



## Norfolk Plan to Reduce Poverty Annual Report, 2016

Population of Norfolk in 2014: 246,393  
Number of people living in poverty in 2014: 49,465

In 2013, the City of Norfolk established the Mayor's Commission on Poverty Reduction. This Commission brought together members of the community across business, education, non-profit and philanthropic sectors to identify the root causes of poverty in Norfolk and specific barriers to economic opportunity experienced by our residents.

While Norfolk is a vibrant city with tremendous economic growth and new opportunities – with over 205,000 jobs, it is also a city with the second highest poverty rate and one of the highest unemployment rates in the region. Norfolk's current poverty rate is 22% for individuals and 16% for families. This represents over 49,000 individuals and about 8,200 families living in poverty in the City of Norfolk.

When the *Norfolk Plan to Reduce Poverty* was presented to City Council, commissioners underscored the fact that it will take the work of many active citizens, an investment of public and private resources and multiple skilled and effective organizations to reduce poverty. Norfolk's strategy is a collaborative model which creates opportunities to access education, training and economic development services, so that people living in poverty can obtain family sustaining employment. The strategy identifies four focus areas:

- ➔ Early Childhood Education
- ➔ Youth Education and Career Pathways
- ➔ Adult Workforce Development
- ➔ Neighborhood Revitalization and Support

Together these focus areas represent a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction that links housing, education, workforce development, transportation and health.

Implementation of the poverty reduction plan is underway. In the past two years, \$3.9 million in local funding has been appropriated for implementation of the *Norfolk Plan to Reduce Poverty*. The work to date has changed policy, grown partnerships, and initiated evidence-based programs. However, it is clear that much work remains. Several key initiatives of the City's poverty reduction efforts are highlighted in this report.

# A Year in Review: 2015-2016

<b>163</b> individuals attended Bank on Norfolk financial education classes, financial counseling sessions or financial planning events	<b>\$1,085,500</b> to our non-profit partners to build capacity or to work on joint initiatives
<b>117</b> volunteer hours for financial coaching to Norfolk residents	<b>18,898</b> pounds of food raised in Norfolk for the Foodbank through the We Feed Norfolk program
<b>4,505</b> families served by the Newborn Screening and Referral Program	<b>464</b> Norfolk residents have registered online at the Career Access Network portal now offered in Norfolk libraries
<b>50</b> additional families a year to be served by home visiting programs because of funding through the City's poverty reduction program	<b>\$5,000</b> worth of man hours for a City-School partnership that provided career awareness, mentoring and education to middle school children by the Public Works Department
<b>293</b> children participated in the summer program at Jacox Elementary School that provided project based academic and earned enrichment opportunities for children from Pre-K to 5th grade	<b>11</b> unregulated providers became voluntary registered day home providers and <b>3</b> voluntary registered day home providers received a State License
<b>0</b> summer learning loss in reading and math for students to participated in the United for Children Summer program	<b>125</b> students engaged in Renting 101 workshops, knock and talks, transfer previews and safety lunches to discuss the Rent Ready Norfolk program and their rights and responsibilities as renters

***Early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. A strong start for Norfolk's children will help interrupt the cycle of generational poverty and position children to be more likely to thrive in school.***

- Invested over \$100,000 in the Newborn Screening and Referral program which identifies families at risk and connects them with needed services at birth. The program began in 2014 at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital. Since inception, 4,505 families have been screened and 3,036 were referred to The Planning Council for evaluation. All were referred to needed services and 78% of those evaluated were referred to intensive Home Visiting services.
- Partnered with Norfolk Ready by Five to fund a Norfolk Provider Quality Improvement project that provides training, technical assistance, mentoring and outreach to home-based child care providers to encourage unregulated providers to become registered and registered providers to become state licensed. This engagement focuses on increasing the quality of care provided to Norfolk children in home daycare settings.
- Invested \$55,000 to provide support, mentoring, technical assistance and quality improvement programming to 10 Norfolk child care programs through a partnership with the local community college.
- Created a kindergarten readiness checklist and worked with partners to distribute widely to parents.
- Partnered with the Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads to provide a Mini-MBA program for 5 early education providers. The program is designed to increase the number of quality educational options for families with young children.
- Invested \$150,000 to increase the number of families receiving home visiting services from nurses and mental health workers. These services deliver early detection of developmental delays and health issues, prevent child abuse and neglect, and increase children's school readiness and school success. This investment will serve an additional 50 families in intensive home visiting services each year for 3 years.
- Collaborated with the Planning Department and the Planning Commission to align state and local licensing and zoning regulations to appropriately establish child care in family homes. This resulted in 5 new child care providers in the City of Norfolk - 3 of these provide care in the evenings and on the weekends, a critical asset for our working families.
- Invested \$77,500 to provide grants to church-based child care providers to improve the quality of early education in low-income neighborhoods. Seven churches received funding for their programs in 2015 and additional rounds of funding are being offered in 2016.
- Supported the effort of Elevate Early Education (E3) to implement a kindergarten readiness assessment for all children entering the school system. Norfolk Public Schools participated in the pilot and results show 36% of students fall below benchmark in literacy, math, self-regulation or social skills, emphasizing the need to improve the pre-Kindergarten education opportunities for children birth through age 5.
- Launched a public awareness and outreach campaign in partnership with Norfolk Ready by Five regarding the importance of early childhood education. Informational cards, electronic billboards and an upgraded website provide information to parents and childcare providers.

