



Poverty 2010 Grant Nominee Assessment

PART OF THE SOLUTION (POTS)

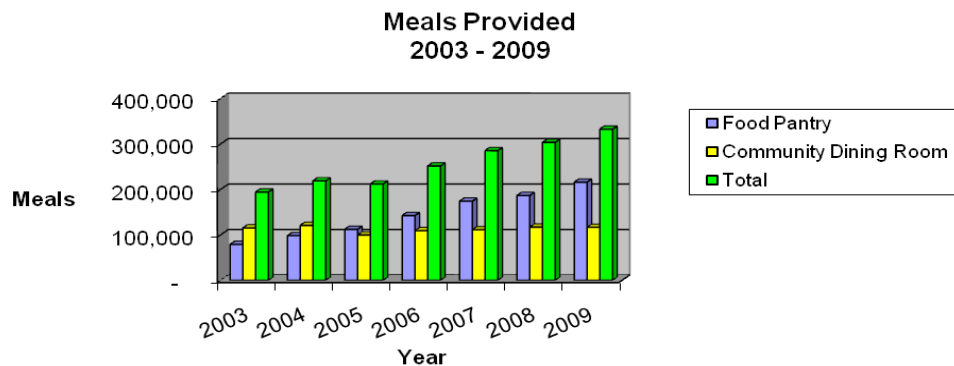
www.potsbronx.org

Overview: Part of the Solution (POTS) provides emergency food, case management, and legal services to low-income families and individuals in the South Bronx with a focus on respect, dignity, and compassion. The organization started in 1982 as a soup kitchen, and has since expanded its activities from solely providing meals to serving the basic needs of its constituents in a holistic way through emergency food, case management, and legal services. In 2010, the organization expects to assist more than 8,500 people, including 1,700 families with 2,800 children. In addition to day-to-day services, such as the provision of free food, meals, clothing, school supplies, showers, and haircuts, POTS provides next-step services such as drug/alcohol treatment, educational and employment training, legal services, Earned Income Tax Credit screenings, and Food Stamp enrollment assistance.

Organizational Mission and Sustainability: Part of the Solution aims to respond to the needs of the hungry, homeless, poor, and working poor and to serve them with respect and compassion. POTS does this through the provision of day-to-day immediate assistance (largely through food assistance) and longer-term interventions.

How would a grant from OPF be used? A grant from OPF would be used to help meet the needs of the 8,500 people who will count on POTS for help in 2010 and will support the organization's efforts in providing 350,000 meals to those in need.

What is the organization's track record in its work? What is the sustainability of the nominated organization? POTS has steadily increased both the number of programs and services it runs, and the number of clients it serves. Numbers were most readily available for the organization's core emergency food programs, and from 2005 to 2009 the number of clients relying on POTS services increased by 57%. The chart below shows the increase in meals provided from 2003 to 2009.



Financial, Staffing, and Project Summary: In 2008, POTS raised approximately \$4.5 million, \$3 million as part of a capital campaign to expand its operations and \$1.5 million in general revenue. Its 2008 expenses were \$1.4 million in 2008. Its 2010 operating budget breaks down with 80% to programming, 13% to administration and fundraising, and 6% to its new facility. Ninety percent of POTS' funding comes from private sources, the rest from federal and state funds. POTS spends approximately \$650K on salaries and benefits for its fulltime staff of 13, including two attorneys.

Closing Analysis: POTS is a small organization that provides a broad range of services to a large population in the Bronx with a high level of need. The organization has grown in scope and scale since it was founded, adding complimentary services to its core operations of emergency food relief to implement a holistic approach. Its commitment to providing services with a focus on individual dignity is in line with OPF values.



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Nominator Endorsement, by Caroline Kinsey: At POTS, kindness and dignity are passed around as freely as a slice of bread to go with your dinner. It's not a soup kitchen, it's a café where meals are served restaurant style by volunteers. It's a community center, a hub of the neighborhood. The majority of the employees live in the surrounding blocks, and many of them used to come to POTS for meals and showers, and are now gainfully employed there. Volunteering at POTS didn't teach me about poverty; I already knew. It didn't convince me to work in the non-profit sector; it was already evident to me that my life was headed in that direction. Instead, volunteering at POTS taught me the importance of helping with all my heart and to help all the way. It's equally important to be kind as to give someone a hand, and if you are going to serve a community, use every single resource you can find.



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