



January 10, 2019

*Emergency Housing*

Mayor David R. Martin

*Transitional Housing*

City of Stamford

*Permanent Housing*

888 Washington Boulevard

*Deeply Affordable Housing*

Stamford, CT 06901

*Rapid Rehousing*

Dear Mr. Mayor:

*Vocational Training*

Inspirica is profoundly grateful to the City of Stamford for its unwavering partnership in and support of our mission to break the cycle of homelessness. Together we have moved thousands of individuals and families off the streets and into permanent homes where they are living safe and stable lives. However, the need for our services continues to grow, as the soaring cost of living in Stamford is forcing more men, women and children than ever before into homelessness. As such, Inspirica respectfully requests a grant of \$350,000 for general operations of our residential and non-residential programs which are critical to ending homelessness in the city.

*Education & Employment*

*Children's Services*

Recognizing budget constraints, we do not make our request for funding lightly. The Stamford-Norwalk metropolitan area remains the 5th most expensive housing jurisdiction in the nation. While most daily expenses here track a few percentage points above national norms, housing costs are an outlier – they are more than double the national average. This has resulted in a different kind of homelessness: economic homelessness. While mental illness and substance abuse still play an outsized role, the rising cost of living coupled with wage stagnation is leading to soaring homelessness. Compounding this harsh reality is the fact that 103 months since the start of the Great Recession, Connecticut has recovered only 89% of the jobs it lost during the downturn, making it the only state in the nation that has not yet recovered to pre-recession levels. In most cases, those jobs that have been recovered pay less than those they replaced. (Wage growth in Connecticut has been just 0.1% over the past eight years.)

*Early Childhood & Parenting Services*

*Employment & Housing Retention*

The disparity between stagnant, or even declining, monthly salaries and soaring monthly rents has led to a record demand for our services. In 2017, the results of the annual Point-In-Time Survey showed an 18% decline in homelessness in our area. In 2018, the number of homeless essentially remained flat (there was a very slight increase). Given the large decline in 2017, we were glad not to give back any of these gains. However, one statistic stands out: we remain sobered by the fact that homelessness today remains at the same level as it was at the end of the Great Recession in February 2010, when unemployment was 10.1%. In short, we continue to make progress, but the war on ending homelessness has hardly been won.

It is against this context that Inspirica plays a critical role in Stamford, perhaps the most critical role on any not-for-profit organization. But we cannot do what we do without the city's support. Our strong results are proof of the impact that your investment returns. In the past 8 ½ fiscal years, we have made a record 1,577 job placements, which in turn has allowed us to move a record 1,388 men, women and children into permanent housing.

At the same time that we are facing a surge in homelessness (and thus a greater need for our services), we are facing severe reductions in funding. Deficits in the Connecticut state budget have already led to a drastic cut in our funding. We have already lost \$570,000 in state funding over the past few fiscal years – a number that we expect to increase. This equates to losing 8%-10% of our budget at precisely the time that demand for our services is soaring. (Please note that the \$7,000,000 is an operating budget, excluding capital projects other than minor repairs.)

To be sure, we do not expect to recover all of the funding we are losing. Indeed, Inspirica has and will continue to absorb as much as we can internally. To this end, over the past three years we have eliminated several roles, including our Chief Development Officer, one of the Program Directors of



our Family Housing Program, a Job & Housing Retention Case Manager, and an administrative assistant, etc. This has had an impact on services. Further reductions in staff – while necessary – will be devastating.

With all the above in mind, we humbly submit our request to the City for \$350,000. This request is made against the challenges we currently face with state cutbacks, along with the internal cuts we have already absorbed. The homeless situation in Stamford is volatile. We have a “triple threat” of: 1) soaring cost of living; 2) stagnant/declining wages; and, 3) a dearth of affordable housing (particularly at the 25%-35% AMI level.

Inspirica has answered the call for many years (140 years) with only minimal support from the city. We now need greater support, substantially greater. Our return on investment and impact is well known. I hope you will agree that Inspirica “punches way above our weight.” The fact is if we don’t do what we do every day, the city would look very different and not be able to operate at anything close to the level it does. No one who “services” the city could live here, and the state’s transportation infrastructure is such that they can’t afford to live elsewhere and commute here.

