



SUMMER 2015

- Co-Directors: Betty Ann Wilkins, Darlene Griffith, Susan Lampazzi and Mary Rank
- Program Manager: Jessica Ramones
- Newsletter Editor: Christy O'Farrell
- Training Coordinator: Laura Greenspan
- Publicity Coordinator: Monica Galloway

A program of Our Daily Bread Inc., Fairfax, Va.

Statement of Purpose: To work with high-risk pregnant women and new mothers promoting consistent prenatal care, fostering positive parenting skills and supporting them in planning a healthy future for themselves and their babies.

NP Founder Honored for Lifetime Achievement

Naomi Project founder **Peggy Ferguson**, who retired in late 2014 after 19 years of dedication to the organization that remains dear to her heart, received a Lifetime Achievement Award recognizing her all-volunteer service from Volunteer Fairfax. At an April 24 ceremony, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova presented the award to Peggy for her leadership.



Peggy Ferguson

Saying it was a tremendous honor, Peggy added, "I have always been inspired by the incredible women who have volunteered in this program and who continue to volunteer – giving so generously of their time and talents" to women "who need some extra help to get their families off to a great start. And I am humbled by the women we serve who allow us into their lives."

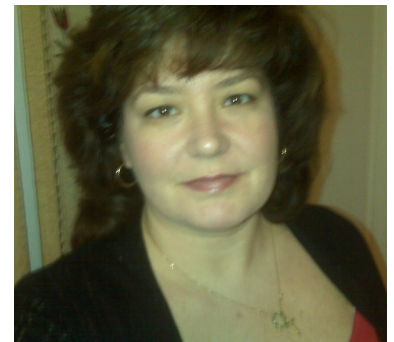
"We are so proud of Peggy, and are honored to have the Naomi Project and the wonderful volunteers who run this program as part of our family," said Our Daily Bread Executive Director **Lisa Whetzel**.

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Mentor Helps Client Face Challenges

Isha was referred to Naomi Project in November 2013 as a single pregnant immigrant from Sierra Leone, with a 5-year-old son who is likely autistic. With little support, and feeling stressed and overwhelmed, Isha needed help.

Enter Isha's NP mentor, **Bridget Simpkins** (Fall '13), who later reported: "Isha is doing great. She is working hard and found a new social worker who is more proactive and engaged, thankfully. She has taken her son, Sahid, to autism specialists, and got her rent reduced, and is thriving."



Bridget Simpkins

After consulting with the autism specialist, Sahid's individualized education program was changed to include intensive help at home. Isha, Bridget and others are monitoring Sahid's tendency to "love" too hard on his baby brother, Alie, who is now 15 months old. Bridget gave Sahid some cardboard building bricks for Christmas and he sorted them by color while his 4-year-old cousin built a wall. Then Sahid knocked down the wall.

"I had to smile at that because it was so normal," Bridget said. "He has begun using some American Sign Language, but I haven't learned the signs, so it is time for me to start studying!"

Bridget said Alie is smiley, lovey and alert, and loves to be read to, though he does not verbalize much. It may be cultural, or just because his family is quiet, but she wants to keep an eye on it so he can receive help if necessary.

Bridget was able to meet Isha's family when they visited from Africa for the holidays. "All the people I have met in her life are deeply caring and respectful, and thank me for helping her. It is clear she is a treasured family member and that she tells them how she appreciates Naomi project."

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BIRTHS



Congratulations to Nancy, client of **Rebecca Miller** (Fall '13), who had a baby boy, Moses, in mid-March.

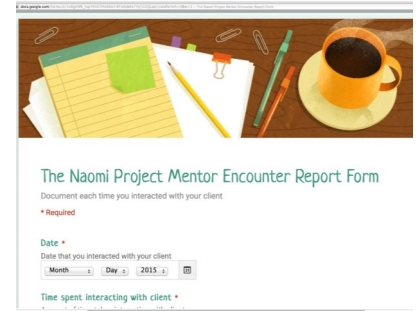
Mentors, Please use our new reporting form.

We want to hear all about the amazing experiences you're having with your client. Please keep us informed about your interactions, so we can help with any issues that may arise, and track the hard work and hours you are investing to improve their lives.

We have simplified the reporting process with a Google form. If you consistently complete a form after each encounter, you won't need to do a monthly

report. Some mentors are already using the new form, and we greatly appreciate it, and all the time that each of you devote to your clients and to Naomi Project.

To access the form, visit www.odbfairfax.org/NPMentorTools.



Thank you!

Volunteer News (cont. from page 1)

“Peggy recognized a need in our community and devoted an unbelievable amount of time to create an organization to fulfill that need, inspiring so many others to devote their own time and energy to helping moms or expectant moms who are struggling,” Lisa said.

After Peggy’s and husband Jerry’s five children were grown, Peggy founded the Naomi Project in 1995 to help children whose futures were uncertain because of circumstances beyond their control. “As a mother and grandmother, she knew parenting skills mattered,” according to the nomination form. “As a public health nurse, she knew some mothers needed more help than an overburdened nurse or social worker could offer. As a hospital chaplain, she had seen how one person, alert to individual needs, could impact a life.”

