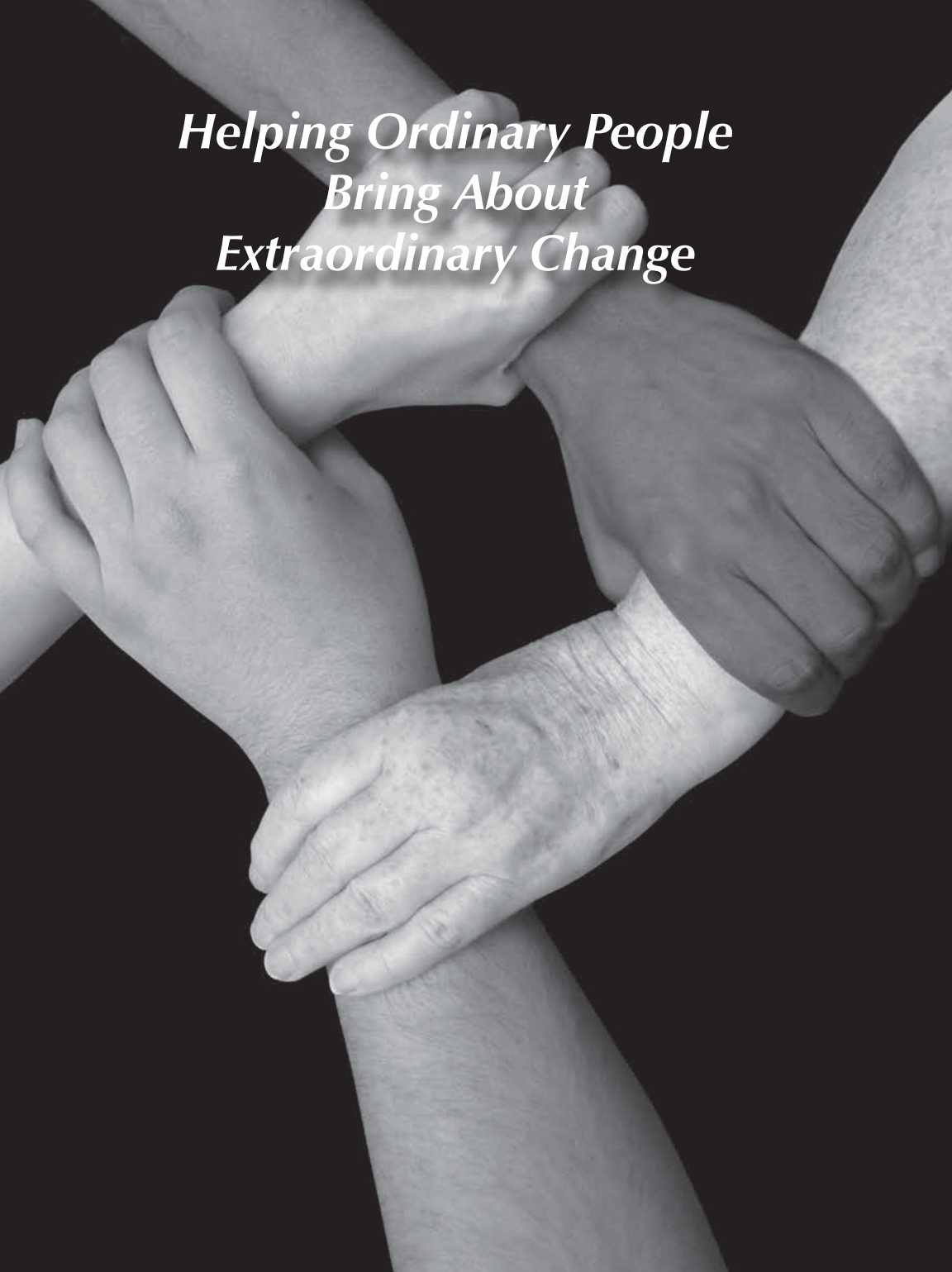


*Helping Ordinary People  
Bring About  
Extraordinary Change*



**COLLABORATION STATION**



*2008 Annual Report*



*Special thanks to...*

**The William J. and Dorothy K.  
O'Neill Foundation**

**Ronald Woodson and Associates**

**TRice Communications**

**and Morgan Litho**

*without whom this  
report  
would not be possible.*

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It has been a long seven-year journey for [Collaboration Station](#). A journey of ingenuity & creativity, a journey of struggle & tears, a journey of building & growing and FINALLY, we are experiencing good success. Our definition of “good success” in 2008:



- Positive, strategic relationships built with sponsors and supporters
- Encouraging significant numbers of individuals and small nonprofits to “pay it forward” through our service programs
- Effectively educating over 100 clients on the “business side of community service”

Our reward has been seeing distressed communities and forgotten low-income populations benefit from the fruit of our clients’ labor.

