



Just Harvest

OUR MISSION: To promote economic justice and work to influence public policy and to educate, empower, and mobilize the citizens of our community toward the elimination of hunger and poverty.

Annual Report 2010-2011

A letter from our Co-Directors

Dear Just Harvest Members, Supporters and Friends,

The past year has been one of the most challenging yet exciting ones in our nearly 25 years of advocacy, education, outreach, organizing and service towards the elimination of hunger and poverty in our community.

Even as we carried out a major leadership transition with the retirement of our founding Co-Director Joni Rabinowitz, the worst economic conditions in a generation continued, expanding the ranks of those in need. Simultaneously, a highly polarized political environment opened unprecedented threats to the critical role of government in defeating poverty.

These circumstances must inspire all of us to “fire on all cylinders”—our advocacy work must be tough-minded but strategic; our services compassionate yet efficient; our drive to build grassroots community support undimmed. The strength of our vision of economic justice for all must inform all we do.

We take pride in our recent accomplishments, which you will read about in the following pages, but our view is firmly fixed on the future.

Just Harvest is now engaged in a strategic planning process to help define our growth and sustainability in the coming years. With guidance from our Board of Directors; day-to-day execution by our staff, interns, and volunteers; and active involvement by you—our members, allies and friends—we will meet the new challenges of 2011 and beyond.

In solidarity,

Just Harvest: A Center for Action Against Hunger

Through A Center for Action Against Hunger, we conduct direct and grassroots lobbying for public policies that address hunger and economic injustice.

In 2010, Just Harvest organized **our members, clients and our community** to advocate for policies which:

Work toward adequate funding for food and other basic needs

- **Collected 348 signatures** to petition legislators to vote against massive WIC cuts under the federal spending bill HR 1
- Just Harvest volunteer and WIC client Teeoina Hall **spoke to local media** at a press conference on the importance of WIC in the face of these cuts.
- **Organized visits to the offices of Congressmen** Jason Altmire, Mike Doyle and Tim Murphy about cuts to SNAP under “The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act”
- **Lobbied and testified at City Council** to strengthen public oversight and transparency of city budget decisions, including allocations of the City's Hunger Fund

Make changes in existing programs to ensure access to adequate assistance

- Worked to stop unreasonable annual and lifetime limits on Special Allowances for needed employment-related expenses for welfare participants
- **Participated in WIC hearings** to suggest improvements to the program
- Worked with Department of Public Welfare (DPW) staff to **improve and simplify the food stamp application process**

Ensure that programs provide high-quality service

- **Visited State Senators** Wayne Fontana and Sean Logan with clients to stress the importance of maintaining DPW funding
- Conducted regular meetings with local DPW staff to resolve common client issues and problems clients face
- **Participated in DPW Income Maintenance and Employment Training Advisory Committees** to monitor and influence welfare policy changes
- Intervened with County Assistance Offices to **ensure fair treatment of welfare and food stamp recipients**

Change the priorities that lead to hunger and poverty

- Sent action alerts to our tax clients and members to contact legislators to **permanently expand the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) and Child Tax Credit**
- **Visited with legislators in Washington DC and Pittsburgh** to pass a Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill that improves programs to feed millions of hungry children
- **Collected over 170 responses** to our sign-on letters to pass a robust Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill

COALITION BUILDING AND ADVOCACY PARTNERS

Just Harvest realizes that there certainly is strength in unity. This is evident whether we're contributing as a board member of the PA Hunger Action Center, addressing community food issues at the Pittsburgh Food System Council, helping to launch the new Southwestern PA Food Security Partnership, or working with the Coalition for Low-Income Pennsylvanians on state welfare issues. Moreover, we draw from and add to the pool of research and knowledge amassed by renowned national partners such as the Coalition on Human Needs, the Food Research and Action Center and Bread for the World.

But our clients are our prime partners in the fight for dignity and justice for all those affected by hunger and poverty in our region. Their personal stories are not only consistent reminders of the systemic problems we aim to correct, they are vital testimonies that we help to deliver to lawmakers who most often do not hear the voices of the needy over the noise of political theater—especially in these changing times.

Our Services

To maximize our effectiveness in our struggle against hunger and poverty, we help low-income people to access the government services that they are entitled to. The first steps to ending poverty and hunger are to expand participation in government safety-net programs, educate people about their rights, and eliminate barriers to these programs.

WELFARE ADVOCACY

We assisted over 500 clients by providing one-on-one advocacy services, addressing – and removing – barriers clients may face when trying to access public benefit programs.

