



FAITH NETWORK OF THE EAST BAY, INC.

# 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

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## PROJECT URBAN SCHOOL ADOPTION



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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Our nation's educational system is in crisis. One out of three Americans is not graduating from high school – a sobering fact with undeniable social and economic consequences. In the East Bay, 72% of Oakland's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are below proficient in reading, a reliable indicator of whether they will earn a high school diploma.

Since 2001, Faith Network has been proactively responding to this educational crisis through its urban school adoption program. By mobilizing and channeling community support, Faith Network seeks to aid at-risk children in underperforming public schools. Our base of support has swelled to 370 volunteers and 32 community partners. At the conclusion of Fiscal Year Ending June 2007, we were serving 26 East Bay schools in one or more capacities with a combined student population of 6,300.

We are pleased with our steady progress this past year, particularly with the launching of three intervention programs that target specific segments of our vulnerable population.

- The **Excel Reading Clinics** provided one-on-one tutoring to 63 students who were reading below benchmark at 5 schools.
- The **Health4Kids** program distributed food for each weekend to about 700 children who otherwise would be undernourished during the school year.
- The **Science Horizons** program made it possible for 182 fifth-graders the view the world and themselves differently.

This Annual Report describes our accomplishments and challenges. It also highlights two of the many success stories during the year that demonstrate our volunteers' deep impact on the school community.

We are grateful for and accountable to all of our stakeholders, including educators, parents, volunteers, service providers, corporations, foundations, and individual donors. Ultimately, however, we are most accountable to the youth of our community, and pledge to continue serving them to the best of our ability.

Randy Roth, Founder & President



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### ABOUT FAITH NETWORK

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Faith Network of the East Bay, Inc. (Faith Network), a 501(c) (3) non-profit public benefit corporation, was founded in 2001 to help build healthy children and families by rallying community support for urban public schools. ***Our mission is to give hope to disadvantaged children by showing them unconditional love and guiding them into becoming whole persons – physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.*** Our services are non-sectarian and are open to the community at large.

Faith Network was founded by leaders in the faith community in response to the growing crisis of underperforming urban public schools. The academic performance of children in the East Bay had deteriorated to an unacceptably low level that did not befit the children of a prosperous nation. The children's future, the vibrancy of our community, and the stability of our society was at stake.

Six years later the canvas painted by an assortment of statistics continue to depict a dim, ominous landscape of the East Bay urban school environment. On the horizon, the faint sun appears to set over a dark, heavy sky, as the future rapidly vanishes for underprivileged children.

There are some signs of improvement, but generally many of the schools still have a steep hill to climb. What is the status of East Bay children today?

- ▶ Nearly 70% of the children in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) are economically disadvantaged; 1 in 3 students read at grade level; 72% of 3rd graders are less than proficient in reading.
- ▶ A student who is not a “modestly skilled reader” will probably not graduate from high school; studies by the National Institutes of Health conclude that 3<sup>rd</sup> graders who lag behind in reading have only a 12% to 20% chance of ever catching up.
- ▶ Children score poorly in other basic subjects such as math and science; over 80% of 5<sup>th</sup> graders are failing in science.
- ▶ A growing body of literature on “nature deficit disorder” shows that inner-city children do not spend enough time in nature; yet, when they are given a chance to learn outdoors, their test scores can improve significantly – by as much as 27% according to one study.
- ▶ 5 out of 10 freshmen earn a high school diploma on time; 1 in 4 high school graduates attend state colleges or universities.
- ▶ A high school dropout is at least 3 times more likely to be arrested than a high school graduate; 3 out of 4 state prison inmates in the U.S. are dropouts; 4<sup>th</sup> grade illiteracy

rate in California is used to project the number of prison beds needed in the future.