Once again, thank you for your past support and your consideration of our request this year. We are deeply grateful to the City of Stamford for its continued investment in us, and hope that we will continue to work together to address one of the most pressing issues facing our community.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Weyl", is written over a faint, dotted-line signature strip.

Alan Weyl  
Chief Operating Officer

Enclosure

**Inspirica, Inc.**  
**Mission & Goal Statement**

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***Inspirica Inc.'s mission is to break the cycle of homelessness by helping people achieve – and maintain – permanent housing and stability in their lives.***

Inspirica's mission is a higher bar than most organizations that provide services for the homeless. Our work in serving the homeless is guided by our mission which has the ultimate goal of ending homelessness. While many organizations that serve the homeless focus on "sheltering" people, Inspirica does much more. We are one of only a few organizations nationally that combine residential and support services under one roof in a "one-stop-shop" setting. Our ability to address both the physical aspect of homelessness (residential) and its underlying root causes (support services) exponentially increases our success rate. Residential services include emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, deeply affordable housing, and rapid rehousing. Support services, for both adults and children, are at the core of our work and are strategically integrated within our residential programs to help clients access the services they need, exit homelessness as quickly as possible, and stabilize in appropriate housing. Combining residential and support services to address all aspects of homelessness under one roof ensures there are no gaps in services, and allows us to achieve outstanding results. Support services – all provided in-house – include: vocational training; workforce education; job placement; housing placement; job & housing retention support; early childhood & parenting services; children's services; counseling; case management; and much more. Direct access to medical care, mental health care, psychiatric care, dental care, and substance abuse treatment are also provided through a network of strategic partnerships, many of which are located on-site and fully integrated with our services.

As one of the largest providers of services to the homeless in Connecticut and the largest in lower Fairfield County, Inspirica is essential to answering the surging homeless problem. We currently house approximately 63% of all individuals in emergency shelter and transitional housing in the area; all other organizations combined equal 37%. As we mentioned before, the expansion of our family emergency shelter in November 2014 doubled its capacity to house the growing population of homeless families clearly demonstrating that Inspirica is responding to the need in our area.

Our approach focuses on addressing the acute needs of the growing homeless population in our area, while also being innovative and highly impactful in the development and delivery of our programs and services. We cultivate and implement innovative ideas as we work to break the cycle of homelessness. We build program models that are effective, yield high impact, and have the ability to be replicated. Recent additions to our Children's Services Program and Jumpstart Career Program demonstrate our innovative, impactful approach.

Inspirica is unique for its focus on serving homeless children in our care. We believe investing in children is the most effective way to break the cycle of homeless. A prominent objective of ours is to ensure that children who are homeless do not grow up to become homeless adults. Our Children's Services Program is designed to ensure that each child's experience of homelessness is temporary and does not impede his or her academic, social, and physical development. The program provides critical foundational, educational, psychological/developmental, and after school support to children in our care. This comprehensive approach allows them to maintain stability, gain self-esteem, excel in school, and develop in line with or ahead of their peers who are not homeless. Without this support, most would be unable to break the cycle of homelessness.

As a result of the expansion of our emergency shelter, we are serving more very young children than ever before. The numbers of children in our shelters increased from 125 in FY14 to 250 in FY17. Nearly 40% of them were under the age of five years old, driving the need to include additional, age-appropriate, preventive measures to break the cycle of homelessness. In January 2016, we launched a critical fifth

component to address the needs of our youngest, most vulnerable residents. Our Early Childhood and Parenting Program (ECPP) meets their needs by providing pre-literacy and early childhood programming to children from birth to five with concurrent training for their parents. It is an innovative “two-generation” approach to ending homelessness.