TAX CAMPAIGN

As part of the United Way of Allegheny County's Money in Your Pocket Coalition, Just Harvest:

- Operated **three** volunteer tax preparation sites
- Completed **2,303** federal, state, and local tax returns which yielded **\$4.6 million in refunds**

EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit)

EITC is the nation's largest anti-poverty program

- **50% of households** were eligible for EITC, accounting for **\$2,052,393 in refunds**
- **307 households** received EITC payments that boosted their annual income by **25%**

Thanks to our many volunteers who logged in 2,190 hours of service to help give Allegheny County taxpayers' paychecks a boost!

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM

Just Harvest convenes a **yearly Summer Food Site Sponsor meeting** among 12 county sponsors, aimed at sharing resources and best practices.

SNAP (Food Stamps) CAMPAIGN

In fiscal year 2010, we:

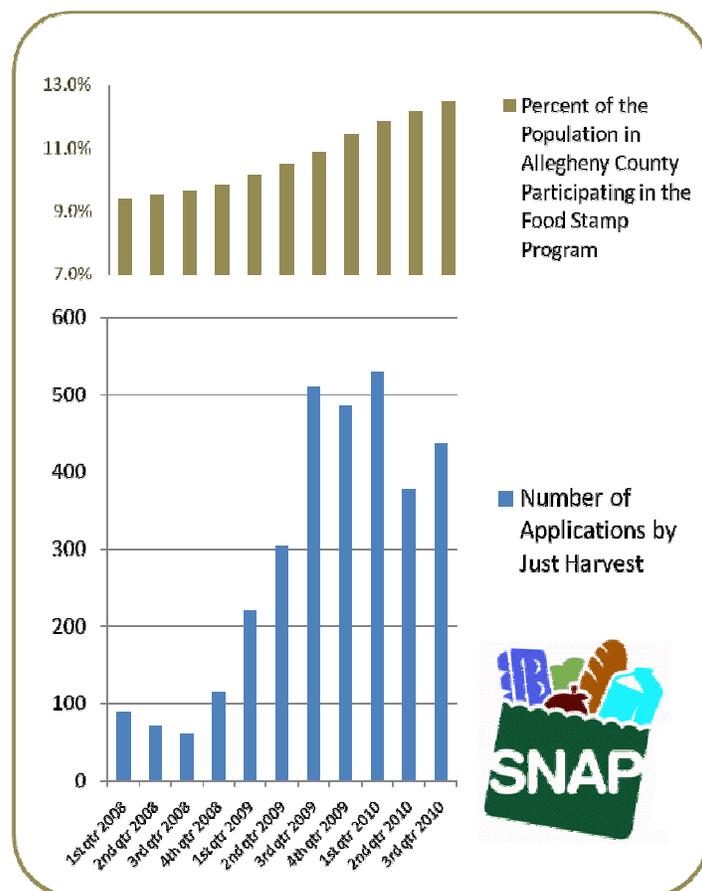
- *Processed* applications for **1,704** clients
- *Screened* **2,158** clients for benefits

Since July 2009, our clients received an estimated \$2,472,000 in SNAP benefits

For every state dollar invested, \$16.48 goes to a family in need.

A SNAPshot of Allegheny County

- As of December, 2010: **154,969** clients
- Total SNAP benefits issued in Allegheny County in 2010: **\$223,273,848 (currently over \$20 million/month)**
- **Impact to County economy in 2010 resulting from Food stamp purchases: \$386,000,000 (\$34 million/month)**



Just Harvest: Education Fund

Through **community education** and **outreach**, we strive to debunk myths about hunger and poverty, deepen understanding and mobilize communities to action. **We reach out:**

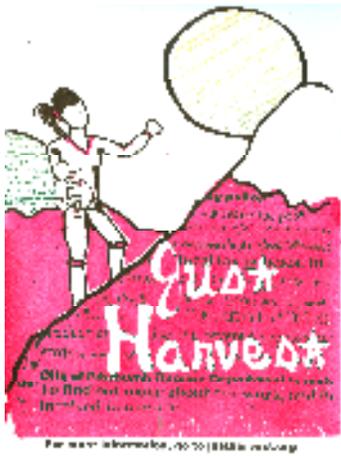
THROUGH SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND EVENTS

Weekly Clinics at EARN Centers

Our Welfare Advocate conducts **weekly clinics for TANF and SNAP clients**, keeping them informed on relevant state and federal issues.

