to get what she wanted or needed was to work the system.

At Erie DAWN, the first thing Sr. Phyllis did was help Naomi make the mental switch from this “survivalist” mentality to one of accountability, commitment and determination. She learned tools for communicating and problem-solving. Ultimately, Erie DAWN taught Naomi how to have faith in herself and in her ability to make decisions.

After two years of hard work under Sr. Phyllis' guidance, Naomi graduated from Erie DAWN in 1997. She obtained her GED and, not long after, moved to Texas and received her B.A. in English from Concordia University, obtaining a 4.0 grade point average. She went on to become a Certified Financial Planner through Rice University and began her career as a financial advisor specializing in clients with special needs and/or disabilities. In 2007, Naomi was accepted into the Million Dollar Roundtable®, an association of the world's best life insurance and financial services professionals. During her speech in front of an international audience at the MDRT Annual Meeting in Canada last year, Naomi publicly credited Erie DAWN for giving her the opportunity to change her life. A true success in every sense of the word, Naomi lives a full life in Texas with her husband and teenage daughter.

Changing Lives



Alicia

Alicia SUMMER

2010 was a difficult but important year in Alicia's life. She began her work with Erie DAWN in May of last year after walking out on a dangerous domestic situation and a drug addicted family member. In September, Alicia gave birth to her first child and was grateful for the help and support she received from the Erie DAWN "family." In early 2011, Alicia applied for acceptance into the UPMC Hamot PCA program, a grant-funded collaboration with the Erie Community Foundation that works to identify and train health-care workers for new careers. Alicia was excited to gain entry into the program and was recently hired as a full-time PCA worker with UPMC Hamot. This new opportunity will provide her with the financial stability she needs to begin the path toward self-sufficiency. With one year left in the Erie DAWN program, Alicia is well on her way to achieving her goals and moving on with her life. She recognizes that there is more work to be done but has already begun to see fruit of her labor and has high hopes for the next season of growth.



Jennifer

Jennifer SPRING

Our newest participant, Jennifer came to Erie DAWN in June 2011. At 28 years old, Jennifer has two young children and a good job as an office assistant. Her life took a turn for the worse last year when her husband left suddenly and she could no longer afford her mortgage payment. She came to Erie DAWN looking for financial support and a chance for a fresh start. Jennifer is now working to sow the seeds of growth with an Erie DAWN mentor and to identify goals for her two years in the program. She is ready for the hard work that lies ahead.



Supporters

Through support and partnerships with many organizations, Erie DAWN is able to provide supportive and caring services to homeless women and children during each and every season of the year.

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Erie DAWN families "grow" together

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GRANTS

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Erie Community Foundation
Erie County Office of Drug and
Alcohol Abuse
Erie Insurance
Million Dollar Roundtable Foundation
ReTool Erie
United Way Women in Action Fund

* Rent Assistance

** Monthly Rent Assistance Supporters



Financials

The following from MONAHAN & MONAHAN, P.C., is the statement of activities of total support, revenue and expenses for Erie DAWN, Inc, for the year ended June 30, 2011.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	Unrestricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
County of Erie - Project Reach	\$ 125,691	\$ -	\$ 125,691
County of Erie - Drug and Alcohol	20,986	-	20,986
Corporate and agency grants	69,750	-	69,750
Contributions	70,694	-	70,694
Donated services, supplies and facilities	47,010	-	47,010
Rent income	17,220	-	17,220
Investment income	27,609	75	27,684
Other	1,049	-	1,049
Total support and revenue	380,009	75	380,084

EXPENSES

Program services			
Supportive housing	240,555	-	240,555
Supporting services			
Management and general	98,227	-	98,227
Fund raising	17,751	-	17,751
Total expenses	356,533	-	356,533
Increase (decrease) in net assets	23,476	75	23,551
Net assets at beginning of year	182,989	2,301	185,290
Net assets at end of year	\$ 206,465	\$ 2,376	\$ 208,841

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.



Naomi Duke, Maureen Dunn and LaVaughn Buchanan

Erie DAWN Team



Erie DAWN Highmark Walk

GOVERNANCE

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Maureen Dunn, Executive Director
Heidi Lutz, Financial Manager
Mary Viglione, Case Manager
Pam Biroscak, Mentor/Volunteer Coordinator
Katie Allison, Program Coordinator
Gina Allison, Life Skills Coordinator





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