Another key objective is to help participants prepare for, find, and maintain employment, allowing them to earn the income they need to secure permanent housing. Our comprehensive Jumpstart Career Program provides clients with the core skills needed to secure employment and earn the income necessary to exit homelessness and maintain healthy, stable lives in the community. The program has three distinct components: Jumpstart Vocational Training; Jumpstart Education; and, Jumpstart Employment Agency – each carefully crafted to help participants prepare for, find, maintain, and advance in employment. The Jumpstart Career Program was specifically created to serve our “extreme low-income” population of homeless adults many of whom have little to no education and employment experience and who may be coping with substance abuse, mental health issues or have histories of incarceration. By embedding the program in our residential programs, Inspirica has produced outsized returns not typically seen when working with this population. With the cost of living in lower Fairfield County more than double the national average, our clients need a living wage in order to maintain permanent housing. Our innovative Wage Growth Initiative, focuses solely on improving the earnings of clients we have already placed in jobs. A dedicated Job Developer works with clients to increase their wages through a higher-paying new job, an increase in salary in the same job, additional hours etc.

As an organization, we hold ourselves to a high standard. As such, another of our key objectives is to continue to be results-driven. We maintain copious data on outcomes, which we track and collect daily to ensure compliance, maximize program effectiveness, and achieve our goals. Evidence of our rigorous data management and tracking is demonstrated by our record outcomes over the past 12 months:

- We have moved 190 men, women, and children who had been homeless into permanent housing in the community.
- We have made 195 job placements, with an average starting wage of \$12.48 per/hr (24% above minimum wage).

In the past 8 ½ years, we have made a record 1,557 job placements, which, in turn, has allowed us to move a record 1,388 men, women, and children into permanent housing.

Additionally, our Job & Housing Retention Program has helped clients attain record retention results that far exceed the average for homeless populations:

	<u>Housing Retention*</u>
1 month	95%
3 months	89%
6 months	77%

Our comprehensive approach to helping people, and our rigorous focus on outcomes and results through which we measure success not by how many people we serve, but how many of them achieve- and maintain- permanent housing and stability, have led us to set the following numeric goals for 2019-2020:

- 1. We will serve 1,050 individuals (including those in permanent housing).**
- 2. We will make at least 190 job placements, with more than 50% earning \$11/hour or more, significantly above the minimum wage.**
- 3. We will place between 190-200 people into permanent housing.**

**Inspirica, Inc.**  
**Income Statement - July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 (FY18 YTD)**  
**Operating Fund (Excluding Inspirica Endowment)**  
**Unaudited**

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<b>Income</b>		
*Contributions	7,296,405	2,045,000
<b>Government Grants</b>	3,232,297	2,744,713
<b>Tenant Rentals</b>	716,458	745,648
<b>** Other (Exclude Invest Income)</b>	752,468	757,312
<b>Endowment Transfers</b>		312,533
<b>Total Income</b>	<u><b>11,997,628</b></u>	<u><b>6,605,206</b></u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Compensation</b>	4,178,052	4,368,132
<b>Outsource Functions:</b>		
<b>Financial</b>	31,601	50,000
<b>Security - Emergency Coverage</b>		
<b>Property Mgmt Colony/Atlantic</b>	120,291	120,291
<b>Total Outsource Functions</b>	<u>151,892</u>	<u>170,291</u>
<b>Program Expenses</b>	262,997	263,263
<b>Central Services</b>	88,795	97,769
<b>Contract/Professional</b>	190,212	146,100
<b>Equipment</b>	118,937	121,500
<b>General</b>	270,549	328,930
<b>Occupancy</b>	716,787	785,199
<b>Depreciation</b>	472,204	450,339
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u><b>6,450,425</b></u>	<u><b>6,731,523</b></u>

\*Please note that the surplus between revenues and expenses in the actual column is misleading. In FY18, Inspirica received \$4,551,060 in grants for capital projects, including 72 Franklin Street. All of this income was recorded as operating revenue. However, the expense was or will be capitalized and does not show as an operating expense. Additionally, Inspirica received several multi-year grants (including one of \$500,000 over five years), the full amount of which were recorded as revenue in FY18 in keeping with accounting regulations/standards. It also received some restricted funding in which the income was recorded above, but the payments and expenses has not yet occurred.

