

Caroline Center Agency History



Mission and Initial Founding:

The School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) first came to Baltimore in the mid-19th century to educate the children of Catholic German immigrants. By the late 20th century, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of these immigrants had moved well into the middle class, and the neighborhood around their first school, the Institute of Notre Dame (IND), had experienced racial, religious, and economic transition. In 1993, therefore, ten sisters from the Baltimore Province of the SSNDs began a two-year effort to research the needs of women in East Baltimore. This task was inspired by the overall mission of the SSNDs:

Our mission as School Sisters of Notre Dame is to bring all to that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent. We choose to fulfill our mission through education in the broadest sense, with particular sensitivity to women and youth, and with preference for persons who are materially poor. We believe in the empowerment of persons so that they may develop to their fullest potential. We educate with the conviction that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons. We strive to do this wherever we are sent.

The sisters concluded that employment and job training were the greatest needs for women in the area. They proposed that a job training center be established in a vacant building on the grounds of the IND, which had formerly served as the novitiate for the order. At the time of the proposal, the building had been vacant for over 10 years and was in need of extensive repair.

The SSND leadership in the Baltimore Province approved the proposal and donated \$50,000 seed money to begin the project, which was to be named Caroline Center after Sister Caroline Friess, who started the SSNDs' first school in Baltimore on the Center's site. The building was leased to Caroline Center rent-free for 15 years, with the option of a 5 year renewal after that. The SSND leadership also invited Sister Kathleen Feeley, SSND, the former president of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (the

SSNDs' college), to be the first Executive Director. She began a fund drive to raise \$1.3 million to renovate the building and its furnishings, and an additional \$300,000 for the first year's operating budget. She was successful in doing this, including raising \$400,000 through a State of Maryland Bond Bill. Building renovations were begun in 1995, and the Caroline Center became separately incorporated with 501(c)3 status the same year.

The Mission of the Caroline Center is described on its web site as follows:

*to assist unemployed and underemployed women to acquire the discipline, knowledge, and skills necessary to find work in a career with potential for growth and advancement, thus **creating a future full of hope for themselves and their families.***

The SSNDs have recently (2007) established a "Sponsorship Review Process" to ensure that the overall SSND mission and vision are consistent with how each of their sponsored organizations fulfills its separate organizational mission. To assist administrators and boards in preparing for their Sponsorship Review, Sister Grace L. D'Amico, the Sponsorship Coordinator for all North American provinces of the SSNDs, has developed a series of workshops for the administrators of the various SSND schools and other institutions.

All of these offerings are designed to assist schools and organizations to further develop and ensure the sustainability of their SSND spirit, that special quality that distinguishes SSND ministries from similar endeavors. The workshops will also provide remote preparation for the Sponsorship Review required of all SSND sponsored ministries.

Each administrator has been encouraged to assemble his/her staff and board members for the introductory workshop, which is offered by Sister Grace D'Amico free of charge. As Sponsorship Coordinator, Sister Grace also initiates the review process for each organization and works with the CEO, the board of trustees, and the local SSND province leadership to establish an on-site committee of at least four lay and religious reviewers. Following the organization's self-study and the reviewers' report, the Board of Trustees of the organization present both the self-study and their response to the SSND leadership council in the local area. The SSND council then determines whether or not to continue SSND sponsorship of the organization. This entire process is newly-established and, so far, has been done for only two

or three of the traditional SSND schools. The Caroline Center is beginning its Sponsorship Review this year, and is the first non-traditional SSND ministry to do so.

Currently, the Board of Trustees of Caroline Center includes 25 individuals, of whom 4 are SSNDs. As is typical with the schools, hospitals and social agencies originally founded and run by Catholic religious orders, the Caroline Center is not connected with the local Catholic diocese in any formal way – either financially or administratively. The Center receives no diocesan or Catholic Charities funding, is separately incorporated, and does not have any diocesan clergy or other representatives on its Board of Trustees. While its Sponsorship Workshop flier states that these workshops are based on Scripture and Church writings, equal emphasis appears to be placed on SSND history, writings, and founding figures. This is also the case in its annual reports. This relationship – or lack of relationship – has not changed since the foundation of the Caroline Center.

However, the SSNDs have changed in their larger structure, which has potential implications for their relationship with the Caroline Center. In 2006, the three North American provinces of the SSNDs merged into a single entity. This means that the schools and other institutions originally sponsored by the Baltimore province of the SSNDs are now formally under the sponsorship of the merged body. The current SSND director of the Caroline Center wonders whether this will lead to an inevitable distancing of emotional involvement of the SSNDs with their sponsored institutions.

Milestones:

1995: Caroline Center is incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization.

1996: Caroline Center opens on October 5. Since the building renovation was not quite finished, the first 3 weeks of operations were housed in the Urban Bible Fellowship Church under Pastor Carl Pagan.

Sister Patricia McLaughlin, SSND, is hired as Sister Kathleen's associate director.
Clerical Training Program started.

1997: Child Care Training Program started

1998: Certified Nursing Assistant/Geriatric Nursing Assistant Training Program begun.
Sister Patricia McLaughlin, SSND, becomes Executive Director.

1999: First "Green Food and Bands" fundraiser. This was billed as a "family-friendly"

way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Currently, it raises approximately \$60,000 yearly for the Center.

2001: Upholstery Training Program begun.

2004: Pharmacy Technician Training Program begun.

Caroline Center wins "Baltimore's Best Job Training Award" from *Baltimore Magazine*.

