



OPERATION RESPECT  
**CREATING SAFE,  
COMPASSIONATE  
ENVIRONMENTS FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

— 2015 —

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# MESSAGE FROM

## MOLLY McCLOSKEY, PRESIDENT AND CEO

We have made a difference. A recent report by the National Academy of Sciences shows clear evidence that years of work in schools by Operation Respect, our partners, and other like minded organizations has led to a downward trend in bullying incidents among children and youth.

We have made a difference. Our *Don't Laugh at Me* resources have been disseminated hundreds of thousands of times and our work in schools and districts across the world has reached millions of students so that they may learn and live in safer, more respectful, more compassionate environments.

We have made a difference. We have steadfastly provided our materials free of cost so that teachers in districts with limited budgets, those who find themselves just wanting to get started and not knowing how, and those who know the power of music to reach the heart and open it to justice may access and use high quality, social and emotional learning lessons without facing the barrier of high cost.

We have so much more to do. Today our message of love and peace is threatened by the horrors of hate based violence and angry, cruel, degrading public rhetoric intended to inflame.

We have so much more to do. Despite downward trends, 20-30% of children and youth experience bullying on a daily basis and that percentage doubles for those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and increases by one and half for those who have disabilities. Dramatic evidence shows that bullying of Muslims and immigrants is on the rise in the United States and around the world.

We have so much more to do. For the first time, U.S. education law calls for a measure of school quality which reflects the conditions for learning rather than traditional, limited academic measures and states and schools are scrambling for next steps.

We can do this together. Your generosity and support have sustained Operation Respect over time and have made it possible for us to meet the needs of children and educators across the world.

We can do this together. We can sustain each other's energy and commitment by joining in a campaign for civility, a campaign to live love and teach peace. With this report we share with you our work in 2015 to build on our foundation and prepare ourselves for the next fifteen years.

We have made a difference. We have so much more to do. We can do this together.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

### JANUARY

New York City Department of Education training in Respect for All and direct support to schools in Staten Island begin in the new calendar year, creating safe and respectful school climates.



### FEBRUARY

Renowned singer Albert Au translates "Don't Laugh at Me" into Cantonese and Mark Weiss travels to Clark County, Nevada for training with our partners at Welcoming Schools.



### MARCH

Kick-off professional development for our schools in Japan, Peace Week events in Israel, and a special presentation by Peter Yarrow at the ASCD conference in Houston, TX.



### APRIL

Steve Seskin, Operation Respect Board Member and the co-writer of "Don't Laugh at Me" holds assemblies and songwriting workshops for students in six New York and New Jersey schools.



### MAY

Molly McCloskey, an educator and activist, joins Operation Respect as President and Chief Executive Officer, and Peter and Mark return to Japan for a concert at the U.S. Embassy



### JUNE

Peter Yarrow and Mark Weiss travel to Hong Kong for a kick-off concert for Project Respect and professional development for educators in participating schools.



### JULY

Molly McCloskey hosts focus groups on the Operation Respect website at the American School Counselor Association conference and the Operation Respect Board meets in New York.

### AUGUST

Operation Respect joins the Foundation for Respect Ability in Charlotte, North Carolina to offer professional development workshops for educators to kick-off the 2015-2016 school year.

### SEPTEMBER

Molly and Peter head to Marietta College (OH) for professional development workshops with pre-service teachers and current teachers in the city and county and a special concert.

### OCTOBER

Molly and Peter travel to Israel for meetings and school visits and Operation Respect Board Member, Jim Graves, hosts two dynamic fundraising events in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

### NOVEMBER

Professional development continues for 25 schools in Clark County (NV) Public Schools and Operation Respect trainers support NYC schools throughout the month.

### DECEMBER

Long time supporters, Dr. Alex and Josee Berenstein, host a gala fundraising event for Operation Respect featuring Peter Yarrow, David Broza, Bethany Yarrow and Rufus Cappadocia.