- ▶ About 63% of children in OUSD depend on school-supplied meals; 35% of emergency food recipients from the local food bank are children under the age of 18.
- ▶ 2 out of 5 children are overweight in OUSD; 1 out of 6 have asthma; and 2 out of 3 have tooth decay.
- ▶ Declining school enrollment in OUSD, lack of parent involvement, teacher turnover, and violence also have a bearing on the school setting.
- ▶ Oakland’s Expect Success program has set an ambitious target: “Every school is expected to increase its Academic Performance Index by 165% of its anticipated growth every year.”

Under such astonishing odds, our human inclination is to feel defeated and resign to the inevitable. The price of giving up, however, is much too costly for our society. Rather than accepting defeat, Faith Network has chosen to heed a calling – that of offering hope to the children and schools in need. We approach this calling with humility, perseverance and faith that our efforts, immediately or eventually, will bear fruit.

### WAYS IN WHICH FAITH NETWORK RESPONDS TO EAST BAY CHALLENGES

Some Problems	Some Solutions
Illiteracy	→ Tutors, Excel Reading Clinics
Poor writing skills	→ Writing coaches
Low self-esteem, low scores	→ Classroom assistants, after-school helpers, mentors
Hunger	→ Health4Kids food delivery program
Poor nutrition, obesity	→ Health education through partnerships
Low science test scores	→ Science Horizons
Teacher morale and turnover	→ Teacher appreciation events
Safety	→ Lunch Buddies
Low attendance	→ Attendance Incentives: Bike Program
General school aesthetics	→ Campus beautification
Lack of parental engagement	→ Outreach to parents to engage them in supporting reading clinics; assistance with PTA start-ups
Understaffed or dormant school libraries	→ Library assistants, organizers, readers

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## TARGET POPULATION

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Population	Underperforming urban elementary and middle schools			
Students Served	8,800			
Geographic Location	Alameda County, with primary focus in Oakland One school in Alameda, two in Berkeley One school in West Contra Costa School District			
Age	Children 5 to 14 years of age			
Socio-economic status	Low-income			
Ethnicity	African American	51%	Caucasian	3%
	Hispanic	33%	Filipino	2%
	Asian	9%	Other	2%
Language	21% English language learners			

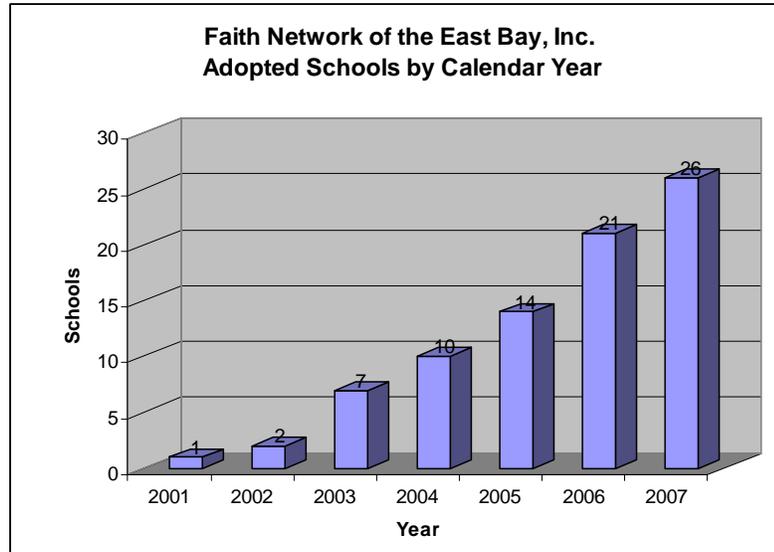
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## ACHIEVEMENTS

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Our Fiscal Year Ending June 2007 was marked by increased capacity – growth in the number of **schools** and student population we serve, an increase in **volunteers**, new **partnerships** forged to serve our client population better, and expanded **services**.

**Schools:** During the FYE June 2007, Faith Network served 26 adopted schools.



**Volunteers:** The number of volunteers also grew during the last fiscal year. Faith Network has three volunteer categories: (1) one-time volunteers who serve 2 to 6 hours on a short term project, such as campus beautification; (2) occasional volunteers who are called to action and work 2 to 5 hours when the need arises, such as with library organization or repair, or teacher appreciation events; and (3) regular volunteers who serve 1 to 4 hours weekly as tutors, classroom assistants, writing coaches, and food bag

preparation. During the last fiscal year, 370 volunteers invested 10,280 hours collectively in support of our mission.

