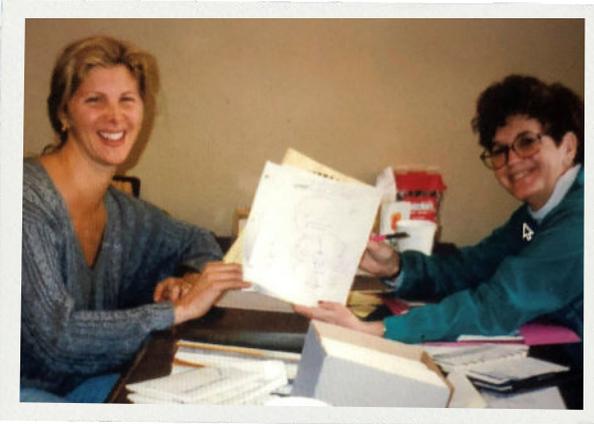


Oasis Started 25 Years Ago With Passionate People Like YOU



Ann Wagner and Christine DeVita Breit, Oasis Founders

Oasis founders Ann Wagner and Chris Breit served in Eva's Village Soup Kitchen through the 1980s and early 1990s. At the time, Eva's clients were mostly men, and children weren't served in the soup kitchen.

"We'd turn away women with their babies," says Chris. "It broke our hearts."

"We wanted to create a place where the needs of women and children would be addressed."

When Ann left Eva's after twelve years as the Kitchen Manager, Chris phoned her: "Let's get started," she said. "Let's build a special place for women with children."

"No," said Ann.

"I'd been at Eva's through the AIDS epidemic. So many clients were dying. I couldn't return to all that."

Three weeks later, Chris called her again. "Are you ready now?" she asked. This time, Ann was ready.

They needed a location for the soup kitchen, and for that, they needed money. They reached out to everyone they knew—to many of you—telling them what was happening in Paterson: Impoverished

mothers with children needed meals and a safe place.

People listened and began to give. Ann's neighbor wrote a check for \$10,000. An anonymous donor donated \$25,000. More funds came in, and then they organized a gala.

That first Annual Oasis Gala of Hope in 1997 raised \$37,000 and funded the opening of a unique organization: Oasis — A Haven for Women and Children.

An army of supporters (many of you), joined Ann and Chris, rented space in the Presbyterian Church on Main Street, in Paterson, and began to serve meals.

The church was across the street from a methadone clinic, and mothers struggling with addiction came in to eat and feed their babies. Committed volunteers cooked and cleaned.



Oasis —
A Haven
for
Women
and Children,
1997

Right from the start, Oasis offered parenting and math classes for women. A volunteer doctor visited weekly. Before long, an after-school program was established.

"People just wanted to help," says Ann. "People wanted to be a part of it. They kept giving."

"From the beginning, Oasis was different. You could always feel the love in that building. And you can still feel the love here today."

Why Oasis?



Merry Kennedy, GED Math Teacher, 10 years

I'm not here just to teach math. It's about helping the whole person. Everything at Oasis is about the individual woman and what she needs. I once had to walk a student to the test center—she was so afraid to test that she couldn't get there alone.

So many of the women I teach don't believe they're capable. They've been told they're stupid, they've lived with abuse, they feel unworthy.

When they achieve the GED, it changes them. It gives them confidence. They think, "if I can do this, I can do more. I can take college classes. I can get a better job." Watching women achieve is why I'm here.

Mindy Schlossberg, Volunteer, 12 years

The fact that Oasis is for women is so important. I believe the mother is the center of the family. Helping women break the cycle of poverty helps their children: The kids see the mom achieve and understand how important it is to get an education.

When a woman asks for help, it's more comfortable for her to be surrounded by other women. She's less intimidated in a learning environment without men and can learn better.

Oasis is truly a happy place—I feel good just being here, and when I leave, I feel gratitude.



Emely Rondon, Student, 12 years

When I was three, my mom sent me to the Dominican Republic to stay with relatives. She worked at McDonald's and couldn't afford to take care of me.

I returned when I was seven, and that's when my mom signed me up for the After-School Academy. I've been coming ever since. I'm in the Teen Program, and I'm an Oasis camp counselor.

My mom used to come here for breakfast and to get clothes. We just couldn't afford things. Oasis helped my mom get a better job. I want to get into a good college, and I know Oasis will help me.

Me and my mom just wouldn't be where we are today without Oasis.



Why YOU?

Jessica Abreu, Oasis Public School 2 Coordinator, 5 years

Oasis is a hub for so many different resources and opportunities. Maybe the most important thing we do is something that's not tangible: We create relationships. And a relationship is a resource.

For instance, yesterday, a mom stopped by, and I asked her what she needed, and she said, "I don't need anything. I just wanted to stop in." She has no one in New Jersey and was looking for someone to connect with.

This woman has a lot of struggles, and she needed a safe space to share. Oasis is a safe place, because people here care, and that's such an important resource.



Dr. Steven Marini, Donor, 8 months

What impresses me most about Oasis is its comprehensive services. A lot of other organizations provide one thing—like food—which is good, but Oasis does more. Oasis provides food with education. Oasis has an all-inclusive approach to the community—you care for the person in totality. Oasis doesn't just feed people. Oasis transforms their lives.

I give because of a Jesuit philosophy—to live a life of serving others. It's all about what you do for other people. If you're fortunate enough to have enough to have extra resources, the only good thing to do is to use them to serve others. That's what I base my whole life on.



Oasis started with passionate and caring
volunteers and donors like YOU...

What's your Oasis story?

We'd love to hear from YOU!

Please contact Laetitia at 973-881-8307 ext. 105 or
laetitiacairolino@oasisnj.org to start a conversation.

Why Oasis? Why Now?

They Need Your Support Today, More Than Ever

"I can't help my son!"

Rosaline, born in Haiti, lives here in Paterson with her youngest son, James.

Although he was born in America, James learned very little English before starting school. He began kindergarten two years ago but left school in March of that school year due to pandemic school closings.

James couldn't understand his teachers when he returned to the classroom as a second-grader. "We speak French and Creole at home," says Rosaline. "James brings home homework, and I can do nothing with it. I can see him failing at school, and I can't help him."

Rosaline speaks English haltingly. "I work all the time, cleaning houses, and I have no time to improve my English."

Can you imagine watching your child fail and being unable to help him? James is failing in second grade through no fault of his own.

Would you help a child like James?

Your gift to Oasis gives children like James intensive after-school academic help and it gives mothers like Rosaline support with hot meals, food bags, English classes, and more. Your gift changes their lives.

The Struggle is Real. Did You Know:



**1 in 4
Black and Latino
children
live in
poverty**



**Low-income teens
are far less likely
to enroll in college
than their
wealthier peers**



**One-half
of homeless women
and children
are victims of
domestic violence**

Yes, I'm part of this: I'm an Oasis supporter who cares about women and children in need. I'll provide an impoverished mother and child with a hot meal, a food bag, and education and support the vital antipoverty programs Oasis provides to women and children.

- \$30
- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1,000
- My best gift _____

Please use the enclosed envelope
or give securely online at
oasisnj.org/fall

Thank you for your generosity.