**Inspirica, Inc.**  
**Income Statement - July 1, 2018 to Oct 31, 2018 (FY19 YTD)**

**Unaudited**

	<u>Actual through 10/31/18</u>	<u>Budget through 10/31/18</u>	<u>FY19 Budget 12 Months</u>
<b>Income</b>			
*Contributions	682,653	665,000	2,045,000
Government Grants	958,560	928,938	2,786,815
Tenant Rentals	225,896	214,773	644,320
** Other (Exclude Invest Income)	192,722	285,192	855,577
Endowment Transfers		122,738	368,213
<b>Total Income</b>	<u><b>2,059,831</b></u>	<u><b>2,216,641</b></u>	<u><b>6,699,925</b></u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Compensation	1,436,930	1,498,934	4,551,640
Outsource Functions:			
Financial	13,890	16,667	50,000
Security - Emergency Coverage			
Property Mgmt Colony/Atlantic	40,097	40,097	65,457
<b>Total Outsource Functions</b>	<u>53,987</u>	<u>56,764</u>	<u>115,457</u>
Program Expenses	94,402	99,307	286,798
Central Services	27,353	31,246	93,541
Contract/Professional	52,357	46,353	139,060
Equipment	36,768	48,221	144,663
General	67,486	118,952	356,858
Occupancy	192,136	263,044	766,878
Depreciation	151,067	154,999	465,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u><b>2,112,486</b></u>	<u><b>2,317,820</b></u>	<u><b>6,919,895</b></u>
<b>***NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>			<u><b>(219,970)</b></u>

**Inspirica, Inc.**  
**FY19-20 City of Stamford Operation Request – Proposed Budget for FY20**

Please note that Inspirica's proposed budget for FY20 is developed between March to May, 2019. When approved by our Board of Directors it will be submitted to the City.

## Inspirica, Inc. Budget Narrative

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Inspirica is profoundly grateful to the City of Stamford for its generous support of our mission to break the cycle of homelessness in lower Fairfield County. Your investment over many years has helped move thousands of men, women, and children from homelessness to jobs, health, home – and dignity. At the same time, this investment has saved the city tens of millions, if not hundreds of millions of dollars, in services and costs related to leaving homeless people in the streets. In view of the extremely high return on investment we humbly request continued support in the amount of \$350,000 for general operating expenses of Inspirica's residential and non-residential programs. **This amount represents just 5% of our projected budget, a remarkably small percentage given the outsized role we play in the City.**

**As noted in our FY19 budget (see attached), Inspirica projected a deficit of \$219,970 entering the fiscal year. This was the result of cuts in state funding in the past of a total of \$570,000 – a number that continues to grow as revenues at the state level lead to “hold backs” and mitigations. Unfortunately, we are concerned this number will grow further in our upcoming fiscal year. Without your support, this will force us to cut programs in the coming months, a move that would be catastrophic given the rising demand for services in our area.**

### **MISSION & HISTORY**

Inspirica's mission is to break the cycle of homelessness by helping people achieve – and maintain - permanent housing and stability in their lives. We are one of the largest providers of services to the homeless in Connecticut and the largest in lower Fairfield County. Each night we house approximately 350 people and each year we serve over 1,050 people (including 250 children). We operate 11 facilities Stamford and provide an extensive array of support services, including vocational training, workforce education, job placement, housing placement, job & housing retention support, children's services, counseling, case management, and more. We further provide direct access to medical care, mental health care, psychiatric care, dental care, and substance abuse treatment through a network of strategic partnerships.

We are unique for several reasons.

- The first is the **breadth of housing** we provide. By operating shelters, transitional housing, permanent housing and deeply affordable housing we work across the spectrum of housing, enabling us to break the cycle of homelessness rather than provide only a temporary fix.
- The second is the **scope of people we serve**. By serving single men, single women, families, people with mental illness, and persons living with HIV/AIDS, we are able to work across the spectrum of people who are homeless rather than with just one segment.
- The third is our **comprehensive approach** to helping people. We address not just the physical part of homelessness, but *all* of the underlying reasons a person becomes homeless, improving our success rate. Our ability to integrate services is a key element of our success and sets us apart from many other organizations.

