



Graceful Growing Together, Inc.

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GGT 2016 Annual Report

Vision:

We envision a welcoming place grounded in love, service and sharing, where people of all ages, faiths and culture can meaningfully connect with each other and explore opportunities for a healthy, balanced life.

Mission:

Graceful Growing Together is a nonprofit created by Christ Lutheran church to offer affordable space in downtown Bethesda to organizations that enrich lives across generations, serve vulnerable neighbors, and advance intercultural and interfaith understanding.

2016 was an exciting year for GGT as we move closer to realizing our goal of building a worship and community center that will build on the legacy of Christ Lutheran Church's long-standing tradition of meeting pressing needs in the Bethesda area. The new center will expand on current programs and add much needed multi-purpose recreation, concert, daycare, assembly, event and meeting space as well as an affordable location for the nonprofit community whose programs will work toward our mission to connect neighbors and build futures in Bethesda and across the County. We are pleased to present this Annual Report to share the progress made in 2016.

Board and Executive Leadership

March 1, 2016 GGT welcomed Melissa Graves as Executive Director. She has brought with her a wealth of experience from her previous role as CEO of Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area. She hit the ground running to work with the Board to implement ambitious plans for 2016.

In addition, the Board welcomed two new members this year. After an exercise to examine existing and needed expertise on the Board, Trish Kelly and Harvey Schweitzer were elected to serve. Ms. Kelly brings accounting and finance expertise to the Board. She has CPA and JD degrees and her career has largely focused on the nonprofit sector. Mr. Schweitzer is an attorney with extensive background in nonprofit governance and family law. Both are Bethesda-Chevy Chase residents and passionate about the promise the project holds for increasing the quality of life and opportunities for service in Bethesda and across the County.

Board of Directors

Barry Lemley
President

Don Cuming
Vice President

Dave Heffernan
Secretary

Trish Kelly, JD, CPA
Treasurer

Dr. Raymond Albright
Board Member

Paula Bobb-Semple
Board Member

Rev. Mansfield Kaseman
Board Member

David R. Lambert
Board Member

Dr. Charles Milliken
Board Member

Ann Posner
Board Member

Harvey Schweitzer, Esq.
Board Member

Melissa Graves
Executive Director



Connect, Enrich, Innovate
Celebrating over 80 Years of Community Service

Graceful Growing Together, Inc.

The Board of Directors elected a new slate of officers for 2017: Barry Lemley, President; Don Cuming, Vice President and Liaison to CELC Council; Trish Kelly, Treasurer; and Dave Heffernan, Secretary. We thank them for their willingness to serve and recognize outgoing officer David R. Lambert for his outstanding service.

The Board conducted its first annual retreat at which it affirmed and restated its vision and mission, reviewed community needs, and updated its strategic planning document.

Community Engagement

Since coming to GGT, Executive Director Melissa Graves has made community engagement a priority. She met with more than 100 community leaders from government, business, and the nonprofit sector to ensure the worship and community center would meet existing needs and bring an important resource to Bethesda. Conversations confirm there is strong support and anticipation of this innovative project. Services and amenities that have emerged as pressing needs are recreation and multi-purpose space for events and assemblies, day care, mental health counseling, and commercial kitchen that can all be used for inter-generational programming and activities. See quotes from community leaders at the end of this report.

Advisory Committees

This year GGT launched two advisory committees to engage community leaders who want to share their expertise and experience to bring expanded services to make Bethesda a more connected and compassionate community.

The Leasing and Operations Advisory Committee is made up of Bethesda-based real estate experts who have assisted GGT in developing revenue and expense projections for future operations, marketability of the project, and how to ensure an innovative community space.

The Messaging and Branding Advisory Committee is made up of marketing and communications professionals. They have been offering creative ideas and advice on communications strategies, messages and visual identity for GGT. Keep your eyes out for new logo and look coming in 2017!

Fundraising

GGT was fortunate to receive its second round of funding from the Montgomery County Executive and Council in 2016 with grants for both construction and operations. To date, Montgomery County has invested more than \$350,000 in this project and has included an additional \$135,000 in the County Executive's 2018 proposed budget.

At the State level, the entire District 16 Delegation supported GGT by introducing legislation for FY18 bond bill funding for the project's development and construction. District 16 Delegates Marc Korman, Adriana Kelly, and Bill Frick and Senator Susan Lee have been especially supportive of this effort.

This year, GGT engaged Capacity Partners to assist in the final planning and preparation for a capital campaign to augment the significant investments being made by Montgomery County, the State of MD and founder, Christ Lutheran Church.

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GGT was honored to be a 2016 recipient of a MANNA Community Food Rescue mini-grant to assist with the design and construction of the new building's food rescue and feeding capacity. Melissa Graves and GGT Board member, David Robert (Dave) Lambert serve on the Community Food Rescue and Access Working Group.

Congratulations to the GGT Board who achieved 100% Board giving for the fourth consecutive year.

Financials

A consolidated audit of 2015 financials was conducted by Councilor, Buchanan and Mitchell. 2016 financials are under review by new financial management company. Final adjustments and audited statements will be made available when complete. Before adjustments for year-end giving and grant revenues, preliminary year-end numbers show revenues of \$167,533 and expenses of \$175,073 for a net income of (\$7,540).

Quotes from Community Leaders

"Bethesda has no community Center downtown that will provide what the Graceful Growing Together project will offer." -- Maryland State Del. Marc A. Korman

"Your Center will be an integral part of the new downtown Bethesda." -- Chuck Short, Special Assistant to County Executive Ike Leggett

"Your conceptual design is ideal for a neighborhood, multi-generational health and wellness center." -- Gabe Albornoz, Montgomery County Director of Recreation

"This is a very innovative and important way to be thinking about how to serve a community." -- Ken Nelson, Montgomery College Director of Business and Community Outreach