### **NEW PARTNERSHIPS**

- Tidewater Community College
- Sentara
- The Planning Council
- Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads
- The Up Center
- Children's Health Investment Program (CHIP)
- Infant Toddler Connection
- Elevate Early Education (E3)
- Norfolk Public Libraries
- Nauticus
- Norfolk Botanical Garden
- Chrysler Museum
- Norfolk Public Schools
- Hampton Roads Community Foundation

**For all children, life outside of school affects what happens in school. Research shows that poverty has harmful consequences for children's achievement and other domains of development. Educational programs must provide support that can serve all students and connect them to a comprehensive set of services and enrichments**

- Invested \$350,000 in United for Children, a comprehensive community effort to ensure educational success for children living in poor neighborhoods. Children enrolled in this summer program, designed to stem learning loss in math and reading, consistently demonstrates zero learning loss and routinely show improvement in their test scores. More than 4,000 children have participated regionally to date.
- Invested \$1M for the design and development of the new Hampton Roads Career Pathways Center (formally CTE High School). This partnership with the business community will provide work-linked education for people of all ages. The vision for this school is a comprehensive academic-technical high school and a high tech regional training center with onsite employer partners' programs, equipment and labs.

United for Children is an intensive collaboration aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty by coming together around the needs of the whole child with integrated individual, family, neighborhood and school interventions.



Why Children Drop Out  
Boston College City Connects 2011

## Adult Workforce Development

**Poverty can only be overcome by broad economic vitality through the increase in the number of jobs available and accessible. The abundant availability of jobs, however, is insufficient to overcome poverty because the disconnect between job seekers and job opportunities is driven by a combination of factors such as job readiness, education, transportation, and skills gap. A holistic approach that addresses all of these factors comprehensively is therefore required.**

- Partnering with Opportunity Inc. to connect residents to workforce development services and training in their neighborhood libraries. Residents access virtual on-demand career portals, receive job search assistance, career exploration, workshops and career related events. 464 users have registered online at the Career Access Network portal in Norfolk libraries, boasting the largest participation across the region.
- Established Bank On Norfolk in January 2016, a collaborative public-private effort to connect residents with mainstream banking services, financial education, one-on-one coaching and incentivize savings. Classes are held three times a year.
- Contracted Workforce Engagement Solutions to conduct a service asset and gap analysis of existing employment and training resources in the city.
- Partnered with the Department of Development to establish a Small, Women and Minority owned Business (SWAM) program that will identify, utilize and provide support to SWAM businesses and contractors. A new SWAM coordinator position has been advertised by the City.
- Partnered with the Norfolk Pastor's Coalition, Opportunity Inc. and the Virginia Employment Commission to hold a job fair at a Norfolk recreation center. Over 500 residents attended the fair and over 60 employers and educational institutions participated. Several employers made job offers onsite.

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- United Way
- Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Recreation, Parks and Open Space
- Norfolk Public Schools
- Open Campus High School
- Opportunity Inc.
- Workforce Engagement Solutions, LLC
- Goodwill Industries
- Norfolk Public Libraries
- Norfolk Pastor's Coalition
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Financial institutions
- Catholic Charities
- City of Virginia Beach
- Bank On Hampton Roads

**Neighborhood transformation occurs when initiatives include the involvement of multiple sectors, strong resident engagement, innovative financing and comprehensive solutions linking housing, education, workforce development, transportation, and health services.**

