



# Changing the story for older adults

## 2016 Annual Report Summary

**O**lder adults are discovering that some of the most exciting and satisfying adventures can happen later in life. With more time to consider how they want the rest of their stories to unfold, people are turning to Oasis for inspiration and opportunities.

They are discovering that with better health, lifelong learning and ways to give back to their communities, the next chapters in their lives are meaningful and lasting. With Oasis, the story for older adults gets better and better.



## From the Chairman

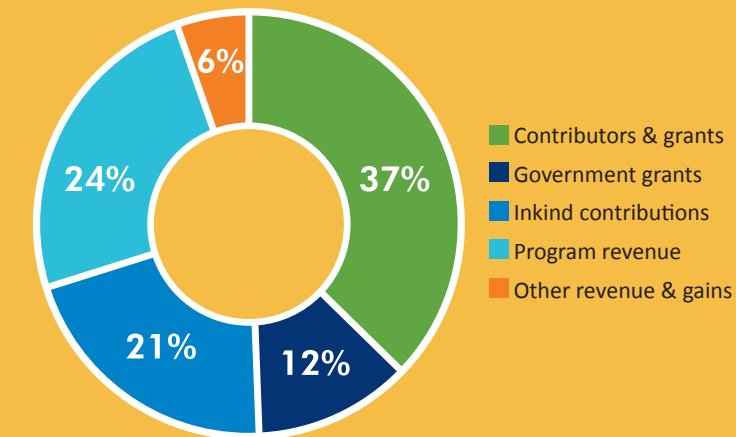


Oasis Institute Board Chair Matt Geekie and Founder Marylen Mann led staff and friends in thanking Marcia Kerz for 16 years of service as President and welcoming Paul Weiss, who joined as President in June 2017. (Shown left to right: Matt Geekie, Marcia Kerz, Paul Weiss and Marylen Mann)

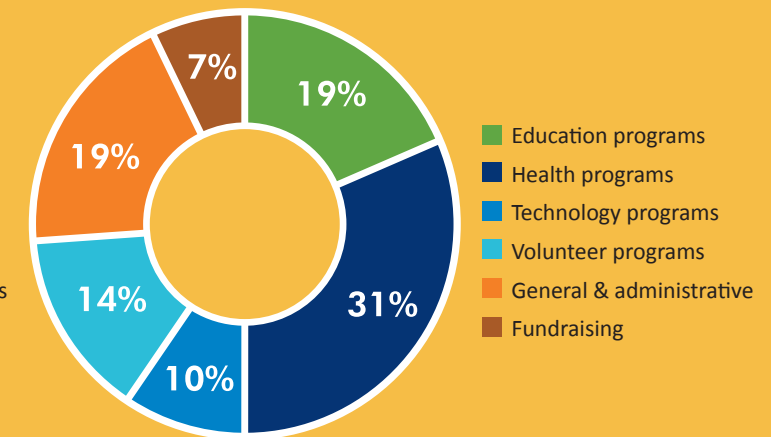
## 2016 Oasis Institute Statement of Activities

To see our complete financial statements, please visit [oasisnet.org/annualreport](http://oasisnet.org/annualreport)

### Support & Revenue: \$7.1 million



### Expenses: \$7.9 million



How many times do we hear people say how thankful they are to be in good health? It seems the older we get, the more keenly aware we become of all that is possible when our bodies and minds are in working order.

There is another interesting way to think about this. Studies show that people engaged in doing things that matter to them actually stay healthier. Oasis leads the way on important conversations about the roles that older adults play in the community if we are healthy and engaged.

Thirty-five years ago, our founder Marylen Mann was determined to change the story for older adults by providing opportunities for new and exciting chapters in their lives. Oasis continues to do this. This year, we've said farewell and a heartfelt thank you to Marcia Kerz, who served as our President for more than 16 years, leading us with distinction through an ongoing process of refinement and growth.

Oasis continues to change and grow. I am confident that our next chapter will be just as exciting and full of impact as we welcome Paul Weiss as our new President. Paul brings to Oasis a wealth of experience in the nonprofit sector, primarily in the community health and

fitness arenas. We're especially excited about Paul's demonstrated commitment to older adults.

