



Erie DAWN 2012 Annual Report

# Home Is Where The Heart Is.

# Who We Are



Birdhouse by Susie McAllister

**On Cover  
Birdhouses by:**  
Jim Sabol  
Campbell Pottery  
Janel Potratz Levin

## 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.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BIRDHOUSE.

As the cornerstone of Erie DAWN is to provide housing, we find the symbol of a house very significant. As home is where the heart is, the family feels safe and secure knowing they have a place to call home. The symbol of a house is incorporated into our logo and we have used it in decorating Christmas Trees for Festival of Trees to major fundraisers.

You will see throughout this report pictures of birdhouses created by local artist that were auctioned off at our annual spring fundraiser, Come Fly with Me.



# Erie DAWN Works



I do not think a day goes by that I don't read something in the paper or see a news story about the economic condition of families in Erie County-- 47.3 percent of children under 18 living in poverty; low numbers of living wage jobs; a lack of safe, affordable housing; debates over self-sufficiency and so much more.

At times, it almost seems hopeless. These problems are so large and so complex, we begin to wonder how we can ever make a difference. But when I look back on our year at Erie DAWN, I realize that this is one place where we are seeing change. In reviewing our outcomes, both data-based and anecdotal, on the following pages, I think you will agree with me that the Erie DAWN program works.

We are making a difference in the lives of women and children in Erie County by addressing life issues such as affordable housing, financial stability and healthy behaviors. We are paying attention to the work being done by other organizations such as the Erie County Policy & Planning Council and Erie Vital Signs in order to ensure that our program supports the large-scale community impact they endorse. And we are working toward the ultimate goal of individual self-sufficiency, which we know is the key to both community and personal growth.

This kind of intensive work is incredibly rewarding for Erie DAWN staff and volunteers-- but it also requires incredible resources from supporters like you. Thank you for all you have done in this year to make our work possible. Day by day, family by family, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of Erie families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maureen Dunn".

Maureen Dunn  
*Executive Director*



Families are the heart of Erie DAWN. Two of our families enjoying family outings. Adrienne and her son at the Zoo and Jen and her children at Art Night.



# Homelessness Awareness

According to the Erie County's Department of Human Services, the number of homeless people in Erie increased from 405 in 2011 to 439 in 2012. Erie DAWN brings awareness to the growing issue of homelessness with activities each November during National Homelessness Awareness Month.

In November 2011, local bakeries participated in a bake sale of house-shaped cookies to help Erie DAWN raise both awareness and funds. Erie DAWN families, friends, staff and board members painted homemade birdhouse ornaments that were used to decorate a tree at the Festival of Trees event, where Erie DAWN also coordinated "No Room at the Inn," a display of more than 70 nativity scenes from around the world.

By providing safe, affordable, independent transitional housing to program participants, Erie DAWN helps women transition from homelessness to homes of their own.



Tony and Jenni Stefanelli of Romolo Chocolates participated in Erie DAWN's cookie sale.



Program graduate Rosena and her mentor Kathie, along with other Erie DAWN families, helped create decorations for the Festival of Trees. Erie DAWN mentors offer women guidance on a one-to-one basis.



The handmade ornaments adorned an Erie DAWN tree at the Festival of the Trees, where Erie DAWN also presented the "No Room at the Inn" nativity scene showcase.





Julie and her daughter

## Julie

Julie, a proud Erie DAWN graduate, overcame many of life's obstacles including addiction and abuse. Julie worked hard to get her personal life on track which has led to her being promoted to manager at a local restaurant.

Julie attributes her success to hard work and determination and gives credit to the dedicated staff at Erie DAWN and her mentor, Kathy. Julie and Kathy have maintained a friendship for almost nine years and their relationship continues to grow.

Julie has stayed in touch with Erie DAWN over the years as she would share her successes with us. She resides in Edinboro with her daughter and has started saving for her first home, the final step on her path to self-sufficiency.