# MESSAGE FROM

## PETER YARROW, CO-FOUNDER



This past year, something has changed in the way I have come to view the work of Operation Respect. What was an effort devoted to improving the lives of children and youth can now also be viewed, when united with many other organizations with a similar vision and set of objectives, as one important way to heal a society that desperately needs to curb the spread

of a cultural virus that threatens much of what we value and hold dear.

In our first years, most people viewed Operation Respect as an anti-bullying organization that created caring climates of respect in schools, summer camps, etc.

Now, however, our efforts have an additional, and perhaps far more significant, importance. Many of the most difficult and pervasive challenges of our time, not just to our children and youth, but even more so in the adult world, can only be met by creating a climate of caring and compassion that can counter the scourge of bullying behavior that is metastasizing virtually everywhere: in schools, to be sure, but also in government, in business, amongst our world leaders, and as the default for creating policy, addressing conflict and solving problems.

Bullying has become a much more serious symptom of a sickness “of the society’s heart” than I could have ever imagined when Operation Respect was first conceived. Truly, I had no idea how centrally the building of a bright future for our world would be linked to the need for eradicating bullying and its destructive kin: greed, disrespect, cruelty, bombast, egocentricity, narcissism and hyper-materialism. These are symptoms of a society in pain,

a society that is doing grave injury to itself.

In a way, it’s really simple: If we care about each other, we’ll want those who are sick to get medical care, we’ll care about those who have no food to eat and nowhere to sleep. If we care about each other, we’ll care about those who are living in the pain of the old and new faces of racism in our country. If we care about each other, we’ll embrace those who are different from ourselves, whatever their race, religion, sexual identity may be. If we care about each other, we’ll object to some of us having more wealth than someone can ever use in one hundred lives while millions of others struggle terribly just to survive.

It’s clear that the road to healing what is becoming a greater and greater social and cultural illness can only come about with either the inculcation of goodness, generosity of spirit and love in our adult population – and we know how impossibly difficult a task that is– or, alternatively, by virtue of the education of the next generation, before they are infected with the “sickness”, before they buy into the negative aspects of who many of us have become.

Does all this sound familiar? No wonder. That’s what we’ve been devoted to doing at Operation Respect since our inception. Ironically, and in many ways, and very sadly, Operation Respect and other efforts like ours are now needed more than ever. Am I optimistic? Cautiously, yes. I’ve seen miracles of change in my lifetime and, gratefully, I’ve been allowed to be a part of helping some of them to happen. To me, it’s basically a matter of holding hands, literally and metaphorically, and watching as the little “pools of peace” that so many wonderful people create everywhere do their job and help us turn the next corner. “Onward!”, as we say at Operation Respect.

# WHO WE ARE

## WHO WE ARE

Operation Respect is a non-profit education and advocacy organization dedicated to transforming schools, camps and other youth-serving organizations into safer, more respectful, bully-free environments for children and youth. Founded in 1999 by Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary, and Dr. Charlotte Frank, Senior Advisor at McGraw-Hill Education, Operation Respect disseminates its own classroom based curriculum, the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program, free of charge to thousands of schools in the United States and internationally. Operation Respect's inspiring music, social-emotional learning curricula, multi-cultural videos and highly-regarded professional training provide adults with the tools they need to help children express their feelings constructively, resolve

conflict peacefully, celebrate diversity, and engage with each other in a spirit of caring, compassion and cooperation.

## MISSION

The mission of Operation Respect is to create respectful, safe and compassionate climates of learning, free of bullying, ridicule and violence.

## VISION

Our vision is a world in which children experience equity and justice in their homes, schools, and communities: a world with less violence and more understanding, in which children may develop as productive, compassionate and civically engaged members of society committed to peace.