We also expanded our core staff from 2.0 to 3.5 full-time equivalent positions when we launched three targeted intervention programs in Fall 2006 and designated a director for each program.

**Partnerships:** We are proud to have an expanding network of community partners.

### COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Congregations		Community Organizations
All Nations Presbyterian Church	First Presbyterian Church, Oakland	Alameda County Community Food Bank
Bay Area Christian Connection	Havenscourt Church	Bishop O'Dowd High School
Bay Farm Community Church	Hillview Baptist Church	Four Season Concerts
Calvary Temple	Kaleo Christian Fellowship	Mission Springs Conference Center
Community Alliance Church, Richmond	Mills Grove Christian Church	National Charity League
Creekside Community Church	New Hope Covenant Church	Young Life
Dancey Memorial Church of God in Christ	Oakland Worship Center	Patten University
Evangelical Free Church of Oakland	Piedmont Community Church	Today's Youth Matter
Faith Presbyterian Church	Progressive Missionary Baptist Church	Windermere Properties of the East Bay
First Baptist Church, Alameda	Regeneration	
First Covenant Church, Oakland	Sequoiah Community Church	
First Presbyterian Church, Berkeley	Shiloh Christian Fellowship	
	South Bay Community Church	

**Services:** As we expanded our services during FYE June 2007, Faith Network made two organizational adjustments. We realigned our targeted intervention programs from stand-alone operations to fully integrated components of Project Urban School Adoption. We also broadened the vision of our Outdoor Science Education program, now called Science Horizons.

1. **Excel Reading Clinics** offer free, one-on-one, individualized tutoring sessions held during school hours to improve the reading skills of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders recommended to us by school personnel;
2. **Health4Kids** provides nutritious food to many impoverished children who would otherwise go home to empty cupboards on weekends.
3. **Science Horizons** gives disadvantaged 5<sup>th</sup> graders a unique hands-on learning experience of the natural sciences and inspire them to raise their scholastic performance; and

**Excel Reading Clinics:** During FYE June 2007, we operated five Excel Reading Clinics with 49 tutors and 63 students. It is somewhat difficult to measure our success with the Excel program in its first year of operation. The clinics start-ups were staggered throughout the year. Thus, for programs with a late start, the children were not able to benefit from a full year of tutoring. In addition, a few children dropped out for various reasons, such as relocation to a new school or behavioral issues at school. We agreed to help drop-in or fill-in children that were referred to us for short-term tutoring when our

regular students were absent and during transitions. These children were not tested and not included in our final evaluation.

If we pinpoint only those children who were tested at the start of the year and end of the year, then all of these children met our goal of improving their reading skills significantly enough to read at or above grade level at the end of the school year.

#### Student Spotlight: Excel Reading Clinic

The only child of a single mom, Ryan was struggling academically in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. His teacher referred him to Faith Network's Excel Reading Clinic where he was paired with a volunteer tutor. They worked one-on-one through the year, and Ryan made impressive gains. His English-Language Arts score improved 42 points on the California State Standards Test. Ryan's mom has expressed gratitude for the support given to her son. She relayed that Ryan now enjoys going to the library and checking out chapter books – and he loves insects, reptiles and animals of all sorts! We are proud of Ryan's progress and accomplishments.

Faith Network had projected achieving 70% parent participation and support for the reading program by the end of the 2007 school year. Because we focused almost exclusively on base program start-up of the five clinics, there was insufficient time to reach out to the parents. However, we will be placing emphasis on engaging parents in the new fiscal year. We plan to seek parent cooperation with supervising the homework assigned by the tutors two to three times per week. We believe parent involvement will help to accelerate and strengthen the students' reading skills.