For the thousands of older adults we serve and the communities in which they live, we look forward to what is to come. We're able to do this with generous support from our partner organizations, private and corporate foundations and individual donors who recognize what a good story we have to tell.

I hope you will find the opportunity to share our story with someone you know who is looking for an adventure.

With Oasis, they'll probably find just the right one.

*Matt*

Matt Geekie  
Chairman

The Oasis Institute

## No matter how "hot" the topic, people want good conversation.

Is it possible to have friendly conversations about current events these days?

"I try to encourage civility by modeling it myself," says **Jim Fleming**, who leads "Conversations in American Politics," a popular class at **Rochester Oasis**. A retired college professor, Jim missed the classroom and gave Oasis a try.

"These folks are former doctors, teachers, lawyers and scientists. They are very smart and didn't want to be lectured to," Jim recalls. "There's no teaching here, just good conversations. The sessions are led by the participants, and I'm there to ask questions, add comments and keep the discussions going. I make

sure everybody has time to say what they want to say and that they feel good about their participation. I think people leave feeling better about themselves and the world."

Despite hot potato topics like the national election, the presidency, the economy, terrorism and racial conflict, civility reigns at **Pacific Region Oasis in Los Angeles**, as well, says **Earl Ofari Hutchinson**, who leads the Current Events Roundtable.

"These topics dominated the discussion this year and at times the exchanges were fierce," he says. "Our participants may differ, but they do so in a respectful way. I try to make it challenging and



informative, but fun."

Informative is key, says **Molly Williamson**, who offers guest lectures at **Washington Metro Oasis**.

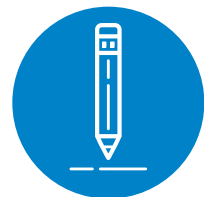
"There really is a hunger for information and discussion about the economy, environmental issues and other global phenomena," she says. "People genuinely want to know what's going on in the world."



# One tutor, one child and a lasting bond



## Tutoring reach in 2016



**4,500  
tutors**



**673  
schools**

After nearly 20 years, **Estelle (Alene) Rosen**, of **Maryland Heights, MO**, keeps at Oasis tutoring for one good reason: she knows she's needed. She made this discovery with the help of a little girl named Chelsea.

"Chelsea was very special," Estelle says. "My experience with this child motivated me to keep going with all the other children I have come to know, even though I don't always feel great. I bring my enthusiasm to work with each child and I get there and focus on them."

Chelsea is a grown woman now, but still recalls who was with her when she read for the first time.

"I remember sitting there listening

to Mrs. Rosen read a book, and then reading it aloud to myself," says Chelsea. "I felt this sense of joy... and thinking to myself, 'I can read this book!' I remember feeling a sense of accomplishment. Reading didn't feel as impossible as it had."

The two share a lasting bond.

"I don't think we ever outgrow the need to love someone and have that person love you back," says Estelle.

And Chelsea is thinking about opportunities to pay it forward. "I would be happy if I could impact just one child like Mrs. Rosen did for me—she taught me how to read!"

## Oasis impact in 2016



**40  
cities**



**22,000  
children**



**31,000  
adults**

## Tutoring with a Twist



### Extra, Extra! Read all about it!

Oasis tutor **Aaron Epstein** discovered another way to make an impact at Murch Elementary School in **Washington, DC**. He started *The Blue and Gold*, a high-quality school newspaper. As editor-in-chief to a dedicated newsroom of fourth and fifth-grade reporters, he runs a tight ship and couldn't be more proud.



### Taking tutoring a step further

**Cynthia Singleton** likens her role as tutor coordinator for **Pacific Region Oasis in Los Angeles** to that of a den mother of sorts, with a lot of administrative skills mixed in. She supports more than 50 tutors in eight elementary schools. For anyone on the fence about tutoring, she says, "There is never a dull moment. I find myself laughing all the time! If you want to be happy, give back and become a tutor."

