

Our **MISSION** is to empower, encourage, and equip low-income single parents to obtain a college degree, develop essential life skills, and ultimately become self-sufficient. We do this by providing our single parent students with:

1. Financial Assistance for housing and childcare
2. A facilitator to connect our students to community resources
3. Financial Literacy and a game plan for financial independence
4. Counseling resources and success coaching

Our **VISION** is to see our single parents and their families break the cycle of poverty and become hopeful and self-sufficient, and increase their contribution to society.

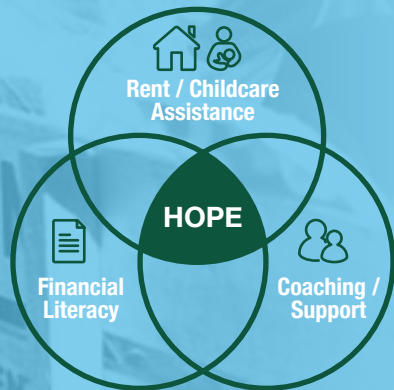
Our **VALUES:** We believe in education; we believe in family; we believe in giving to those in need; and we believe in overcoming obstacles and statistics.

We feel we have a strong **IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY** because we provide education and financial opportunity for low-income families, headed by single parents, which affects poverty levels in our community and increases the quality of life for low income families and children within the community.



**KEY ELEMENTS OF THE H.O.P.E, INC.
HELP FOR LOW-INCOME SINGLE
PARENTS (H-LISP) PROGRAM:**

- RENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- SOCIAL SERVICES
- LIFE SKILLS TRAINING
- EMOTIONAL SUPPORT



Helping Other People be Empowered



Helping Other People be Empowered



MORE WITH LESS

The last two years have been filled with obstacles, but the greatest ones were faced in 2016. In May, the loss of Deon Lewis, Sr., our Co-Founder and our President and Founder's husband, was hard for us all. Our founder's strength, even with a broken heart, helped us pull through a rough time.

After Deon's passing, it seemed as if we were losing a lot. One of our biggest grants was delayed and it was time to recruit new seats on our Board as key members rolled off. Yet, in the true spirit of HOPE, you made it possible for us to do more with less.

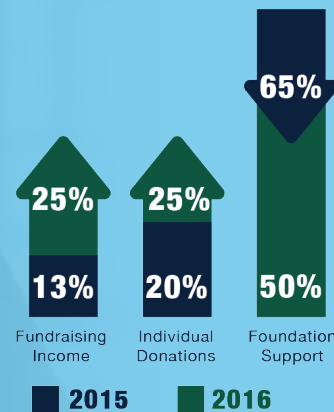
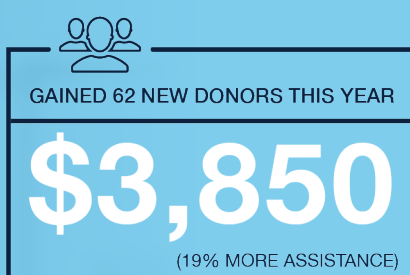
Between your increase in monthly donations and showing up to our Top Golf Tournament and our Deon Lewis Memorial HOPE Run in your Neon Deon shirts, you have allowed us to **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SINGLE PARENTS WE ASSISTED BY 62%!**

You increased our **FUNDRAISING INCOME FROM 13% IN 2015 TO 25% IN 2016** and our **INDIVIDUAL DONOR GIVING INCREASED FROM 20% IN 2015 TO 25% IN 2016.** Although **FOUNDATION SUPPORT DECREASED 65% IN 2015 TO 50% IN 2016,** we do not look upon this negatively because it shows that we are becoming more dependent upon our donor base, which is more sustainable.

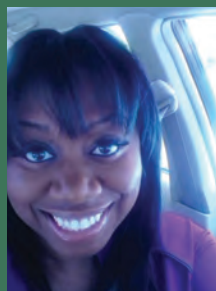
YET THE MOST AMAZING NEWS IS THAT SINCE 2011 YOU HAVE ASSISTED 36 SINGLE PARENTS and have seen **21 SINGLE PARENTS GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE WITH ASSOCIATE'S OR BACHELOR'S DEGREES!** How awesome is that?!? No one can ever take that away from you.

“ NOT ONLY HAVE YOU CHANGED THE OUTCOME OF **36 FAMILIES,** BUT YOU HAVE **INSPIRED 72 CHILDREN!** YOU ARE CHANGING GENERATIONS! ”

We realize the difference our supporters make in the lives of so many, which is why we decided to honor you this year at our 3rd annual Holiday Dinner with some pretty awesome awards. The greatest of these was the Deon Lewis Legacy Award, given to those who have been a bright light in our community. This award went to Mrs. Beauty Baldwin for her awesome support of education and so many great causes in Gwinnett County. However, you didn't stop there! Our great partners at **PERIMETER CHURCH** helped us give away **31 BOOK BAGS** to students in elementary, middle school and high school.



JEREMEE'S STORY



My experience with HOPE has been the difference between living and surviving. My story is the journey that I am living, even as someone is reading these words. I am a woman, now a mother and responsible for another human being, and I was (and sometimes still am terrified that I can't do all that needs to be done.