Being initially a Central Ohio based organization, our greatest challenge has been the establishment of our presence in Northeast Ohio—an area already rich in capacity building resources for nonprofits. It has been a slow process, but we have identified our strength—showing nonprofit entrepreneurs how to apply the capacity building skills they’ve learned to their community projects. For [Collaboration Station](#), that means investing up to 80 hours in each client as they work to help countless numbers of children and families for the better.

Moving forward, [Collaboration Station](#) will be working on streamlining its programming so that we can serve more people more efficiently while providing the same quality of service. Further, we will continue to welcome opportunities to align ourselves with both non-profit and for-profit agencies that recognize the value of small, grassroots community service efforts. After all, as our slogan says, “Helping Ordinary People Bring About Extraordinary Change” is what we are all about! And it is certainly our pleasure to champion that cause every day.

Sincerely,

*Cheryl J. Smith*

Executive Director

**OUR 2008 MISSION:**

Collaboration Station is a 510c3 grassroots nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide opportunities for concerned citizens AND small community & faith based agencies to come together WITH small for-profit businesses to launch and sustain meaningful community service projects.

**OUR 2008 VISION** is to accomplish win-win, high-impact community problem-solving by identifying a significant community need, matching that need with the capacity building needs of nonprofit entrepreneurs & small FBCOs and then create an innovation that will solve both problems.

**CHANGE IS GOOD**

Historically, our company logo has embodied the focus of our organization. Our current logo represents what we believe are the four keys to successful growth of a grassroots organization: **people, tools, partnership and funding.** Each is expressed in each panel of the puzzle piece of this original artwork.

COLLABORATION STATION



Now, as we seek-out new opportunities to advance our new agency agenda, we have shifted from a pictorial representation of our focus to a pictorial representation of our strategic direction.

So as we move forward, don't be surprised if our 'look' is sometimes a little different. Because **a little change can be good!**



## OUR PHILOSOPHY:

Accessing capacity building training and technical assistance is the easy part. Understanding how to apply this knowledge to prosper one's own "pay it forward" efforts is quite different—and can take a significant amount of time.

This is where [Collaboration Station](#) comes in. We implement programs for low to moderate income individuals seeking to do good works in the community without the dollars to maintain high consultant fees or professional salaries in the early stages of development. All programs are offered either free or on a sliding fee scale based on the client's ability to pay.

We encourage people to ***think differently about their good works and how to make them work***. We are not about re-inventing the wheel and provide referrals to currently available capacity building services in their area where offered. The services we provide build trust among grassroots leaders, small nonprofits and small businesses encouraging them to develop unique and strategic ways to partner in making a strong community impact. With [Collaboration Station](#) as the mediator, partnerships are established that increase the number of families served while using evidence-based practices to ensure outcomes are met. In addition, we are able to provide guidance to individuals who think they want to start a nonprofit organization, but might be better suited for partnering with another 501c3 agency to accomplish their "pay it forward" efforts. At the very least, these entrepreneurs learn about other nonprofits in the area providing the same types of services to families & children and in turn, discover whether or not they have their own niche in providing services.



## OUR HISTORY AND CURRENT CAPACITY

Originally based in Columbus, Ohio, the organization's work primarily consisted of nonprofit management trainings and individualized coaching sessions specifically in the areas of grant-writing, obtaining 501c3 status and program planning. In 2007, the agency moved to Cleveland, Ohio upon the request of several civic entrepreneurs wanting to utilize the services we provided but unable to travel to Columbus, Ohio on a regular basis to receive services. Since that time, we have expanded our services considerably to more effectively meet the technical assistance needs of our clients. In 2008 as the number of clients served increased more quickly in Summit County, we opened a second location in Akron, OH. Our current staff capacity includes a full-time Executive Director (with 12 years experience in nonprofit management—specializing in meeting the needs of small nonprofits, grassroots leaders and community groups, a contract Financial Manager (who is a C.P.A. with over 20 years experience in doing bookkeeping, taxes and financial advising for nonprofit organizations) and volunteer office administrators. Other contractors are utilized to perform specific program functions on an as needed basis.