# MESSAGE FROM

DR. CHARLOTTE FRANK, CO-FOUNDER AND CHAIR



Successful organizations are built on ongoing reflection and a continuous effort to grow, not just in performance, but in real significance overtime. That has long been the hallmark of Operation Respect from our founding in 1999 through thousands of presentations, assemblies, and workshops delivered, hundreds of thousands of curricula disseminated, and millions of children reached.

With our new CEO and President, Molly McCloskey, onboard in May 2015, we began a period of imagining and preparing for our next fifteen years. We stood on the solid foundation of our historic efforts across the world to reduce bullying and bias and increase peace and compassion and looked toward our future both knowing we have made a difference and that there is more work to be done.

We continued our partnerships and long term efforts in Nevada and North Carolina, New York and Israel, and we also built new capacity to provide more comprehensive services for schools and districts by adding restorative practices, peer mediation, and leadership coaching to our social and emotional learning expertise.

We also provided *Don't Laugh at Me* Program resources to thousands of teachers worldwide and began the process of refreshing and reinvigorating

our foundational tool with more arts integration, connections to current curricular efforts and adaptations for children ages 5–18. This updated version lives on our new Operation Respect website, enabling us to reach an infinite number of teachers, counselors, administrators, and all who seek to support children in a safe, respectful, compassionate environment.

As always, I am grateful that you continue to heed our call asking you to join us in spirit and with your generous support. Together we make a difference in the lives of children around the world every day.



# DON'T LAUGH AT ME IMPLEMENTATION

At Operation Respect we believe that all young people deserve, and have the right, to learn in a safe, respectful and caring community. In 2015 our *Don't Laugh at Me* resources were used in 25 schools in Clark County, Nevada, the fifth largest school district in the United States, to prevent bullying and build school cultures committed to caring, compassion and cooperation. Working in partnership with Welcoming Schools of the Human Rights Campaign and Teaching Tolerance, we trained fourteen terrific educators across all grade levels to act as experts within their own schools and mentor a second school in their implementation. Our favorite story may be from Greenspun Junior High School in which students launched a campaign to be #souncool, saying, "If bullies think that they're cool, then we don't want to be bullies. We want to be uncool."

*Don't Laugh at Me* was also used in 2015 in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district in North Carolina to create communities of "upstanders." Through our partners at the Foundation for Respect Ability, we've reached fifteen schools with training for staff members, local support of their efforts, and songwriting workshops for their students.

In Israel, the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program continues to be widely used throughout the country with the support of the Center for Educational Technology and the Israeli Ministry of Education. The program in Israel represents one of our most intensive and comprehensive implementations to date. Recently the Ministry of Education added a requirement to the Life Skills curriculum in Israel for content related to a multi-cultural society and they specifically recommended use of the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, 63% of elementary school counselors in Israel reported using *Don't Laugh at Me*, translated into Hebrew and Arabic, to teach social-emotional skills and address bias and youth violence spurred on by ongoing conflict.

***"Don't Laugh at Me helps you be nicer to people. It makes people think and try to be more caring no matter what our differences are."***



# DON'T LAUGH AT ME IMPLEMENTATION

2015 saw the formal launch of the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program in four schools in Japan, with the support of a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Fifteen educators and staff members of a Japan-based NGO, NPO After School, attended a two-day professional development workshop held at the Nippon Foundation headquarters. During school visits in March and again in May, Operation Respect staff had a chance to sing and share *Don't Laugh at Me* lessons, now translated into Japanese, and heard from a school director who said, "After only three classes positive changes were seen. There were times when teachers burst into tears to see children revealing their feelings so honestly."

In May 2015, we returned to Hong Kong to participate in the launch of the new "Project Respect." Inspired by Operation Respect, and with the ongoing support of the Consulate General and Bureau of Education, Project Respect was created and funded by a multi-year grant from the Lee Hysan Foundation and will be administered and run by the Boys and Girls Clubs Association (BGCA) in Hong Kong. To support this new initiative, Operation Respect provided professional development workshops for BGCA representatives and educators in Hong Kong. Several concerts and events were also arranged with Peter Yarrow and Albert Au, a beloved musician and singer in Hong Kong. Albert translated and recorded the "Don't Laugh at Me" song in Mandarin and Cantonese and is a committed ally of Operation Respect.