Candidates' Forum

Our Primary Candidates' Forum featured spokespeople for the candidates for Governor, U.S. Senate, and PA House seats in Allegheny County with contested primaries. Participants responded to questions on issues related to hunger, poverty, and economic justice in our region.



A screen print from The Warhol Museum's 'Power Up' after-school program

Food, Inc. Screening

More than 200 attended our free community screening of the film **Food, Inc.** in Homewood to raise public awareness of the problems with the U.S. food system, issues of food access, childhood obesity and other diet-related problems.

Poverty Simulation

Just Harvest co-hosted our yearly Poverty Simulation, a very powerful role-playing experience that offers insight into the day-to-day realities, problems and barriers those in poverty face.

Our quarterly publications, **Just Harvest News** and **Welfare Agitator** reach over **4,000 community members**

THROUGH THE WEB

- Our e-mail **Action Alerts** reach over **300 Just Harvest members and clients**
- In 2010, our website saw over **11,000 hits**

THROUGH OUTREACH

TAX PROGRAM: Sent over **2,000 brochures** to **54 organizations** mailed **2,000 letters** to former clients

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM: Distributed more than **30,000 promotional fliers**, including coordinating a county-wide effort by **42 school districts** to send outreach literature to **3,500 families**

FOOD STAMP (SNAP) PROGRAM: Distributed more than **5,000 brochures** through churches, community organizations and community events

www.youtube.com/justharvestpgh

www.twitter.com/justharvest

www.facebook.com/justharvest

www.justharvest.blogspot.com



Join Just Harvest's online advocacy network!

and

Just Harvest Education Fund is proud to announce that we are now a partner agency of the United Way of Allegheny County. A new grant from the United Way's Impact Fund on Financially Struggling Adults on Families is helping us expand and strengthen our efforts to help low-income people access the public safety-net benefits they need.

Spreading our message

In 2010, we focused on spreading our message: we've appeared in print in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, City Paper and the Pittsburgh Tribune Review more than ever, and we've also expanded onto the airwaves through the radio and into the online video community.

PittsburghonVideo

With support from the Pittsburgh Foundation, we've been filming our events and posting video online at www.pittsburghonvideo.org. POV recently interviewed Just Harvest co-directors and staff for the inaugural episode of 'Unsung', their online nonprofit news program.

Listen to Just Harvest On the Air!

We keep listeners up-to-date on pressing issues surrounding hunger and poverty every third Friday of the month on Family Radio Network's 'The Union Edge' Radio Program heard on WPYT 660AM.

Just Harvest helps to deconstruct damaging stereotypes, bridge cultural divides and foster community understanding of hunger and poverty through our media appearances. We are regarded as an often-consulted local authority on issues surrounding hunger and poverty.



With over 50 appearances in print and broadcast media in 2010!

2009 Audited Financial Statement

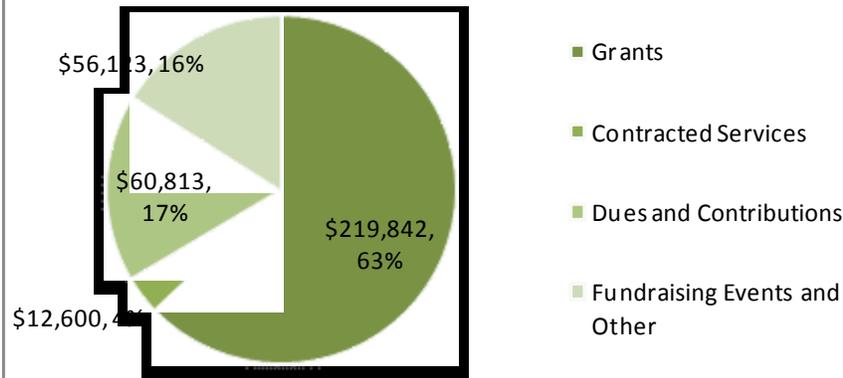
Just Harvest: A Center for Action Against Hunger