Peggy leaves “a legacy of caring and compassion and a solid Naomi Project that will thrive for years to come,” her nominators said. “Although Peggy will sincerely insist that she didn’t do it alone, the Naomi Project simply wouldn’t exist today without Peggy Ferguson’s commitment, leadership and vision.”



Left to right: ODB Executive Director **Lisa Whetzel**, NP Founder **Peggy Ferguson**, NP Training Coordinator **Laura Greenspan**, NP Co-Director **Betty Ann Wilkins** and NP Program Manager **Jessica Ramones**.

Two days later, Peggy’s parents, the late Joseph and Frances McAllister McCloskey, also were honored for “raising a family steeped in service to the Church and the community.” The Ignatian Volunteer Corps Northern Virginia and DC Metro/Maryland regions celebrated IVC’s 20th anniversary by recognizing those whose lives reflect the Ignatian values of direct service to the poor and working for a

more just society.

The McCloskey family has engaged in “lifting up the vulnerable and least among us for four generations,” their Della Strada award citation said. They “gave us the gift of their children,” including Father Joe McCloskey, S.J., spiritual director and Jesuit priest for more than 50 years; Peggy Ferguson, founder and retired co-director of the Naomi Project, and Pete McCloskey, who created Study Buddies, a program in 35 states that connects volunteer tutors with struggling children.

Naomi Project's Spring 2015 Class



We warmly welcome our latest group of trainees, and thank them for their volunteer hours.

Back row, left to right: Sheeba San Antonio, Colette Slaton, Anne Pick, Aimee Zepnick, Julie Gregorowicz and June Bloedorn

Front row, left to right: Kari Wells, Meghan Omogi, Sharon Bomgardner, Olivia Hudson and Michele Mrozek

More Volunteer News

Many thanks to Co-director **Susan Lampazzi** (Fall '93 and Fall '10) for completing five years as a mentor. Susan was there for the birth of Naomi Project, right along with founder **Peggy Ferguson**.

Our gratitude also goes to Training Coordinator **Laura Greenspan** (Fall '95) for 20 years with Naomi Project. She previously was newsletter editor.

Retired co-director **Corinne D'Silva** (Spring '02) deserves thanks for handling our book program, now run by Program Manager **Jessica Ramones**, and previously managed by **Dianne Rose** (Fall '01). Mentors give children's books to their clients to stress the importance of reading to infants, toddlers and older kids.

Baby Items Available

The Naomi Project closet, now maintained at Kelly Square, 10777 Main Street in Fairfax, has an inventory of baby clothes, diapers and Pack 'n Plays. Mentors can email Jessica to arrange pickups naomiproject@odbfairfax.org

THE NAOMI PROJECT

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www.naomiproject.org

<http://www.facebook.com/>

[NaomiProjectofNorthernVirginia](http://www.NaomiProjectofNorthernVirginia.org)

www.odbfairfax.org

The Naomi Project, in its 19th year, is a volunteer-based resource mothers program. Trained volunteers mentor disadvantaged clients in a one-on-one relationship.

Clients are referred to the program, which is free, confidential and interfaith, by the Fairfax County Health Department, Inova Cares clinics and high school social workers in Northern Virginia.

Since its inception in 1995, more than 200 Naomi Project volunteers have helped more than 500 women. The program is active in Fairfax and Arlington counties, and the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church.

County Program Streamlines Service Delivery

Mentors and clients are grateful for the plethora of assistance programs available in Fairfax County. But it can be overwhelming navigating the vast web of services offered by the government, non-profits, churches and other organizations.

That's why starting with a phone call to Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning can simplify the process. CSP provides information, referral, linkage and advocacy to Fairfax County residents, drawing from both public and private resources. Through partnerships with community-based organizations and other Fairfax County agencies, CSP assists callers with the following services:

- Basic needs such as emergency food, shelter, clothing, furniture, and transportation;
- Financial assistance such as rent or mortgage assistance to prevent eviction or foreclosure; security deposit assistance to secure permanent housing; utility payments to prevent disconnection; prescription assistance and other special needs;
- Health care referrals for medical, dental, vision, hearing, mental health, substance abuse, home care, pregnancy and family planning;
- Employment and education, including job training, job search, English for Speakers of Other Languages, legal assistance and financial literacy;
- Recreation including facilities and programs, senior centers, teen centers and referrals for those with special needs.

Multilingual staff can assist in 16 languages, though sometimes there is a long hold time. On average, CSP received 417 calls a day so far in fiscal 2015, according to its report on trends and statistics.

Some forms of help are limited to once per year.

Immediate and long-term needs are assessed on a case-by-case basis, and if necessary, staff will develop a personalized integrated service plan for callers.

As the "front door" to the county's human services system, CSP fields requests ranging from emergency food and rental assistance to job and housing search assistance to dental care.

703 222-0880

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/csp

Mentors can also access the county's database of human services directly to search for resources by category, key word or zip code at

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hstrg



Next Mentor Training Session June 6

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Rowland Conference Center at Kelly Square, 10777 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Fairfax, VA 22030.

For more information, visit www.odbfairfax.org/NPTraining