Inspirica is also unique for a fourth reason –our **intense focus on results**. We measure success not by how many people we serve, but the ultimate goal: how many of them achieve-and maintain-permanent housing and stability.

### **NEED**

The economy has improved, but the effects have not yet trickled down. Today, 94 million people in the United States (1 out of 3) live in poverty or within 50% of the poverty line (defined as "near poverty"). Another 45 million people live within 50%-100% of the poverty line, bringing to 139 million the number of people in the country who live within 100% of the poverty line – 43.4% of the U.S. population (that is almost 1 out of 2).

From this precarious economic position these people are cascading into homelessness. Our area has been particularly hard hit due to the high cost of living. The Stamford-Norwalk metropolitan area remains the 5th most expensive housing jurisdiction in the nation. While most daily expenses here track a few percentage points above national norms, housing costs are an outlier – they are more than double of the national average. This has resulted in a different kind of homelessness: economic homelessness. While mental illness and substance abuse still play an outsized role, the rising cost of living coupled with wage stagnation is leading to soaring homelessness. Compounding this harsh reality is the fact that 103 months since the start of the Great Recession, Connecticut has recovered only 89% of the jobs it lost during the downturn, making it the only state in the nation that has not yet recovered to pre-recession levels. In most cases, those jobs that have been recovered pay less than those they replaced. (Wage growth in Connecticut has been just 0.1% over the past eight years.)

The disparity between stagnant, or even declining, monthly salaries and soaring monthly rents has led to a record demand for our services. In 2017, the results of the annual Point-In-Time Survey showed an 18% decline in homelessness in our area. In 2018, the number of homeless essentially remained flat (there was a very slight increase). Given the large decline in 2017, we were glad not to give back any of these gains. However, one statistic stands out: we remain sobered by the fact that homelessness today remains at the same level as it was at the end of the Great Recession in February 2010, when unemployment was 10.1%. In short, we continue to make progress, but the war on ending homelessness has hardly been won.

It is against this context that Inspirica plays a critical role in Stamford, perhaps the most critical role on any not-for-profit organization. But we cannot do what we do without the city's support. Our strong results are proof of the impact that your investment returns. In the past 8 ½ fiscal years, we have made a record 1,557 job placements, which in turn has allowed us to move a record 1,388 men, women and children into permanent housing.

### **BUDGET NEED**

**At the same time that we are facing a surge in homelessness (and thus a greater need for our services), we are facing severe reductions in funding. Deficits in the Connecticut state budget have already led to a drastic cut in our funding as noted above. We have already lost \$570,000 in state funding over the past few fiscal years – a number that we expect to increase. This equates to losing 8%-10% of our budget at precisely the time that demand for our services is soaring. (Please note that the \$7,000,000 is an operating budget, excluding capital projects other than minor repairs.)**

**To be sure, we do not expect to recover all of the funding we are losing. Indeed, Inspirica has and will continue to absorb as much as we can internally. To ensure the operation and sustainability of our programs, Inspirica relies on a variety of sources, including public and private funding. With respect to the latter, we have launched several new fundraising programs across the organization, including a Major Donor Stewardship program and a Social Media Initiative. We have further increased and expanded our special events, including a Spring Soiree (each spring), a walk-a-thon (each fall) etc. As the only provider of services to homeless families in the area, we are committed to continuing its operations at any cost, including, if necessary, utilizing the organization's scarce and precious reserve funds. In addition, over the past few years we have eliminated several roles, including our Chief Development Officer, one of the Program Directors of our Family Housing Program, a Job & Housing Retention Case Manager, and an administrative assistant, etc. This has had an impact on services. Further reductions in staff – while necessary – will be devastating.**

**We are deeply grateful to the City for its increase in funding last year. As you may recall, we requested \$350,000 in funding and received \$233,000. This was a significant increase, but not enough to help us close our budget shortfall that is predicted in the current fiscal year to be \$219,970 – a shortfall we cannot afford. With this in mind, we submit our request to the City for \$350,000. This request is made against the challenges we currently face with state cutbacks, along with the internal cuts we have already absorbed. In short, the homeless situation in Stamford is**

volatile. We have a “triple threat” of: 1) soaring cost of living; 2) stagnant/declining wages; and, 3) a dearth of affordable housing (particularly at the 25%-35% AMI level).

