

Graceful Growing Together, Inc (GGT)

2012 Annual Report

Following Graceful Growing Together (GGT) Inc. Board direction and CELC Congregation leadership, and community advisories, it has been a very active and productive year on a number of GGT fronts. The Board held formal meetings every 2nd month and program and finance meetings met as required during 2012. Advisories and Town Hall meetings were held during the year to keep stakeholders apprised of activities and future goals. The CELC Congregation approved the expansion of the Board of Directors to 13 Congregation and Community members.

Here are brief highlights of key activities and decisions.

Capital Campaign Feasibility Study (CCFS) July to Sep. 2012

Using a development grant approved by CELC Council, the GGT commissioned the Community Counselling Services Company (CCS) to assess philanthropic goals from the congregation and community for financial support of the project. The findings and recommendations provided in this Capital Campaign Feasibility Study (CCFS) for GGT, Inc. and CELC are based on 118 strategic internal and community discussions.

A study group made up of 15 CELC and Community leaders provided direction at 3 meetings held during the same period. To approve initial material, suggest midterm correction and receive final findings and recommendations.

An Executive Overview of the Feasibility Study comprises of five (5) points:

1. Graceful Growing Together should allow for a 12-24 planning and prospective cultivation period prior to initiating and launching a public campaign. This period would include deeper engagement with Christ Lutheran Church members, Bethesda-based businesses and foundations, as well as Montgomery County government officials, to boost awareness of the organization and GGT's philanthropic priority standing among donors.
2. All tested case components were endorsed enthusiastically but there is mixed support for providing individual and/or organizational philanthropic contributions for the effort.
3. Based on data points and benchmarking, CCS has confidence in GGT's ability to raise \$1,000,000 in new, private philanthropic support over a five-year pledge period.
4. Developing a clear, compelling, and impactful case for financial support will be essential.
5. Expanding GGT's visibility and impact in Bethesda, and the greater Montgomery County area will be important.

18 important study findings & observations detailed a suggested timetable and implementation plan that is now incorporated into GGT and CELC's future strategies and workplans.

CULINARY ARTS

The Christ Lutheran / GGT Culinary Arts Initiative currently consists of three components: 1) the Professional Track utilizes the National Restaurant Association ServSafe® course and exam; 2) the Family Track is designed to address childhood obesity and overall family nutrition; and 3) to encourage local entrepreneurship, Time-Share Kitchen Rentals are available to small and start-up catering businesses owners.

The National Restaurant Association ServSafe® class continues to be taught at CELC in Luther Hall. Successfully passing this national-level food safety course will allow a student to then obtain a Montgomery County Certified Food Service Manager card. This card is a prerequisite to renting our Luther Hall licensed kitchen.

In June, the People-4-People Employment Assistance Program launched a Culinary Arts Job Training Program for unemployed persons seeking employment in the food service industry. Students received instructions in food safety, practical kitchen skills, as well as job readiness training. This pilot program was sponsored by seven Montgomery County churches and Christ Lutheran non-profit GGT in Bethesda provided the licensed kitchen space.

Each Saturday in August, the Farm to Freezer program used the Graceful Growing Together "awesome" commercial kitchen. With ten volunteers, they were able to prepare 54 lbs. of tomato sauce, 11 lbs. of blanched squash and zucchini, and 10 lbs. of roasted eggplant, all to be frozen in the Bethesda Cares donated freezer space.

All year a local chef has been renting the Luther Hall Kitchen on a shared use basis. She sells her baked goods at various farm markets in Maryland and DC. We look forward to at least two additional kitchen renters in 2013; another farm market vendor and a small processor of foods.

GGT continued to provide discounted or free community service facilities for a Polling Place, expanded space to Bethesda Cares and other nonprofits in Luther Hall and the Glenbrook House. Additional expansion is planned for 2013.

Submitted by the Graceful Growing Together (GGT) Board of Directors

Ray Albright, Don Cuming, Melanie Folstad, Dave Heffernan, Barry Lemley, Paula Mathis, Andy Masetti, Mark Miller and Reverend Tim Warner