- Invested \$1.4M into the development of a Housing Trust Fund. An expert group of business and civic leaders will design the program criteria and the ordinance establishing the fund.
- Partnering with nationally recognized nonprofit to revitalize high poverty communities by focusing on linking housing, education, workforce development, transportation and health to develop neighborhoods of opportunity.
- Invested \$75,000 in Rent Ready Norfolk, a neighborhood quality enforcement program that is used to attract great renters by encouraging responsible landlords with quality rentals.
- Investing over \$115,000 in a comprehensive affordable housing study to evaluate the current housing market to determine affordability gaps and to define solutions for providing affordable housing for all Norfolk's residents. A nationally recognized firm has been selected to complete the study. Expected completion by end of 2016.
- Invested \$90,000 for building improvements that support job creation, job retention or additional investment to strengthen commercial corridors in distressed neighborhoods. Two grants are underway.
- Invested \$25,000 in the We Feed Norfolk movement—a locally grown effort by churches, residents and Norfolk's technology sector to use smartphones to increase food donations. Local churches have expanded this program by committing to participate in a rotational collection schedule that ensures a steady stream of donations to food distribution partners. To date 9,000 pounds of food have been collected through the neighborhood and special events program. The Church Rotation program is expected to collect 250,000 pounds of food over the course of a year.
- Held a financial planning day for residents to provide free, one-on-one advice from certified financial planner professionals and a wide range of personal finance topics. Workshops and vendor booths provided a variety of resources to attendees. The Vice Mayor issued a financial fitness challenge to all residents to grow their financial security through programs offered by the City.

### NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- HR&A Advisors
- Norfolk Businesses
- Concur Inc.
- Purpose Built Communities
- Old Dominion University
- Norfolk State University
- Department of Neighborhood Development
- Norfolk churches
- Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia
- Legal Aid Society of Virginia
- Financial Planning Association of Hampton Roads
- Center for Community Change
- Landlords and tenants
- Downtown Norfolk Council

## Spotlight on Wealth Building

### BANK ON NORFOLK

Bank On was established to provide access to traditional financial products and services for unbanked and underbanked households. National research indicates that about one quarter of the U.S. population relies on alternative financial services (30 million households). The average unbanked worker spends an estimated \$40,000 over the course of a lifetime just to cash their paychecks. These individuals frequently fall prey to short-term, high-interest loans offered through alternative financial providers costing Americans about \$13 billion per year. Bank On was organized to remove barriers to traditional financial services.



Bank On is a national program that began locally in Virginia Beach in 2012. In January 2016, Norfolk joined Bank On Hampton Roads, a partnership between Virginia Beach, Norfolk and Portsmouth. Each city provides programs under their own name but, all programs operate collaboratively under the umbrella of Bank On Hampton Roads.



Bank On Hampton Roads not only connects citizens to traditional financial institutions, but helps individuals gain skills to successfully manage their money and avoid costly penalty fees. By encouraging savings and active management of cash flows, Bank On helps participants gain the skills they need to successfully manage their finance. By reducing debt and growing credit, Bank On participants have greater access to lower-cost financing options and reduce the impact of mounting debt on their monthly budgets.

Two classes are currently in progress, serving over 60 residents. Three additional classes begin in September. The program is expected to graduate 100 residents a year.

## Spotlight on Early Childhood Education

### UNIVERSAL SCREENING PROGRAM AND HOME VISITING SERVICES

Early identification is key to effective and successful prevention and intervention services to support newborn infants and their mothers. This early response is even more important for families facing challenges of poverty, domestic violence or substance abuse.



In July 2014, universal screening, through Care Connection, a joint project of Sentara Norfolk General Hospital and The Planning Council, was launched. Every mother who gives birth at Sentara Norfolk General is screened by a nurse, using a behavioral health risk checklist. Based on the results of the screening, patients are offered a referral to an Intake Specialist from the Planning Council, who help new access the help they need.



To date, 4,505 women have given birth at Sentara Norfolk General and were screened for at-risk factors. Of those, 3,036 (67%) scored in a range to be referred to The Planning Council for evaluation. 37% of those referrals agreed to be evaluated. All were referred to needed services and 78% of those evaluated were referred for intensive Home Visiting services.

*Diana went to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital when labor began far too early in her pregnancy. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the City of Norfolk and Sentara's innovative Universal Screening Program for all delivering parents and high risk pregnant women, Diana was identified as a struggling parent needing supports. Diana is a young college student and she was facing the isolation associated with domestic violence and the daily struggles of living in poverty. Because of the Universal Screening Program, Diana received much needed help.*

*She was immediately identified and referred to The Planning Council's Centralized Intake for Home Visitation. While still on bed rest, CHIP of South Hampton Roads enrolled Diana in their evidence-based program that pairs a certified Parent Educator with a Registered Nurse to provide wraparound services in the family's home.*