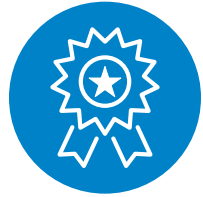


### Two hundred years and counting

For **Indianapolis Oasis** tutor **Betty Dotson** and her young friend Trededy, a history lesson came alive and the intergenerational nature of their relationship took on a whole new meaning this year. They participated in the year-long Bicentennial Bi-Generational Project, celebrating Indiana's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday. This special project was funded by the Hoover Family Foundation and Indiana Humanities.



## Oasis impact in 2016



6,100  
volunteers



383,500  
volunteer hours



23,000  
classes



132,000  
class enrollments

## Taking on tech with a personal touch



“I want everyone to leave the class with just a little bit more confidence than they can try something new and be successful at it,” says **Carita DeVilbiss**, who has been teaching Connections classes at **San Antonio Oasis** since 2012. She’s been focusing on instruction for older adults with iPads and iPhones, and also lends her tech expertise to the center.



“When your patience runs out, get up and do something physical. Then come back to the task later,” says Connections instructor **Emanuel Pope, III**. That’s how he approaches learning something new, and it’s what he advises the older adults taking technology classes at **Pacific Region Oasis in Los Angeles** to do as well. They come to learn online safety using the iPad and iPhone and mastering Facebook.

“There is always more to learn, and this keeps me as sharp as possible,” says Connections instructor **Jerry McAfee**, who helps older adults at **Indianapolis Oasis** learn how to take photos with their iPhones. “If a question stumps me, I find myself saying, ‘I don’t know, but let me get back to you.’”

## Staying on your feet to stay on your game



**Marilyn Davidman** knows from experience that one bad fall can put you down for the count. After a friendly greeting from two boisterous dogs landed her a fractured wrist, she turned to Oasis for help.

“I have a lot of good reasons to stay on my feet,” says Marilyn. An active tutor who takes a good number of classes and volunteers in the **Albuquerque Oasis** office, she is simply too busy to let getting tripped up trip her up.

A Better Balance class gave her more stamina, a better understanding of muscle movement and good strategies to prevent future falls.

Older adults like Marilyn across the country can avoid costly injuries that threaten their independence through partnerships between community-based organizations like Oasis, healthcare providers and managed care. These alliances are a path to lower healthcare costs, improved population health and better patient care—a health policy model known as the Triple Aim.

## Good news in the network



### A new home

Led by CEO Simona Valanciute, **San Diego’s Oasis Learning Center** has a new home after 35 years on Macy’s third floor in the Westfield shopping mall in Mission Valley. The new location in La Mesa’s Grossmont Center will have two centers—a Wellness Center and a Lifelong Learning Center.



### A familiar voice

Retired ABC news correspondent Sam Donaldson spoke to a sold out crowd at **Albuquerque Oasis** and was willing to lend his well-known voice to PSAs that were aired in Oasis cities across the country. His message? “Retirement is just the beginning of a lifelong adventure if we keep learning, stay active and give back.”

# Good things happen when you give.

With Oasis, older adults are finding ways to stay healthier, learn more and stay engaged in their communities. Our good stories are made possible with generous support from corporations, private foundations and donors who believe that it's never too late for a new adventure. Thank you.

»» **To see all donors, partners and board members, visit [oasisnet.org/annualreport](http://oasisnet.org/annualreport)**



"We all need to leave our world better than we found it and I can't think of a better way to give back," says **Sandra Lawhon**, a volunteer in **San Diego**. She has included Oasis in her will and a charitable remainder trust.



"I can certainly say that my life has gotten better since becoming a member of Oasis," says **Thelma Willis**, of **St. Louis, Missouri**. "I donate because I want people to know about Oasis. I get so energized by Oasis and I see so many other people who are energized, too!"



"One of the joys of giving is to be able to give back to an organization that I think is doing important work," says donor and volunteer **Tom Henry**, who teaches a history classes at **Upstate Oasis in Syracuse, New York**. "Oasis provides an avenue for older adults to keep learning in a friendly environment. It is an important part of who I am."

## Major financial support was provided in 2016 by the following contributors:

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Corporation for National and Community Service  
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Express Scripts Foundation  
Lifetime Care  
Los Angeles Department of Aging  
Macy's  
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San Antonio Area Foundation  
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