1 in 3 Cincinnatians live below the poverty line.¹
Cincinnati is the second poorest city in Ohio behind Cleveland.²

That’s more than 90,000 people...
Enough to fill all of Paul Brown Stadium and half of Great American Ballpark.

Someone born into poverty is: ³

6x more likely to drop out of high school
32x more likely to spend adulthood in poverty
7x more likely to have an unplanned teen pregnancy
40% more likely to go to prison if he/she is a drop out

CityLink launched to offer new hope that will ripple out into our community for generations to come.

¹ Source: US Census Bureau, 2016 Quick Facts
² Source: 2016 City Data
³ Source: Childhood Poverty Persistence: Facts and Consequences, Urban Institute Brief 14, June 2010
Amidst a strengthening economy, we face persistent poverty levels which dispel the myth that a rising tide lifts all ships. Growing evidence supports a fuller appreciation of the complexity of poverty. Studies demonstrate how concentrated areas of poverty actually inhibit the cognitive development of youth, lessen life expectancy, and even reshape DNA. Concentrated poverty is an anchor weighing down our community. If a ship is anchored in a rising tide, the tide can actually inundate and capsize the ship.

Hundreds of our neighbors walk through our doors each week to fight for a better future for themselves and their families. People enter the Center with decades of life under their belts and hope for a better tomorrow. Some of those individuals have had a recent destabilizing event, a job loss, a health emergency, a family crisis. Others walk through our doors tired of working hard to keep their head above the water and seeking an opportunity to truly thrive.

Individuals are reshaping their lives through holistic supports at CityLink and spreading that hope within their families. Clients are gaining skills for new careers, building assets, overcoming barriers, and changing the trajectory of their lives. Over 70% of our clients come to us by word of mouth, so networks of hope and promise are forming in families, in neighborhoods, and our community.

CityLink is aggressively pursuing capacity to serve more clients more deeply. We are growing new career tracks to support our clients’ wide variety of educational levels, backgrounds, and interests. We want to see our clients rise along with our communities rising tide.

Thank you for supporting our neighbors’ hopes and dreams for a better tomorrow.

THE CITYLINK TEAM

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
—HEBREWS 6:10

2018 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Generosity of our community allows us to continue to adapt to the changing needs of our community and pour resources into where we see good returns. Clients are astounded that our community cares deeply enough to provide a place of hope, a place where they can walk through one set of doors and receive outstanding support for their hopes of a better life.

Private funding allows us the freedom to aggressively pursue new partnerships, new approaches, and to align our operations with our beliefs. We thank our individual, corporate, foundation and church supporters who make this possible.

In 2018 we served a record number of new clients, 779 and a total of 1,199 unique total clients who engaged in services. We launched a new training track, piloted another, and are preparing for more avenues to support clients’ attainment of living wage employment.
The CityLink model empowers clients to develop the skills and capacities to improve their lives through leveraging the expertise of partners.

Our clients come with the goals and determination, then are surrounded by a specialized team of excellent social services, highly trained CityLink staff and committed volunteers. Partners wrap services around the clients; helping them pursue and achieve their goals.

In 2018, CityLink elevated the depth of partnership through co-creating a new program to prepare individuals for careers in the culinary field. Existing partners came together to teach job readiness, culinary math, resiliency, money management, and introduce options for transportation while Findlay Market teaches the students the industry skills. The program is built off benchmarks for national best practices and includes a 3-month internship at the restaurant Social OTR, which Findlay Market will operate, the revenue will help fuel the ongoing programmatic expenses.

We also commissioned a study through Common Impact who engaged Fidelity for a 3-month comprehensive evaluation of career pathways. Their study evaluated over 70 career opportunities to narrow down to recommended fields with solid wages, accessibility, and growth opportunities. Based off their recommendations we partnered with PerScholas to pilot Cable Technician Training and are evaluating future career tracks. These career tracks offer new rungs in the ladder towards economic prosperity.

We are deeply appreciative of our partners and the 1,199 clients who stepped through our doors and engaged in services to transform their lives and our community in 2018.