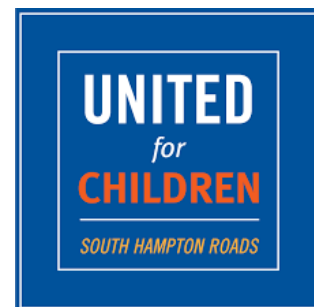
*Over the course of the next few weeks, Diana truly saw that Norfolk cares about their youngest citizens. Through CHIP's case management, Diana was able to access valuable resources in the community. Safe and stable housing was arranged by the City of Norfolk's Homeless Action and Response Team (HART) and the Norfolk Community Services Board provided Diana with the support she needed to overcome post-partum depression, and to begin the work needed to heal after leaving an abusive relationship. This was all while she continued receiving high quality medical care from Sentara after the premature birth of her daughter.*

*Today, Diana continues to work with CHIP on her journey towards self-sufficiency and parenting success. Thanks to the investment by the City, Sentara and the collaborative efforts of multiple service providers on the Home Visiting Consortium, hundreds of Norfolk's most vulnerable children and families have already been given the necessary tools to ensure success for their families now, and for the next generation.*

# Spotlight on Youth Education and Career Pathways

## UNITED FOR CHILDREN

United for Children is a public-private partnership focused on driving educational success for low income children. The program is funded collaboratively through local government, school system, private sector, non-profit, and philanthropic community support. United for Children began in 2012 as an intensive collaboration modeled after the Harlem Children's Zone and other collective impact initiatives around the country. Later that year, the program began testing and operationalizing a collective impact strategy by providing out-of-school time supports for Norfolk schools with high levels of concentrated poverty.



For the 2014-2015 fiscal year the City of Norfolk provided \$100,000 to expand the program to Jacox Elementary. Jacox was selected as the site for the City of Norfolk funded United for Children summer program due to the school's and surrounding neighborhood's demographics and its students' academic needs. Approximately 293 students attended on a regular basis. Students were enrolled in the same grade level they had completed in the previous school year. Jacox teachers provided a continuum of instruction that spanned from remediation for the lower performing students to extension of learning for higher performing students. Teachers did not use the text books or lesson plans from the school year, but focused on the reading and math concepts required for mastery delivered in an



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United for Children tracks the performance of students throughout the summer. Performance of students on reading and math pre and post the summer intervention were tracked. For all grade levels performance increased. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the City of Norfolk will provide \$250,000 to further expand the program into an additional school. With this expansion, four Norfolk Public Schools will have United for Children programs in the Summer of 2016.

To date, more than 70 cross-sector private and public organizations have demonstrated a shared commitment to coming together around the needs of the whole child. As a result, United for Children's out-of-school time interventions consistently demonstrate reductions in summer learning loss, help students build the skills necessary for school and college success, and foster healthy on-track physical, social and emotional development.





## Spotlight on Neighborhood Revitalization and Support

### RENT READY NORFOLK

Rent Ready Norfolk (RRN) is a comprehensive and holistic program initiated by the Department of Neighborhood Development and designed to increase the number of viable residential rentals in the City of Norfolk. The program is intended to reduce blight, address abandoned and poorly managed properties and improve the overall quality of properties in distressed neighborhoods. RRN is a voluntary program with features that include:



**QUALITY ASSESSMENT INSPECTIONS:** an assessment of the rental unit's interior, exterior and common areas

**RENTAL ACADEMY:** a series of courses to inform and educate landlords, property managers, and renters about property maintenance, attracting and maintaining renters, and how to be good neighbors, landlords and renters.

**GOOD NEIGHBOR CAMPAIGN:** An engagement strategy to inform and educate homeowners, renters, civic leagues, landlords and property managers about the misconception of renting.

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION DATABASE:** A database designed to notify residential rental property owner or designated local agents immediately of life and safety emergencies occurring at or near their property.

**RENTAL RESOURCE BANK:** a resource that will be made available to landlords and/or property management companies that have completed a quality assessment and rental academy and signed up the for emergency notification database. Incentives will include low-interest rental rehabilitation loans, marketing incentives, and security screenings.

**PERFORMANCE RATING SYSTEM:** a feature that will assist prospective renters with locating certified "rent ready" properties. Prospective renters will be able to view featured residential rental properties to see the quality assessment score, rental academy score, rent ready score property pictures, rated property features and contact information of the owner or designated local agent.

Rent Ready Norfolk is being rolled out in three phases and is expected to be fully functional by June 2017. It is currently being piloted in the ODU area as part of the City's Campus Cohesion Strategy. Goals include inspecting 800 residential rental properties by October 2016 and qualifying 50-60% of those 800 properties by November 2016.