Toccora and her children

## Toccora

Toccora came to Erie DAWN just one year ago after living on her own since the age of 17. Working full-time and a mother of two young children, Toccora has gone from staying with friends and sleeping in her car to attending Penn State Behrend School of Nursing. Toccora's ultimate goal is to graduate with a bachelor in nursing and to pursue this profession.

Toccora is a devoted mother and it is obvious when you see her interact with her children that she is determined to pass on her strong values to her children. She volunteered as a coach for the children's kickball team at the YMCA and is very involved with their other activities.

Toccora has a gentle spirit and strong will. Her work ethic and determination are admirable. She understands that the key to self-sufficiency is education and employment.





# 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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Birdhouse by Carl Larese

Erie DAWN 2012 Annual Report



# Supporters

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Birdhouse by Cheryl Zalik



# Supporters

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## In Memory of Viola J. Pomorski

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## GRANTS

Citizens Bank Foundation

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Erie County Drug & Alcohol

Erie Community Foundation "ReTool Erie"

Erie Community Foundation "Helping Today"

Erie Community Foundation "Step Ahead"

Welcome Club of Erie "Local Charities Support"

Erie Insurance "Giving Network"

\* Rent Assistance

\*\* Landlords

\*\*\*Fund of The Erie Community Foundation



Erie Insurance continues to be a strong supporter of Erie DAWN. L-R: Karen Miller, Ann Scott, Maureen Dunn.

## In Honor Of Sr. Phyllis Hilbert, SSJ

Elizabeth Calupca

## In Honor Of Msgr. Charles Kaza

Kathleen Weindorf

## In Honor Of Roberta Volgstadt

Mary Hope Wilson-DeSanti

## In Honor of The

Wednesday Breakfast Friends

Kathleen Kern



# 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, 2012.

<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	Unrestricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
County of Erie - Project Reach	\$ 133,447	\$ -	\$ 133,447
County of Erie - Drug and Alcohol	23,008	-	23,008
Corporate and agency grants	47,755	-	47,755
Contributions	75,365	-	75,365
Donated services, supplies and facilities	52,752	-	52,752
Rent income	20,112	-	20,112
Investment income	(5,301)	-	(5,301)
Other	1,057	-	1,057
<b>Total support and revenue</b>	<b>\$348,195</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$348,195</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>	Unrestricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Program services			
Supportive housing	234,232	-	234,323
Supporting services			
Management and general	100,695	-	100,695
Fund raising	21,635	-	21,635
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>356,562</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>356,562</b>
Increase (decrease) in net assets	(8,367)	-	(8,367)
Net assets at beginning of year	206,465	2,376	208,841
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<b>\$198,0968</b>	<b>\$2,376</b>	<b>\$200,474</b>

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

## Come Fly With Me

Erie DAWN held its fourth annual art auction, Come Fly with Me, on May 4, 2012 at the Erie Art Museum. The highlight of the event was a silent auction comprised of more than 35 birdhouse-themed art designs created by local artists. The sales of these one-of-a-kind creations provided much needed revenue to facilitate Erie DAWN's programs of rent assistance, financial guidance and advocacy.



Volunteers like Sr. Barbara Vavreck, SSJ, shown here with Pam Biroscak, Volunteer Coordinator, are important to the success of Erie DAWN's program.



Ned and Susie McAllister, son and mother artists and supporters.



Martha Mueller, artist and long-time supporter



Event chair Robin Schepner with attendees Beth Zimmer and Deb Vahanian



# Erie DAWN Team



## STAFF

Maureen Dunn, Executive Director  
Gina Allison, Case Manager  
Pam Biroscak, Volunteer Coordinator  
Sue Busse, Finance Manager  
Mary Viglione, Case Manager

## GOVERNANCE

Sr. Mary Herrmann, SSJ  
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Marietta Stalsky

Sr. Bernadette Bell, RSM

Katie Bool





**Erie DAWN**

*Dwellings & Advocacy for Women in Need*

Erie DAWN Inc  
2549 West 8th Street  
Erie, PA 16505  
814-453-5921  
[www.eriedawn.org](http://www.eriedawn.org)