The Operation Respect pilot project in Jordan, funded by the U.S. Embassy in Amman, concluded in January 2015 with a culminating workshop at the Amman Center for Peace and Development (ACPD). Workshop participants shared positive feedback on the program and the impact it had on students in their classrooms. On post implementation questionnaires students reported an increase in feelings of good will toward their fellow students; an increase in their love of school; an increase in friendliness and kindness; and a decrease in negative behaviors among their peers.





**“If somebody calls you a name, and this happens everyday, it hurts you inside.”**



# PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

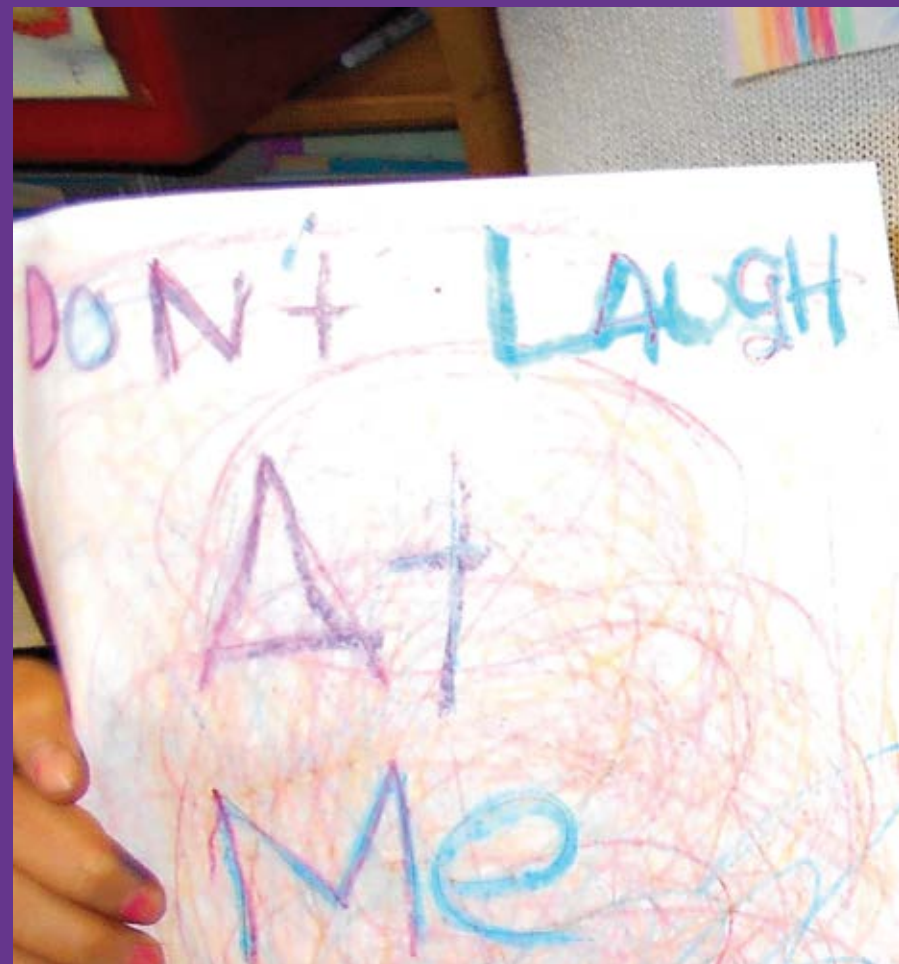
Yes, Operation Respect offers curriculum, music, inspiration and research free of cost to help schools, summer camps, and communities create a safer, more respectful, bully free environment, but sometimes they want and need help to support and strengthen their efforts along the way.

