



CASE FOR SUPPORT

Cornerstone Assistance Network was established in 1992 to meet the needs and restore the hope of individuals and families suffering under the burden of poverty in Tarrant County, Texas. Since its inception, Cornerstone has been a major resource for churches, businesses and other community organizations through its provision of relief, recovery, and restorative services. Throughout the years, these services have offered greater efficiency, economies of scale, and non-duplicated approaches in the 13 direct service programs that it offers to the public.

Today, Cornerstone has grown to become a national model for integrating partner organizations, volunteers and financial support to consistently serve thousands each year with emergency food, clothing, and furniture; free medical, educational and employment services; along with transitional housing and home-ownership opportunities. Cornerstone has built into its relational service delivery a unique accountability with all clients, as staff and volunteers model Christian friendship and values to all those they serve.

Fundamental to Cornerstone programs and services is the belief that personal transformation requires more than just having one's physical needs met. Attention must be given to a person's "whole" being including his or her emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical state. It is our belief that any program or service that neglects one's moral and spiritual issues cannot offer long-term hope and life change.

Cornerstone reached a pivotal point in 2007 when its leadership recognized that, in order to meet the growing needs as a community resource and service provider, it must expand its physical space. Coupled with the commitment from local foundations and its network partners, the organization acquired a \$1.9 million centrally-located facility near downtown Fort Worth. The complex encompasses a 49,000 square foot building housing a medical clinic, classroom and computer training programs, a future restaurant with a commercial kitchen and cold storage, a warehouse, a resale store, and increased administrative offices. Capacity for existing and future programs will be greatly enhanced by the increased space.

Cornerstone's vision is to complete the renovation of the building and continue expanding and creating needed services. In doing so, Cornerstone expects to serve at least twice as many people once work is completed. In 2008, 1,679 unduplicated people were served. In 2009, when the building was only open half the year and only half occupied, 3,723 people were served. That is an increase of 222%. When the building is completely finished and all programs are operating, we expect to serve over 4,500 unduplicated individuals annually. The total cost of the facility, renovation, equipment, and program expansion is estimated at \$2.8 million.

Programs and services at Cornerstone fall into three service areas: Relief, Recovery, and Restoration. A person's relationship with Cornerstone typically begins with an initial needs assessment and referral from one of its 200 network partners which includes faith-based and social service agencies. Those who come for help are welcomed and made to feel safe by staff and volunteers. It is here where true compassion is demonstrated and where the broken and hurting begin their journey to become all that God intends for them to be.

Relief Services

Emergency needs are met with free food, clothing, furniture, and medical services. When available, emergency rental and utility assistance is provided to help keep people in housing. Mentors and volunteers are available to offer spiritual and emotional support.

- **Cornerstone’s Resource Network** provides emergency food, clothing, and furniture through a voucher to the Cornerstone Thrift Store. The Thrift Store is open to the public as well as to clients, three days per week. It also serves as a job-training site for retail industry trainees.

Recovery Services

On-going needs for all age groups—children, adults, and senior adults—are addressed through a wide array of direct services including tutoring, a children’s fine arts program, college and career readiness services, two-year transitional housing, and intensive case management services.

- **Cornerstone’s Welcome Back Program** offers re-entry services for men and women who have been incarcerated. Referrals are made by Tarrant County parole officers who engage approximately 2,500 returning offenders each year. Services include food, clothing, and referrals for mental health counseling and housing.
- **The Cornerstone Comprehensive Care Program (3CP)** has been serving the homeless of Tarrant County since 1997. 3CP was established in order to fill a gap in the County’s “Continuum of Care” system by providing intensive case management services to homeless individuals and families. Case management provides clients with the individualized structure and support needed to move them from subsidy to self-sufficiency.
- **Cornerstone’s Medical Clinic** offers medical care to uninsured patients who are in need of a medical home. The expansion of the clinic will allow the organization to triple the amount of healthcare services it provides. Current clinic partners include interns from the University of Texas Health Science Center, nursing students from Texas Christian University’s Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences, the Epilepsy Foundation, Texas Health Resource’s Wellness for Life Mobile Unit, Moncrief Cancer Resources - Moncrief Mobile Unit, and eight volunteer physicians from the community. New to the Medical Clinic is an Ophthalmic Theatre, in partnership with Alcon Laboratories, John Peter Smith Health Network, and Prevent Blindness and Children’s Eye Foundation. This Tarrant County clinic will be unique, offering ophthalmic procedures to potentially serve 900 patients.
- **Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing** is offered through scattered-site housing which provides up to 24-months of rental and utility assistance to homeless families. All participants receive intensive case management services from 3CP staff. The New Life Center offers 18 homeless men a seamless transition from rehabilitation services as they emerge from drug addiction. Cornerstone’s Trinity Place program offers housing and after-care services to men transitioning from the New Life Center into their own home or apartment. All housing clients receive intensive case management to increase the rate of success.

Restoration Services

Long-term development needs are addressed through mentoring programs, permanent supportive housing programs, and home-ownership opportunities.

- **Community Intermediary Services** - Cornerstone is committed to enhancing organizational stability of its network partners. By mentoring new organizations in meeting their mission, Cornerstone is transforming organizations with efficiency and effectiveness. Results show that this type of up-front effort created a 205% increase in outcomes. Cornerstone's goal is to "incubate" three to four small faith- and community-based organizations at a time.
- **Workforce Development** - The objective of Cornerstone's workforce development division is to create job readiness programs that help move each individual toward independent living and full-time employment. Participants not only receive guidance in job training, but assistance with high school GED, English as a Second Language (ESL), and adult literacy. Other essential services such as transitional housing and medical care are offered which help a person maintain full time employment. Renovation of the multi-purpose classrooms will be necessary to expand Cornerstone's job training programs. A new and exciting component of this division is Cornerstone's Food Services and Hospitality Training Program. As a part of the community meeting room in the main building, this program will offer participants a hands-on training site in Cornerstone's Creation Restaurant. Upon completion, lunch services for 50 – 75 people can be served daily. It is anticipated that the restaurant will be financially self-sustaining within one year. Additionally, a walk-in freezer for the restaurant will, when fully equipped, allow for 50 pallets of frozen meat and food to be kept for food service programs.
- **Cornerstone Housing Development** - The goal of Cornerstone's Housing Development Corporation is to restore and revitalize communities by providing decent and affordable housing to low and moderate income families. Program participants are typically transitioning from homelessness, transitional housing, or rental properties, into home ownership. Participants attend a certified, first-time home buyer's class as Cornerstone resources the churches, businesses, and other community organizations in the area to help assimilate new residents into the neighborhood.

Serving those in need

Finding effective, long-term remedies to complicated social problems such as poverty and homelessness is certainly no easy task. Organizations that address social concerns partner with Cornerstone so that they may maintain their core mission and still offer hope and outreach to people who present themselves for services. Cornerstone's resources assist nonprofits with collaborative efforts and winning outcomes. Today Cornerstone Assistance Network has successfully raised over \$3 million toward its vision to complete the building renovation and serve more clients. Phase I achievements have included: the purchase of the building, and minimal renovations and equipment. Phase II of the project includes finishing out the building (electrical, heating, air-conditioning, interior and exterior painting, security system, signage, audio/visual, etc.), clinic construction, restaurant build-out, as well as expanding program support for the relief, recovery and restoration services. Cornerstone's mission has always been to serve the poor by assisting churches and nonprofits in their own community ministries.