Don’t take our word for it. Here’s what our community is saying:

“Gene Gardner

CityLink is making a positive difference in the lives of more people each year. They also learn from what works well and what doesn’t thereby improving the process. Excellent facility, great people, thoughtful managers, and good outcomes. We are blessed to have them in the community.”

“Stacey Huff

The shopping mall of social services. Work this program and you have support for all areas of your life. Removal of barriers stopping folks from employment or school. Be successful, start here, great guides!”

“Tim Melton

The CityLink Center is the real deal. All the staff and volunteers there really want to get people out of generational poverty. I have spent many hours there and seen peoples lives changed for the better.”
Tamiko’s love for her family is what led her to CityLink Center.

When she first came to us, Tamiko didn’t have her high school diploma, was working in what she felt was a dead end job for the past 12 years in a nursing home, and was living with her son. She had dreams of having her own home where she could gather her family for the holidays and celebrations, one place big enough to be filled with her four grown kids and their families. At 47, Tamiko was ready for a change.

So, she decided to get started by doing a search for financial counseling where she stumbled upon SmartMoney at CityLink. Tamiko immediately signed up to become a client. After meeting with her Service Coordinator and a Financial Counselor, Tamiko realized that what she actually needed in addition to improved money management skills, was a better job. Tamiko always had dreams of working at a hospital but never pursued it because she didn’t have her high school diploma. Her Service Coordinator suggested a program to remove this barrier and Tamiko earned her high school diploma in 2017.

With her diploma in hand Tamiko was ready to land a new job that could support her homeownership goals. She started working with Cincinnati Works to find a better job but kept running into a wall with a charge on her record that was over 20 years old. Her Service Coordinator connected her with Legal Aid who helped her get the charges expunged from her record and to earn a Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE) that serves as an extra endorsement to potential employers. Cincinnati Works helped Tamiko update her resume and supported her job search for a hospital position. Soon, Tamiko had multiple offers and recently landed a new job (with significantly more pay!) at Christ Hospital.

With the help of her SmartMoney financial counselor, Tamiko improved her credit score, paid off her debt and started the process of applying for a Habitat for Humanity home. We are thrilled to share that Tamiko was approved to build and purchase her very own home and will begin construction later this year!

“My life journey has been full of ups and downs. I had all these incomplete things in my life and now it feels like things are finally coming full circle. My son always says, “Mom, it’s not how you start, it’s how you finish that matters” and CityLink has definitely helped me find and maintain my motivation.”

Tamiko also took advantage of Spiritual Growth Counseling and Women’s Bible Study at CityLink and shared that while she had a spiritual background she had fallen away from her faith.

“At bible study, I was able to meet a circle of women trying to do the same thing I was doing. It’s hard to try and walk one way when your friends are going another, so that was inspiring for me.”

Today, Tamiko is on track to achieve more than she ever imagined and is filled with a spirit of confidence that’s pushing her forward.

“I don’t know what I’d do without CityLink! You can get everything you need here to get yourself together spiritually and mentally. I’ve got my diploma, a great job, my record’s squared away, my finances are in order and now I’m approved to buy a house through Habitat! I really came down here and did it! You can accomplish anything you want if you keep pushing forward.”
In 2018 our clients, volunteers and partners made incredible strides towards their goals. Here are just a few of their successes.

1,199 Clients Served
298 Volunteers
13,376 Volunteer Hours
1,442 Hours of Case Management
654 Clinical Counseling Sessions
813 SmartMoney Counseling Appointments
$106,713 of Debt Paid Off by Smart-Money clients
$221,130 Amount Saved by Smart-Money clients
194 Employed in Transitional Job Crews
105 Gained Permanent Employment
30 Cars Sold by Changing Gears
51 I.T. Jobs Through Per Scholas
13 Started the Findlay Culinary Training Program
68 Obtained Jobs via Cincinnati Works
13 Per Scholas Piloted a Cable Technician Program
72 Engaged in Advancement
262 Clients Outfitted
Federal Poverty Level

A common measure

When evaluating poverty in a community, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is the clearest and most widely accepted measure. The Federal Poverty Level is a calculation of income and family size. The larger the family, the more income required. Even when an individual moves to 100% of the FPL, they aren’t truly out of poverty. Most organizations try to advance individuals to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to reach self-sufficiency.