Since 2007 we have trained educators in over 1700 New York City Schools on issues of diversity. In 2015 Operation Respect continued to deliver Respect for All (RFA) workshops, through the NYC DOE's Office of Safety and Youth Development, and in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL); the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN); and the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility.

We also continued to provide direct services to several schools in New York City through a multi-year grant and other individual contracts. These schools face ongoing challenges meeting the needs of their students and Operation Respect consultants provide needed interventions including *Don't Laugh at Me* Program implementation, training in launching a successful advisory program, leadership coaching, peer mediation, Peacemakers Clubs and songwriting workshops and assembly programs.

The Operation Respect Israeli Health and Education (H&E) initiative continued in 2015, in partnership with the Chaim Sheba Medical Center and Center for Educational Technology, and with the endorsement of the Israeli Ministry of Education and the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. This unique project has shown promise to create a school environment in which bullying, ridicule and violence is reduced by combining strategies employed by teachers and other educators with the strategies of health care workers, such as doctors, psychologists, social workers and psychiatrists to both prevent and respond to youth violence.

In Ukraine, Alternative-V, a local NGO with which Operation Respect partnered in 2010 to launch the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program, continues to support educators implementing the program in schools throughout the country. In 2015, over 900 educators, social workers and school psychologists from more than 230 educational and social institutions participated in 40 trainings in 9 regions of Ukraine. The program was initially funded by the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, and continued with a grant from the Swiss Embassy in Kiev.





**“If I was an adult, I would try and make sure all kids grow up happily.”**

# CONNECTING LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Operation Respect staff and consultants travel nationally and internationally to provide presentations, participate on panels, and share their expertise in the creation of safe, respectful and compassionate environments for children and youth. Our 2015 travel included:

**American School Counselors Association  
National Conference**

Phoenix, Arizona

**ASCD Annual Conference**

Houston, Texas

**Asphalt Green NYC**

New York, New York

**Center for Educational Technology**

Tel Aviv, Israel

**Congregation B'nai Jehudah**

Overland Park, Kansas

**Colorado Rotary Club**

Denver, Colorado

**Future Child Advocates of America  
Teachers College, Columbia University**

New York, New York

**Jerusalem School**

Jerusalem, Israel

**Marietta College**

Marietta, Ohio

**Marietta City Schools**

Marietta, Ohio

**New York Rotary Club**

Pawling, New York

**New York City Department of Education**

New York, New York

**New York City Public Schools Climate Managers**

New York, New York

**Peace Boat's 85th Global Voyage**

At sea from Mexico, Belize and Panama

**St. Joan of Arc Church**

Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Ambassador Dan Shapiro and Ms. Julie Fisher**

U.S. Embassy, Tel Aviv, Israel

**Dale Kreisher, Cultural Affairs Officer**

U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, Japan

**University of Hong Kong**

Hong Kong

**Washington County Public Schools**

Marietta, Ohio

**YMCA**

Jerusalem, Israel



**LOCATIONS WHERE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS  
HAVE BEEN PROVIDED SINCE OPERATION RESPECT'S INCEPTION.**



# GRATITUDE

The first theme of our *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum lessons is expressing feelings so we want to express one of ours – gratitude. We all realize that what really matters are the gifts of caring and being cared about, loving and being loved, giving and being given to, by those we hold dear. Our sincere gratitude to every person in every school who on any given day does whatever it takes for each child and young person to feel safe and valued and to those who support them and us. Thank you.



**“If someone was getti**



**ng bullied, I would help them and be an ‘upstander.’”**



# FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Operation Respect depends on the generous support of individuals, corporations, foundations and governments. Many donors have contributed to make it possible for us to survive and thrive and increase our effectiveness. Our thanks go out to each and every one of them. Thousands of classrooms are evolving into safer and more respectful learning environments because of all who help us. We appreciate and value your support, offered in so many ways, more than we can ever express.