Our governing board, advisory board and volunteer roster consist of professionals in the private, public and independent sectors; specializing in various business areas including but not limited to: insurance, legal, marketing, accounting, grant writing, event planning, higher education and school accreditation. While our programs are managed and primarily implemented by the Executive Director, [Collaboration Station](#) is heavily dependent upon its volunteer administrators and its volunteer trainers—many of whom are owners of their own for-profit, small businesses — who donate their time and talents to assist us with agency programming. In this way, we are able to keep administrative costs down, enabling us to increase the number of clients served.

**NEW MISSION:** Collaboration Station is a grassroots support organization that teaches individuals how to start and maintain meaningful service projects and social enterprises with limited resources—with or without tax exempt status.

**NEW VISION:** to nurture the “pay it forward” concept through individual efforts to champion their own causes; demonstrating how giving back not only makes a difference in lives of others but also benefits the giver—mentally, emotionally and financially.

What does it mean to “**Pay It Forward?**” Simply put, it means to do something good for someone else who has a need. This is what all of our clients do every day! Many of these **Pay It Forward Champions** do this within the confines of their **limited** community connections and financial resources. THAT is the beauty of the **Pay It Forward** concept! You don’t need a lot of money nor do you need to be locally or nationally **well-known**. You just have to want to help someone else that has a little less than you; less of an ability to get food, shelter, healthcare, employment, clothing, emotional support, . . . you name the cause. Traditionally, **paying it forward** refers to one person helping one other person—but our clients are ambitious and want to do more to serve more people, and to accomplish that—you need an understanding of nonprofit, a strategy to put your program together and resources to make it happen. This is [Collaboration Station’s](#) area of expertise. This is how we “Help Ordinary People Bring About Extraordinary Change!”



## OUR CLIENTS

Our clients come from all walks of life. We serve single mothers, single fathers, the homeless, sickle cell anemia victims, elderly kinship caregivers, children of prisoners, former addicts, adopted youth and others **who have chosen to champion their own cause through community service.**

How are we able to help so many families and children with so many different types of needs...one community service project at a time. **Most of our clients ARE** those same low-income single mothers, single fathers, formerly homeless, sickle cell anemia victims, elderly kinship caregivers, children of prisoners, former addicts, adopted youth—even ex-offenders seeking to make amends by giving back to the community. For many of these concerned community citizens it is **ALL About Paying it Forward!** Who better to understand the plight of the these families and children than those who used to be where they were only a few short years before?

**Collaboration Station** provides assistance to literally hundreds of causes by giving these community champions the support they need to continue their outreach efforts.



## OUR 2008 PROGRAMS

*Helping Hands Program:* This program provides grassroots leaders and nonprofit entrepreneurs with goal-setting and technical assistance for small capacity building projects.

*Legal Assistance Fund:* For those entrepreneurs that qualify, we provide financial assistance with legal incorporation of their nonprofit and (in some cases) for-profit enterprises. **Fiscal sponsorship services are also provided where appropriate.**

*501c3 Preparation:* For civic entrepreneurs with a current track record of community service seeking tax exempt status for their nonprofit.

*The I.C.* The Information Clearinghouse (I.C.) is available to civic entrepreneurs by phone or email to answer general questions concerning fiscal management, insurance, outcomes management, volunteer management, grants research, partnership-building, and more.

*Mentoring & Training for Civic Entrepreneurs:* Gives youth and adults the opportunity to develop a one-on-one relationship with a nonprofit management professional to guide their community service efforts.

*Entrepreneurship for Ex-offenders:* This program shows ex-offenders how starting a for-profit business can **give back** to the communities to which they return.



## OUR KUDOS TO YOU!!

Being new to the Northeast Ohio area, it wasn't easy for Collaboration Station to attract for-profit business sponsors in 2008. Yet two small businesses stepped-up to the plate - and we are so very grateful! Revol Wireless

and Black Pages of Ohio are two homegrown businesses that believe giving back to their local communities is just as important as making product sales. To these our dedicated supporters we say, **THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN OUR CAUSE!**



Bob Lanier, President & CEO,  
Black Pages of Ohio

**revol**<sup>®</sup>  
wireless

# BLACKPAGESOHIO



**Left to Right:** Tim Luburger, Regional Area Manager, Revol Wireless; Janet Nevels, 2008 Board Vice President, Collaboration Station; Sandy Higgins, Contract Administrator, Collaboration Station; Tracey Cooley, 2008 Sales Consultant, IBuyNeo.com a program by COSE.