A single parent of one child must obtain a full time job paying 16.46/hour to reach the goal of 200% FPL.

Looking Forward

Programmatic expansion

Expansion of industry training will provide opportunities to enter living wage fields for a variety of individuals with different backgrounds and interests. The IT industry has high education requirements and low accessibility for individuals with criminal backgrounds, leading us to expand further into industry training tracks. By building a portfolio of training opportunities while supporting barrier removal services, we can offer a hand up to more clients leading them towards economic self-sufficiency.

Training Tracks

Moving up the FPL

Looking at the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) movement across individuals who graduated from industry training (IT Training), it was clear that the job placement at significantly higher wage rates, positively impacts FPL. On average, these students progressed from 64.45% of the FPL to 209.14%.

A sample of local wage rates

- $9.83/hour Fast Food Industry
- $11.14/hour Home Health Aide
- $12.12/hour Logistics
- $18.89/hour Construction

The Ripple Effect

Amplifying Impact

Your generous support allows us to aggressively pursue more pathways for individuals and families to advance out of poverty.

IMPACTING LIVES TOGETHER

RESIDENT PARTNERS
Catholic Charities. Professional counseling to develop life management skills.
Changing Gears. An opportunity for empowerment through access to affordable private transportation.
Cincinnati Health Department. Vital dental and optical care for clients and their families.
Cincinnati Works. Assists willing and capable people in achieving economic self-sufficiency through employment.
Per Scholas Cincinnati. Professional IT training and certification program supporting individuals starting a career in information technology.
SmartMoney Community Services. Provides individuals with financial education and counseling to empower financial independence.
Center for Employment Opportunities. Transitional employment and job-readiness program designed for people with felony records.
Children, Inc. On-site early childhood learning center providing 5-star rated quality care for children.
Findlay Market. Supports the Findlay Culinary Training program preparing clients for a career in the culinary industry.

VISITING PARTNERS
Beach Area. Strengthens parents through education and coaching.
Cincinnati Public Schools & YWCA. Assists adults in upgrading their academic skills and prepares for college.
Community Action Agency. Utility assistance to clients in need.
Freestore Foodbank. Helps individuals access available programs to stabilize their household.
St. Vincent de Paul. Assists clients with professional attire and immediate needs.
Red Bike. Offers discounted bike memberships.
Riding Forward. Bike safety training.
Sweet Cheeks. Diaper assistance to parents in need.

CHURCH PARTNERS
Bright Star Community Church (West End)
College Hill Presbyterian Church (College Hill)
Compass Community Church (Springdale)
Consolation Baptist Church (College Hill)
Corinthian Baptist Church (Avondale)
Covenant Community Church (Fairfield)
Crossroads Church (multiple locations)
House of Hope Fellowship Church (OTR)
Landmark Church Cincinnati (Glendale)
Lighthouse Baptist Church (Blue Ash)
Miracle Deliverance Worship Center (Walnut Hills)
New City Presbyterian Church (Norwood)
New St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church (West End)
Providence Baptist Church (West End)
Wyoming Baptist Church (Wyoming)

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Experience Your Impact In Action
Visit Social OTR and Subscribe to our YouTube Station

Social OTR
Social OTR is now open! Visit Social OTR across from Findlay Market at 1819 Elm Street, and you’ll be doing more than having an awesome foodie experience. The restaurant’s kitchen is staffed by Findlay Culinary Training students who participate in a 16-week training and internship to jumpstart their career in Cincinnati’s booming restaurant industry. Now that’s delicious.

Subscribe To Our YouTube Station
Every one of our neighbors has a name and personal story of struggle and success. Visit and subscribe to our YouTube station to seeOur YouTube station to see our additional sacrificial individual donors for significantly contributing to our to 2018 Budget!
Please join us in praying for God’s guidance and continued blessings over our clients, volunteers, partners and staff as we progress throughout 2019.

CityLink

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