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## Above \$30,000

Dr. Avraham and Michal Kadar  
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### **In Kind Goods and Services**

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Rainmaker  
Noel Paul Stookey  
Lisa Walsh  
Peter Yarrow

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 2015

DECEMBER 31,	2015	Summarized Financial Information 2014
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$201,221	\$138,426
Investments	\$4,985	—
Contributions and other receivables	\$57,719	\$99,870
Computer Equipment, net of accumulated depreciation of \$38,230 and \$37,447	\$2,218	\$1,565
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$266,143</b>	<b>\$239,861</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$24,650	\$19,693
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$24,650</b>	<b>\$19,693</b>
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	\$183,251	\$193,668
Temporarily restricted	\$58,242	\$26,500
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$241,493</b>	<b>\$220,168</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$266,143</b>	<b>\$239,861</b>

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2015

Year end December 31,	2015			2014
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total	Summarized Comparative Information Total
<b>REVENUES AND SUPPORT</b>				
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				
Individuals	\$141,183	\$58,242	\$199,425	\$182,201
Foundations and other contributors	\$18,610	—	\$18,610	\$79,660
Contributed goods and services	\$107,290	—	\$107,290	\$144,396
<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$267,083</b>	<b>\$58,242</b>	<b>\$325,325</b>	<b>\$406,257</b>
Educational workshops and performance fees	\$140,944	—	\$140,944	\$237,602
Special Events	\$194,017	—	\$194,017	\$83,971
Investment income	—	—	—	(\$538)
Net assets released from restrictions satisfaction of program restrictions	\$26,500	(\$26,500)	—	—
<b>TOTAL REVENUES AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$628,544</b>	<b>\$31,742</b>	<b>\$660,286</b>	<b>\$727,292</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program services	\$407,170	—	\$ 407,170	\$ 421,770
Management and general	\$138,196	—	\$138,196	\$160,804
Fundraising	\$93,595	—	\$93,595	\$73,809
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$638,961</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$638,961</b>	<b>\$656,383</b>
Change in net assets	(\$10,417)	\$31,742	\$21,325	\$70,909
Net assets at beginning of year	\$193,668	\$26,500	\$220,168	\$149,259
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$183,251</b>	<b>\$58,242</b>	<b>\$241,493</b>	<b>\$220,168</b>

# STAFF/TRAINERS/BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Staff

Molly McCloskey, CEO and President  
Mark Weiss, Education Director  
Elizabeth Kolodny, Program Director  
Maryam Williams, Administrative Assistant

## Trainers

Edwin Figueroa, Consultant  
Javier Francisco Diaz, Consultant  
Marcy May, Executive Director, Effective Alternative in Reconciliation Services

## Presenters

Steve Seskin  
Peter Yarrow

## Board of Directors

Dolores Eyler, Founder, Rye Record and Actor, Performance Plus  
Scott Fine, Investment Banker, Scarsdale Equities  
Charlotte K. Frank, Ph.D., Chair and Co-Founder, Operation Respect  
and Senior Advisor, Research and Development, McGraw-Hill Education  
Jim Graves, CEO and Chairman, Graves Hospitality  
Charlotte Kea, Deputy Director, Office of Private Sector Initiatives, Peace Corps  
Victor Kovner, Partner, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP  
Michael P. Miller, Treasurer, former Chair, Toys 'R' Us Children's Benefit Fund  
Larry Moses, Senior Philanthropic Advisor and President Emeritus, Wexner Foundation  
Steve Seskin, Singer/Songwriter  
Gloria Smith, Philanthropist  
Richard Stoff, President, Ohio Business Roundtable  
Noel Paul Stookey, Peter, Paul and Mary  
Chad Wick, Founder and President Emeritus, KnowledgeWorks Foundation;  
University Ambassador, Texas Woman's University  
Peter Yarrow, Co-Founder, Operation Respect





# PHOTO GALLERY





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Operation Respect is a public charity under sections 501c(3) and 509(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our 2015 Form 990 is available upon request.



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