*photo by Woodard Photographic, Inc.*



**Eva Moore**  
**Executive Director**  
 photo provided by  
 Freedom House for Women

Collaboration Station had a very encouraging effect on our organization that is a relatively new grassroots organization; because Freedom House for Women had minimal technical assistance prior to working with Collaboration Station. Collaboration Station had the following impact on our organization: a) assisted in program development, b) technical assistance, c) grant writing, d) budget development, e) fundraising, f) program evaluations and outcomes.

Collaboration Station is such a needed resource in the community. The commitment of the Director, Cheryl Smith to the mission and vision of the agency is only surpassed by the diligence with which the agency as a whole delivers services to nonprofit entrepreneurs. There should be more Collaboration Station's. Their genuine desire to 'go that extra mile' to help entrepreneurs succeed is unparalleled."



**Freedom House for Women** is a 501c3 tax exempt organization in Akron, Ohio. Its mission is to assist the community in addressing the dire needs of supportive services to prevent homelessness for chemically dependent adult women.



**Michael Jones, CEO**  
**Breaking The Cycle, Inc.**

I met Cheryl J. Smith from [Collaboration Station](#) through the Ohio Black Pages. She has been a tremendous help, helping me file my Articles of Incorporation, getting my first grant (on my first ever attempt to get one). She has also been very helpful in understanding how to keep the finances in order for my community program, and recently helped to supervise the coordination of the 1st Annual Resource/Job Fair that was put on by Breaking The Cycle Inc.

With all the aforementioned activities, [Collaboration Station](#) has been instrumental in making Breaking The Cycle a respected community program within the Greater Cleveland area in just 18 months. The creative decision making that she (Ms. Smith) encourages and allows you to have within the fiscal agent relationship while reinforcing the requirements of non-profit management is tremendous. [Collaboration Station](#) has also shown me the importance of social entrepreneurship.

I always have and will continue to recommend [Collaboration Station](#) to others that are trying to become business owners whether it's for-profit or non-profit.



***Breaking the Cycle, Inc.*** is a nonprofit community program located in Cleveland, OH that improves the quality of life of ex-offenders through the provision of comprehensive employment training services and the establishment of positive employer relations. Their vision is to be the springboard for ex-offenders to re-enter society and become successful.

**OUR SPECIAL THANKS AND APPRECIATION. . .  
WE COULDN'T HAVE MADE IT THROUGH 2008  
WITHOUT YOU!!**

**SUPPORTERS**

**Dan Roman**, Director—IBuyNeo.com  
(a program of COSE)

**Tracey Cooley**, 2008 Sales Consultant—IBuyNeo.com  
(a program of COSE)

**Pat DeLeon**—Center for Families and Children

**Sheilah Hampton**, Service Office Manager  
Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

**George Pelletier**, Program Coordinator  
Northeast Ohio Mentoring Center,  
a program of Community Care Network

**Linda Pfaff**, Career Services Specialist  
Cleveland State University

**CONTRACTORS**

Jimmy Burns, C.P.A.

Sharyna Cloud

Sandy Higgins

Tony Marcial

Erinn Sneed

Aundrey Sommerville

**INTERN**

Erika Forde

**OUR GOVERNING BOARD**



**Janet Nevels**

Grants Administrator  
Dept. of Homeland Security  
Office of Public Safety, City of Cleveland  
**2008 Board Vice President**



**Sharon Butler-McCray**

Executive Director  
Pride Through Empowerment Foundation  
**2008 Board Trustee**

**NOT PICTURED:** **Robert L. Dunn**, President & CEO, Landers Real Estate & Acquisitions, **2008 Board President**; **Eileen Andrus, CPA**, formerly of Ciuni & Panichi, Inc., **2008 Board Treasurer**

**TRAINING VOLUNTEERS**



**Louise Buchanan**

Business Consultant  
Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation



**Mark Davis**

Founder & CEO  
mark Creative Services



**Attorney Dan DiBiase**

DiBiase Law Firm, LLC



**Attorney John Gugilotta**

Patent, Copyright & Trademark  
Law Group, LLC

## TRAINING VOLUNTEERS



**David Hostelley, PhD**  
Professor, Walsh University  
former President & CEO, Inner Circle Advisors



**Attorney Suzann Moskowitz**  
Ulmer & Byrne



**Mark Rabkin**  
former Independent Insurance Agent  
Althans Insurance Agency



**Josh Sukol**  
Senior Network Engineer  
Cornerstone IT

**NOT PICTURED:** Eileen Andrus, C.P.A.; Attorney Geoffrey Eicher, Semple & Eicher; Attorney John Kirn, Volunteer Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, Volunteer, Business Advisors of Cleveland