For 140 years, in this community, Inspirica has answered the call with only minimal support from the city. We still need greater support. Our return on investment and impact is well known. We hope you will agree that Inspirica “punches way above our weight.” The fact is if we don’t do what we do every day, the city would look very different and not be able to operate at anything close to the level it does. No one who “services” the city could live here, and the state’s transportation infrastructure is such that they can’t afford to live elsewhere and commute here.

### **CURRENT PROGRAMS**

Inspirica is unique in its ability to address the needs of our clients holistically and comprehensively through an end-to-end platform of integrated services, all of which leverage each other. We are one of only a few organizations nationally (10-15) that has combined residential and support services under one roof in a one-stop-shop setting. Our ability to address both the physical aspect of homelessness and its underlying root causes exponentially increases our success rate.

In order to achieve organizational goals and objectives, the following is a summary of the programs and services to be supported by the City of Stamford:

#### **Residential Programs**

- ***Family Housing***  
Population: Single mothers/fathers or guardians with children and two-parent Family’s  
Total beds: 105  
Our Family Housing Program has two distinct components: an emergency shelter that provides housing and support services to approximately 17 families (42 individuals) for up to two months; and, a transitional housing facility that provides housing and support services to approximately 25 families (63 individuals) for up to 24 months.
- ***Women’s Housing***  
Population: Single women  
Total beds: 25  
Our Women’s Housing Program provides emergency shelter and support services to 25 single women for up to two months.
- ***Gilead House***  
Population: Single men and women with mental illness.  
Total beds: 16  
Our Gilead Program provides transitional housing for 16 single men and women living with persistent mental illness, including three beds in a Jail Diversion Program.
- ***McKinney House***  
Population: Single men/women living with HIV/AIDS  
Total beds: 15  
Our McKinney Program provides transitional housing (10 units) and permanent supportive housing (5 units) to 15 single adults living with HIV/AIDS.
- ***Permanent Supportive Housing***  
Population: Single men, women, and families.  
Total beds: 108  
Our Permanent Supportive Housing Program consists of four residences (Colony Apartments, Atlantic Park Apartments, Metcalf House, Rose Park, Summer Place) that together provide 86-91 people with permanent supportive housing. Tenants in this program hold their own leases and pay 30% of their income in rent.

- ***Deeply Affordable Housing***

Population: Single men, women, and families.

Total beds: 59

Our Deeply Affordable Housing Program consists of two residences (24 Woodland Place, 26 Woodland Place, Summer Place) that provide deeply affordable housing for seniors and families.

*In addition, With the City's invaluable assistance, Inspirica will soon complete construction of a 53-unit building that will provide deeply affordable housing for extreme low-income individuals and families. Located in the heart of downtown Stamford (just 200 yards from UCONN), the building will consist of 26 studio units, 17 two-bedroom units, and 10 three-bedroom units that will house 125 people, the vast majority of whom live at 30% or below AMI. In keeping with our two-generation approach to ending family homelessness, it will include an Early Childhood Education Center (ECE) with six classrooms that provide 48 infant/toddlers ages 0-3 with critical Early Head Start education.*

### **Non-Residential/Support Programs**

All of our residential programs are enhanced with substantial support services that are essential to addressing the underlying causes of homelessness, allowing people to break the cycle of homelessness and return to healthy, stable lives in the community:

- ***Children's Services***

Our Children's Services Program provides critical foundational support, educational support, psychological/developmental support, and after-school support to the children in our care. This comprehensive approach allows them to maintain stability, gain self-esteem, excel in school, and develop in line with or ahead of their peers who are not homeless. Without this support, most of our children would be unable to break the cycle of homelessness, perpetuating the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

- **Foundational Support:** Children receive foundational support upon entry into shelter. Staff assess each child and enroll them in school, arrange transportation to remain in current schools (if appropriate), ensure immunizations and medical care, provide school and daily-living supplies, arrange summer/weekend outings (including camp), arrange special events/parties, and address other critical needs as they arise.