When the Clinics were first introduced, the children were not sure what to expect and had reservations about the program. Within a few weeks, however, they felt comfortable with the process, liked their tutors, and looked forward to coming back. In fact, many other children begged to be sent to the clinics. Word spread quickly that the clinics were fun.

Most clinic participants do not read at home and do not find pleasure in attempting to read. That the drop-in and regular tutees discovered that learning to read can be fun and not frustrating or painful is in itself is a great outcome. The experience will be a springboard for them to read independently and make the next discovery – the joy of reading to learn.

**Health4Kids:** During the 2006-07 fiscal year, Faith Network helped feed approximately 700 low-income children. We packaged and delivered an average of 600 bags per week of nourishing, kid-friendly food to children in eight schools. This level is equivalent to 26,600 bags, or 186,000 pounds of food. We began delivering about 400 bags during fall 2006 and doubled our food bag distribution to 800 bags of food per week by spring 2007.

We have a strong partnership with The Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB). ACCFB is our major food supplier and provides us the space for packaging the food bags. Faith Network's existing channels facilitate volunteer recruitment. We rely

upon 20 ad hoc volunteers per week from community organizations who donate 2.5 hours of their time weekly to prepare the food bags. Through grant dollars earmarked for children, ACCFB was able to subsidize the food. We project that ACCFB funds for this project will be significantly reduced in fall 2007, and the challenge will be to find new sources of support to continue the program next year.

**Science Horizons:** Our goal during the fiscal year was to send 500 fifth graders to the science camp. By the end of the year, 182 fifth graders participated in Science Horizons from eight schools. We had set an aggressive goal during our first year of program operation. We misjudged the time-intensive effort that would be required of the program director to get the program off the ground.

The director worked half-time, making initial contacts with the schools, promoting the three-day camp, processing a high volume of forms, permissions, and other paperwork required by the school district, managing parent relations, implementing a pre-camp science curriculum to help prepare the students, handling logistical issues, recruiting chaperones, orienting 68 chaperones and teachers, mentoring the students, and overseeing post-camp science projects.

Although we did not meet the desired student participation level, we were able to ensure a high-quality experience for the students enrolled in the program. The feedback received from the schools, teachers and students was very positive. The campers learned about the ecosystems of the Santa Cruz Mountains and the animal inhabitants. They enjoyed the night hikes and the squid dissection. The students returned to their classroom invigorated and inspired to learn more about the ecosystems. Some students left camp with aspirations to pursue careers in science – a dream that inconceivable prior to the camp.

We observed a slight increase in the aggregate CST science scores in the schools that participated in the program, though we cannot conclude that Science Horizons was the only factor in the results. We anticipate, however, that the camp experience will have long-lasting impact on these students and will result in improved science test scores in the future.

**Other accomplishments** include:

- ▶ Cleaned up the Lockwood Elementary library, unusable after it had been vandalized and coated with toxic dust;
- ▶ Helped implement a bike give-away program to boost attendance at Emerson Elementary which resulted in increasing attendance by three percentage points;
- ▶ Held a number of well-received teacher appreciation events at various adopted schools;
- ▶ Conducted our first survey of school principals to assess our effectiveness and received accolades for our work.

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## AFFIRMATION

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In 2007, a second grade teacher from Lakeview Elementary School shared his reflections about Faith Network. We believe his unsolicited affirmation encapsulates who we are, what we do and what we try to accomplish. It is befitting tribute to our volunteers, shared with his permission.

### Teacher Feedback: Excerpt

Dear Randy,

Since I am serving my fifteenth year as an urban teacher at Lakeview School, I have had time to learn about the needs of our students. Not only do your tutors help the children with reading support, but they also provide greatly needed attention for many students who lack high quality personal, social, and academic interaction. Tutoring supports their development through improved reading, increased cultural awareness, and also through relationships which nurture children emotionally. Students not served directly through tutoring also benefit indirectly by witnessing the action and spirit of volunteerism. As their classmates improve individually, the class becomes stronger as a whole. Although the complete affects of this work are ultimately immeasurable, I do know that your program offers a model for some of the most powerful and influential experiences in elementary education. If we as educators seek to understand the needs of children as unique individuals, then plan to serve these needs, we will make a significant difference in their lives.