## SERVICE VOLUNTEERS



**Charlene Allen**  
Executive Director  
Alliance Community Outreach Program



**Michael Jones**  
Founder & Executive Director  
Breaking The Cycle, Inc.

SERVICE VOLUNTEERS



**Jessica Knighten**  
Community Volunteer



**Chuck Kramer**  
Consultant  
Educational Management Services



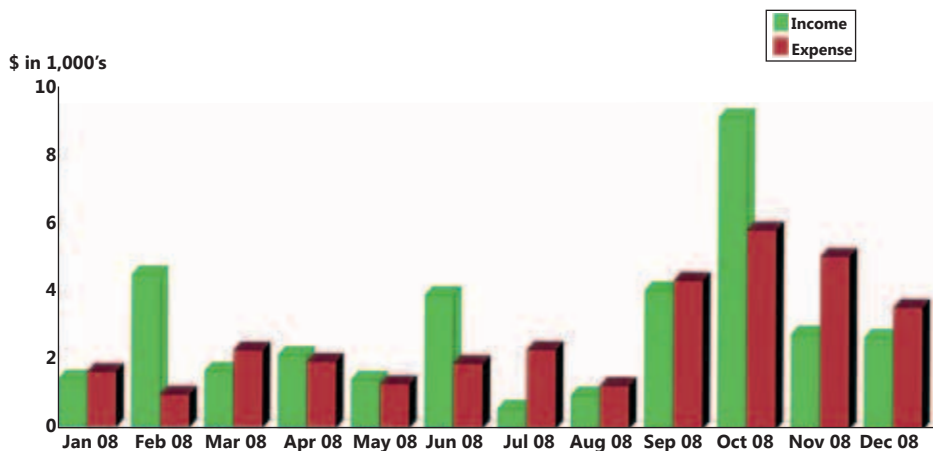
**Donna Ryant**  
Administrative Assistant  
Community Care Network



**Beverly Wilson**  
Sales Assistant  
Time Warner Cable

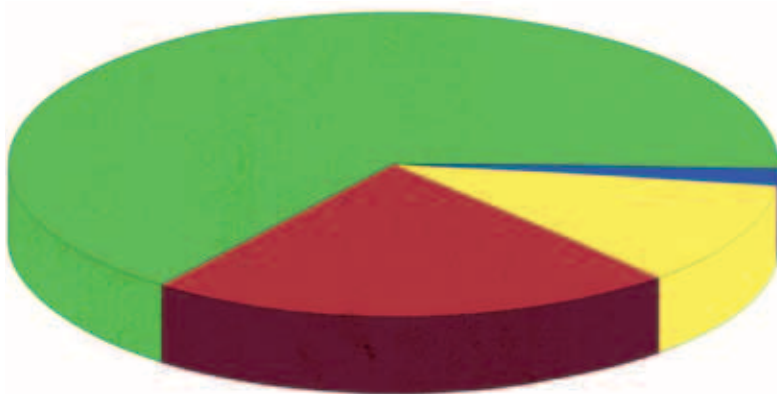
**NOT PICTURED:** **Lynnette Forde**, Foundation Relations, Case Western Reserve University; **Nia Indelicato**, Community Volunteer; **Attorney Jim Rownd**, Kadish, Hinkel & Weibel; **Heather Stuart**, Community Volunteer.

**Income and Expense by Month  
January through December 2008**



**Income Summary  
January through December 2008**

Earned Revenues	%63.84
Grants	22.33
Contributions and Support	11.24
Government Contracts	2.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$35,820.23</b>



Many thanks to our 2008 Grant Funders: the Akron Bar Foundation and the Hitchcock Family Charitable Trust.

**Program Expenses total:** \$26,831.22

**Administrative Expenses total:** \$6,117.23

**Net Ordinary Income:** \$2,871.78

**Fiscal Sponsorship provided to the following grassroots nonprofit efforts:** Nubian Link, Kincaid's Kindred Spirits\*, Black Pages Foundation, Breaking the Cycle, Rent-to-Own Tenant Initiative, Ultimate Skills for Life Center\*, Fill This House\*

\*Indicates grassroots nonprofit efforts that later obtained tax exempt status.