- **Educational Support:** Our partnership with Childcare Learning Centers (CLC) ensures that our children are enrolled in federally-sponsored early childhood education programs throughout Stamford. We also have a strategic partnership with the Stamford Board of Education and the Stamford Public School system. Educational support is further provided by our Director of Children's Services who participates in school PPT's and obtains IEP's/504 plans for children in need of academic support. This is especially important as these plans "travel" with the children after they leave the shelter.

- **Psychological/Developmental Support:** Our strategic partnership with Child Guidance Center (CGC) ensures access to clinical support to address issues that are often prevalent among homeless children. 100% of our children who are not already assessed are sent to CGC for assessments.

- **After-School Support:** Our Youth Center is an integral part of Children Services Program. Located in our Center for Children and Families, the Youth Center fills an essential void by providing a safe space during critical after-school hours when children are more likely to engage in risky behaviors. The Center serves children 5–12 years old and includes tutoring, homework help, reading time, enrichment activities (art, music, science, cooking, etc.), physical activity/sports, a full meal, outings etc.

In January 2016, we launched a critical fifth component to address the needs of our most vulnerable residents, an Early Childhood and Parenting Program (ECPP). This program provides pre-literacy and early childhood programming to children from birth to five with concurrent training for their parents.

**Results: Last year a full 100% of our children graduated to the next grade level. The average grade for children in our program is B-.**

- ***Jumpstart Career Program***

Our Jumpstart Career Program provides participants with the core skills they need to prepare for, find, maintain and advance in employment. The program has three distinct components: Jumpstart Vocational Training, Jumpstart Education, and Jumpstart Employment Agency. Participants in the Jumpstart Career Program develop critical life and work skills that allow them to secure employment and earn the income they need to exit homelessness and maintain healthy, stable lives in the community. By embedding the program into our residential programs, Inspirica has created a new, replicable model for providing employment services to the homeless. Clients in our residential programs are engaged in the following activities:

- ***Jumpstart Vocational Training*** – provides critical training and certification in two of the fastest growing segments of the labor market: health care and food service. In 2018, we added two new initiatives: a Certified Nurse’s Assistant Training (CNA) and ServSafe (Food Handler) training:
  - ***Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program***  
Building on the success of the HHA program, we expanded our Jumpstart Vocational Training Program to include a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) component. CNA training is more rigorous program that is accredited and recognized by the State of Connecticut and Department of Health. We partnered with Excel Academy, which provides training at its location near our headquarters at 141 Franklin Street. The employment sister entity of Excel, DanielCare LLC, hires our clients upon graduation and matches them with its customers as home health care professionals. DanielCare has a partnership with Stamford Hospital which increases employment opportunities for our graduates.
  - ***ServeSafe Certification***  
One of the fastest growing segments of the labor market is food handling/preparation. In 2018, we partnered with the City of Stamford ServSafe, a food and beverage safety instruction and certification program administered by the National Restaurant Association, to launch this in-demand training program. This program enables participants to obtain a ServSafe Food Handler certificate, required for employment by a growing number of restaurants. The program is particularly important because many restaurants do not have employees with ServSafe credentials. As such, when our clients join their ranks, they bring something others who work there don’t have. This not only brings a higher salary, but also ensures that when restaurants layoffs occur, our clients are typically spared.
- ***Jumpstart Education*** – A 13-week workplace-readiness program designed specifically for the extreme low-income homeless that promotes self-sufficiency and provides clients with the skills they need to: a) find and maintain employment; and b) lead independent and stable lives. The program includes 13 fully-integrated workshops around three core areas:
  - ***Building the Foundation:*** Focuses on teaching clients how to access and utilize critical services and benefits. Workshops include:
    - a) Obtaining Benefits
    - b) Obtaining Housing