Career Fair held. Clerical Training Program ended.

2005: Certified Nursing Assistant Program accredited by MD Board of Nursing

Caroline Center Upholstery's business plan was First Runner up in the Yale School of Management/Goldman Sachs Foundation National Nonprofit Business Plan Competition

December: \$500,000 gift from Lucy and Vernon Wright to the "Kathleen Feeley SSND Endowment Fund" for Caroline Center.

Caroline Center Upholstery moved to a separate building; \$200,000 raised to renovate this building.

2006: Culinary Arts/Food Service Program begun

Caroline Center wins the Bank of America's "Neighborhood Builder Award," including a \$200,000 contribution to its operating expenses

Clinical Nursing Skills lab opens in the space formerly occupied by the upholstery program

2006: School Sisters of Notre Dame merge provinces

2007: Child Care Training Program discontinued.

Employment and Earnings Impact Study conducted by the Jacob France Institute of the University of Baltimore of 871 graduates of the program between 1996 and 2007. The findings were released in September 2007. They included:

- 69% of the women were working in the first quarter of 2007
- Average annual earnings were \$18,270.
- 99% of the graduates were African American; 80% were single mothers
- Average age was 28

2008: First Sponsorship Review of Caroline Center begun.

Harry and Jeanette Weinburg Foundation awarded \$100,000 over two years for operating expenses.

Agency Financial History:

1996: First year of operation

Programs: GED, job training

Budget Total: \$300,000

Funding Source: Part of original \$1.6 million campaign

Analysis:

The Caroline Center's first year budget was funded by the original monies raised by Sister Kathleen Feeley. In addition, the SSNDs provided the building rent-free for 15 years (plus a 5-year renewal), underwrote Sister Kathleen's position as director for 3 years and provided \$50,000 seed money. Several SSNDs also served as volunteers or as partially subsidized workers at Caroline Center. No monies were received from Catholic Charities or the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

2005

Programs: GED, Training Programs in Child Care, Nursing Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, and Upholstery

Budget Total: \$615,425

Funding Sources:

Annual Fund	\$133,477 (22%)
CDBG from Baltimore City	\$100,871 (16%)
Fundraiser (Green Food/Bands)	\$ 59,722 (10%)
Grants	\$142,050 (23%)
Investment Interest	\$ 38,054 (6%)
SSNDs	\$141,250 (23%)
Total	\$615,425

Expenditures:

Administration	\$ 54,625 (9%)
Building	\$ 36,530 (6%)
Program Expenses	\$504,360 (85%)
Total	\$595,515

2007

Programs: GED, Training Programs in Culinary Arts, Nursing Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, and Upholstery

Budget Total: \$809,571

Funding Sources:

Annual Fund	\$216,923 (27%)
CDBG from Baltimore City	\$ 79,600 (10%)
Fundraiser (Green Food/Bands)	\$ 60,151 (7%)
Grants	\$ 186,000 (23%)
Investment Interest	\$ 170,745 (21%)
Gifts of Endowment	\$ 63,000 (8%)
SSNDs	\$ 33,152 (4%)
Total	\$ 809,571

Expenditures:

Administration	\$111,706 (17%)
Building	\$ 55,069 (8%)
Program Expenses	\$500,791 (75%)
Total	\$667,566

Analysis:

Sources of monetary donations include provinces of the SSNDs (5 entries in the donor list of the 2007 Annual Report), local SSND convents (18 listings), and individual SSND sisters (41 listings). Additional church-related donors included other religious orders (3 groups, 2 individuals), other Catholic institutions such as churches (7 churches listed), schools or school groups (6 listings), or local chapters of the St. Vincent de Paul Society (2 listings). One bishop was listed as an individual donor. Two Protestant Church congregations were also listed as donors in the \$500-\$999 range.

Additionally, the SSNDs continue to provide in-kind support. The annual fundraiser is held at Notre Dame Preparatory School. The Center's Tenth Anniversary Celebration was held in the chapel of the local SSND provincial center. In 2005, five SSNDs served on the Caroline Center staff; in 2007, four were listed as staff. In addition, a Sister of Mercy served in both years as the business manager, and a Dominican Sister as a counselor.

Another 13 SSNDs were listed as volunteers in the 2007 Annual Report. Volunteer positions include career counselor, collecting and delivering toys to the students' children at Christmas, and organizing and working at the annual fundraiser. In addition, the retired sisters at the SSND infirmary stuffed the invitation envelopes for the fundraiser. Finally, the SSNDs hire many of the Center's Certified Nursing Assistants in their own infirmary.

The 2008 Annual Report is not yet available, but the fundraiser in the spring of 2008 (again held at Notre Dame Prep) garnered \$63,000. The 2008 goal for the Annual Fund is \$195,000. Currently, the average cost to train one woman is \$2,700.

The Strategic Plan for 2008-2011 calls for the Caroline Center to:

- Establish structures and systems in the current program components that will ensure more data-driven decisions.
- Use the emerging Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation partnership with Caroline Center to design a model for other training-related partnerships.
- Explore the feasibility of additional training programs as well as income-generating ventures.
- Determine the numbers of staff and related skills needed to sustain current and future programs.
- Develop a succession plan for all senior management and administration.
- Evaluate and address spatial needs to maximize staff performance and programmatic effectiveness.
- Evaluate technology needs to support administrative staff and curricular program instruction.
- Develop a financial plan that will support current operations and forecast future growth.
- Ensure long-term financial stability and sustainability for Caroline Center.



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