Total Revenue: \$91,170
Total Expenses: \$106,840

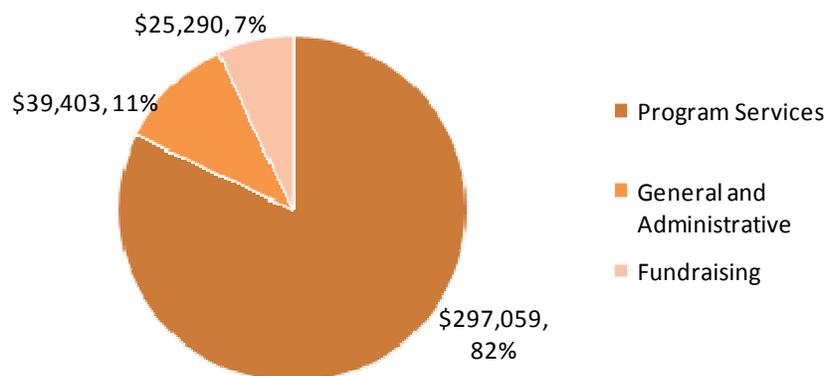
Just Harvest: Education Fund

Total Revenue: \$258,208
Total Expenses: \$254,912

2009 Revenue and Other Support



2009 Expenses



Our 2011-2012 Plan

Strategic Plan

- Develop and implement a five-year strategic plan for the organization

Policy Advocacy

- Engage new public officials
- Improve application assistance for LIHEAP Crisis program
- Advocate for a responsible state budget against major cuts to vital services and support for a TANF cash grant increase
- Advocate on federal budget priorities and issues surrounding child care and child support enforcement
- Advocate for permanent expansion of EITC and CTC through coalition work and lobbying
- Advocate for improved federal TANF rules
- Advocate for Restoration of Food Stamp (SNAP) Cuts under "Healthy, Hunger Free Kids" Act
- Eliminate work requirement from SNAP rules
- Advocate for adequate SNAP funding in the 2012 Farm Bill
- Work to implement plan for Citiparks farmers' markets to accept Food Stamps
- Advocate for better customer service at DPW Change Center
- Advocate for improved CAO Customer Service

Organizing

- Engage Just Harvest clients in policy advocacy and organizing activities
- Conduct Welfare Advocacy Clinics

Education / Outreach / Communications

- Raise a wider public awareness of Just Harvest through media coverage, identifying new audiences, and strengthening partnerships with allies
- Increase awareness of hunger among seniors through outreach to local senior centers
- Develop a WIC outreach plan for our Food Stamp and Tax Clients

Client Services

- Expand our Free Tax Preparation Site, Food Stamp Application Assistance and Summer Food Program
- Process School Meals Applications

BOARD 2010

Sr. Barbara Finch
President
DeWitt Walton
Vice-President
Mary Elizabeth McCarthy
Secretary
Fran Gruden
Treasurer
AJ Baughn
Sara Bennett
Keith Caldwell
Alexander Carlisle
Barbara Coffee
Melissa Farabaugh
Marsha Fuge
Mary Ann Hvizdos
Paul McKrell

STAFF 2010

Tara Marks
Co-Director
Ken Regal
Co-Director
DeShauna Ponton
Child Nutrition Advocate
Rochelle Jackson
Welfare Advocate
Kristie Weiland Stagno
Tax Campaign Organizer
Heather Seiders
Administrative Assistant
Ann Sanders
Food Stamp Specialist
Ken Munz
Food Stamp Specialist
Adam MacGregor
Communications Coordinator
Jessica Burgan
former Communications Coordinator

Americorps VISTA Volunteers:
Maria Muzzie
Noah Stephen Whelan

Interns:
Kate Annett
Selena Marshall
Jen Russell
Anne Wachtel

Welfare-to-Work Program Assigned Workers:
Bernadette Crumpton
Teeoina Hall
Ashley Hays
April Redmon

Many thanks to our temporary tax staff and countless volunteers that make Just Harvest's work so successful!

Thank you...

... to more than 500 individuals and organizational donors for membership dues and contributions from \$1.00 to \$5,000

...to our funders

Allegheny County

Allegheny County Bar Foundation,
Attorneys Against Hunger Campaign

City of Pittsburgh

Community Initiatives

Department of Public Welfare

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Pathways PA

Pittsburgh Community Services

Share Our Strength

United Way of Allegheny County

...to our supporters, organizers, underwriters, advertisers and guests at Empty Bowls, Harvest Celebration Dinner and all our grassroots fundraising efforts

15th Annual Empty Bowls Dinner
1,500 attendees

Raised a record **\$59,129** for Just Harvest and the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank



22nd Annual Harvest Celebration Dinner

350 guests
Raised **\$25,000** for Just Harvest



A very special thank you to:

Steel City Demons Roller Derby, Ten Thousand Villages Shopping Night, My Morning Jacket, Bar Louie, Town Tavern, Mike Stout and the NewLanders, Bruce Springsteen and Joe Grushecky

Arlene Holt Baker, VP, AFL-CIO spoke of the need for us, as voters, to stand firm against the balancing of budgets on the backs of the working poor through cutbacks of vital social programs like food stamps.