- c) Managing Your Healthcare
- d) Money Management (Financial Literacy and Credit Repair)
- *Securing Employment*: Focuses on getting a job. Workshops include:
  - a) Effective Communications
  - b) Motivation to Work
  - c) Building and Writing a Resume
  - d) Job Searching
  - e) Interviewing for the Job
- *Maintaining and Advancing in Employment*: Focuses on helping people maintain employment. Workshops include:
  - a) Workplace Expectations and Succeeding at Work
  - b) Providing Excellent Customer Service
  - c) Conflict Resolution
  - d) Time Management
- *Jumpstart Employment Agency* – A free, in-house employment agency, Jumpstart Employment is a key component of our Jumpstart Career Program. We offer one-on-one counseling, beginning with an assessment of a client’s work history, education and career objectives. Job Developers research, identify and post jobs; develop relationships with local employers; and match clients with appropriate employment opportunities. Clients receive hands-on training writing resumes, job searching, and completing paper/online job applications. We also help hone their skills through mock interviews.

FY15 saw the launch of a new Wage Growth Initiative to help those already employed to advance their earning potential. A Job Developer has been hired to work with clients to increase their wages through a higher-paying new job, an increase in salary in the same job, or through additional hours.

**Results: Over the past 12 months, we made a total of 195 job placements, with an average starting salary of \$12.48 per/hr (24% above minimum wage). In the past 8 ½ years, we have made a record 1,557 job placements.**

- ***Housing Coordination/ Housing Placement***

Inspirica provides comprehensive housing support through our dedicated Housing Coordination Program, which helps clients navigate the difficult and costly housing market and find affordable housing. Clients are assisted through every step of the process to secure permanent housing including: identifying, locating, and inspecting housing; reviewing contracts/leases; and moving into permanent housing. Housing Coordination also includes helping clients who are housed, stay housed, through rigorous stabilization efforts.

**Results: Over the past 12 months, we placed 190 men, women, and children into permanent housing. In the past 8 ½ years, we have made a record 1,388 housing placements.**

- ***Job & Housing Retention Services***

Through our Job and Housing Retention Program, Inspirica’s counselors maintain contact with individuals and families who have recently become employed or moved into permanent housing. Counselors track individuals’ progress at various points after placement – one month, three months, six months, and one year – and help clients solve problems and obtain additional services when needed. Without this support, many would likely lose their jobs or homes, perpetuating the cycle of homelessness. This program is instrumental in achieving record results in job and housing retention.

**Results: As a result of our retention work, our retention rates are as follows**

	<u><b>Remain in Permanent Housing</b></u>
<b>1 month</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>3 months</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>6 months</b>	<b>77%</b>

**Note: “Remain in permanent housing” is a higher bar than “did not re-enter homeless system”.**

- **Healthcare**

Inspirica’s strategic partnership with Optimus Health Care operates The Clinic @ Woodland (a health clinic directly on-site at our Women’s Emergency Shelter) as well as The Clinic @ Summer Place (a health clinic directly on-site at our newest facility which serves seniors age 55+). Through this partnership we ensure that clients have access to behavioral, psychiatric, dental and medical health care. In a unique model, healthcare services provided by Optimus are fully integrated with the support services clients receive from Inspirica, including joint intakes, case conferences, and discharge planning.

- **Additional Support Services**

Our myriad other programs include counseling, case management, substance abuse counseling etc. – all within our residential programs.

- **Warming Center**

At the request of the City of Stamford, Inspirica will again operate the City’s only evening/overnight Warming Center during the winter nights when temperatures have fallen to dangerously low levels and the governor has declared a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol. The Warming Center will operate in the evening when the City’s daytime Warming Center has closed its doors and will provide a meal, access to shower facilities and a cot for each person to sleep on overnight.

- **Capital Improvements**

As mentioned above, we have turned our attention to our next big initiative: a much larger deeply affordable housing project, located at 72 Franklin Street in the heart of downtown Stamford. When completed, the building will house 53 deeply affordable apartments, including 26 studios for individuals, 17 two-bedroom units for families and 10 three-bedroom units for families (approximately 125 people in total). In keeping with our two-generation approach to ending family homelessness, it will include an Early Childhood Education Center (ECE) with six classrooms that provide 48 infant/toddlers ages 0-3 with critical Early Head Start education.