Personally, as I have seen the positive influences of this work, your Piedmont Community Church volunteers have been an inspiration for me. Some have gone well beyond our initial agreements, by taking an interest in supporting our class in a variety of ways. Last year, I was surprised and moved by the unexpected additional support. The year ended with a wonderful class party provided by the volunteers. This was an uplifting and festive way to conclude as we looked forward to the new year.

Since the challenges of urban teaching can easily be overwhelming, one must maintain a disciplined focus on what is good. Your volunteers are a regular reminder of all the very best in our community. As our new tutoring year has begun, I must share that I myself am inspired by your program which provides us with exceptional people without preexisting personal ties to our children or faculty. I am not only privileged to experience this pure form of volunteerism, but I am extraordinarily fortunate to have them as a part of our classroom community. Our volunteers represent one important reason why I have chosen to remain at Lakeview. Your volunteers truly live up to the name Faith Network. It is faith that they represent and it is a feeling of faith that I experience when I think of them. Thank you for all you have done and for all you are doing.

Sincerely,  
John Panagos  
Classroom Teacher, Grade 2  
Lakeview Elementary School  
Oakland, California

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## FINANCES

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Our net income for FYE June 2006, (\$27,725) reflects, in part, the increased capacity we experienced during the year and lower-than-expected individual contributions. We had sufficient reserves to cover the net loss. On a positive note, Faith Network has doubled its corporate and foundation grants in the past two fiscal years. Program expenses make up about 75% of total annual operating expenses.

<b>INCOME STATEMENT SUMMARY</b>			
<b>FYE 2007</b>			
		<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Individual and Community Support		\$169,858	62%
Corporate and Foundation Grants		\$98,500	36%
Other		\$5,447	2%
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$273,805</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program Services		\$213,520	71%
General Administration		\$72,845	24%
Fundraising		\$16,475	5%
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$301,530</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>		<b>\$27,725</b>	
Net assets beginning of fiscal year		\$176,562	
Net assets end of fiscal year		\$148,837	

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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It is a privilege to serve the children of our community and the institutions that prepare them for the future. East Bay schools face an overwhelming task in attempting to work through deeply rooted, complex tangles that prevent school-age children from achieving their academic best. They cannot overcome these challenges on their own. Faith Network comes alongside to uplift our school community and raise academic performance.

We are indebted to the many volunteers who have invested their time and talents in support of Faith Network's mission. They boost school staff morale, serve as role models for the children and become part of their extended family. They also provide continuity and stability in an environment that is marked by high turnover among teachers, broken

homes, and lack of parental participation in the education process. Each moment they spend with the children is invaluable.

We are equally honored to collaborate with committed, enthusiastic community partners that contribute to the success of our organization.

We are grateful to the many individuals who supported us financially this past fiscal year and to the following the following foundations and corporate donors that invested in our vision:

<b>Corporate and Foundation Partners</b>	
Clorox Foundation	Project Winsome International
Dealey, Renton & Associates	Taylor Commercial Properties, Inc.
Diablo Investment Company	Union Bank of California
Dreyer's Foundation	United Valley Insurance Services
Five Bridges Foundation	Valero Benicia Refinery
Jon and Elaine Blankmeyer Foundation	Wal-Mart, San Leandro
Lowell Berry Foundation	Wayne & Gladys Valley Foundation
Piedmont Community Church	Y & H Soda Foundation

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Jon Blankmeyer, Chair  
Randy Roth, President  
Wendy Nation, Treasurer  
Frank Jackson, Secretary  
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Gary Yee

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## **STAFF**

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Randy Roth, President  
Chelsea Boniak, Executive Administrator  
Norman Brooks, Director of Science Horizons  
Charlotte Martinez, Director of Health4Kids  
Carolyn Piraino, Director of Excel Reading Clinics