Before I had my daughter in 2011 I worked as a dance instructor and customer service rep. I have always been able to work multiple jobs to advance myself. When I found out I was pregnant I was overjoyed and made so many incredible plans for the future of myself and my baby girl, who I knew I would name Israel from the time I felt her flutter in my stomach my first trimester. I was prepared. Or so I thought. What I had not planned for was the catastrophic series of events that caused me to face parenting as a single

mother with very slim resources.

I determined that I would go back to work doing several jobs and make things work for my baby and me. That is until I noticed that my sweet baby girl was not hitting her milestones when my/her doctors said she should have. That first year was extremely hard because no one could tell me why my baby was not walking and talking. The endless waiting lists and appointments made it VERY hard for me to work my jobs, maintain a place to live, buy insurance, and pay for special needs daycare.

My decision to go back to school was one that I prayed and planned for with strong determination. I had hoped that my daughter would have what she needed, and that I would rise to the challenge and get all the knowledge I didn't have before I was aware of the severe developmental delay. This challenge was something I had no experience with, and no one around me had any experience or resources to offer me when I reached a dead end on what to do next.

“ THESE ARE DETAILS THAT PEOPLE GO THROUGH EVERY DAY BUT IT TAKES AN ORGANIZATION LIKE HOPE AND PEOPLE LIKE KENITA PIERCE LEWIS TO REACH OUT AND HELP A PERSON WHO FEELS ALL BUT FORGOTTEN. ”

So again, I tell you what HOPE is to me. HOPE is the difference between being able to take my daughter to 6 therapies a week - instead of the 1 she was able to get when I was working three jobs. HOPE is the difference between my daughter going to quality daycare, with staff trained to care for special needs children, and her attending a daycare I didn't like and couldn't afford. They left her in a high chair all day because they didn't know what to do with her! HOPE is/was the difference between having the time to actually STUDY my school work and retaining the information - instead of sliding by on what I can cram right before a test. Some days I am so TIRED all I feel I can do is bathe and feed my sweet Israel and me, and then catch few hours of sleep. The organization recognized that I was really trying and that I needed a confident support team for my household.

With the help, I receive from HOPE I can live close to my baby's therapy, work part time, and go to school. Now I have time to teach my child, hold her and play with her and sing to her when I get home. We are not *just* surviving on whatever - I do not have to choose between food that isn't good for her - or *nothing*. That is important to me because she is only a baby just this once, and I need to get it right! I can provide healthy stuff that I *cook!* I hope anyone reading this can see the difference. Just because I was at a low financial point in my life, doesn't mean that I don't understand that there is a better and best way! I love my daughter and I want to succeed.

HOPE even provided a counselor for me to discuss the things that I really thought no one cared about! It empowers me to live, heal, thrive, and share - where before I felt shame, guilt, and only the option of surviving. HOPE has unequivocally been the love of God expressed to me in physical form. Before I got my approval letter I was going to have to take my daughter out of her awesome therapy, because I couldn't afford to live in the neighborhood and pay for daycare so that I could work. I would probably have had to drop out of school to work another job just to afford the basics. Just like that - I met with Kenita Pierce Lewis and she gave me the great news, after being on the waiting list. I parked on the side of the rode and cried because I didn't know how stressed I was until the guilt of not being able to provide properly for my daughter was released. These are details that people go through every day, but it takes an organization like HOPE - and people like Kenita Pierce Lewis - to reach out and help a person who feels all but forgotten.

My story could be ANY woman or man's story, but it IS mine. I have hopes and dreams and plans and wishes. With this program, I am able to use my gifts, continue to journey towards what God has planned for me, and help the people that come after me.

MORE WITH LESS

(continued)



And because of you, our corporate partner, Market Source, honored our organization for a job well done in the community!

You help us provide a solution to a systemic problem, realizing that there is a direct correlation between income levels and education. H.O.P.E., Inc. remains the only program with a holistic approach addressing the emotional, financial, and educational needs of single parent families struggling to obtain a college degree to better themselves and their children.

We desire to see our single parents and their families break out of poverty and contribute to society in an even greater capacity than they already do.

YOU'RE AWESOME!

We want to personally thank every monthly donor, sporadic donor, corporate partner, foundation partner, community partner, strategic partner, volunteer, and program service provider for supporting our mission at H.O.P.E., Inc. Since our inception, our program has grown beyond what we could have imagined and we truly appreciate you for continuing to support our cause.

When you sow into our mission you are supporting a vision that will grow and develop beyond Georgia. We hope that you will continue to enjoy the ride!



Future goals of the organization include the expansion of the scope of service based on evidence of need among program participants. Expansion of services would be undertaken as determined by availability of funding.

An additional goal includes the establishment of an apartment housing program:

Income-based Apartment Housing Program - As the H.O.P.E., Inc. organization grows in awareness, capacity and funding, the organization would like to provide an Apartment Housing Program as an alternative to the voucher program. This program would involve the purchase of an apartment building and making rental units available to program participants while they complete their education. Single parents enrolled in the program would be required to pay 30% of their annual income to H.O.P.E., Inc. for their monthly rent. Participants would only be able to occupy the space for 2-4 years depending on their timeline for academic completion.

This program would have a number of benefits. In addition to providing participants access to safe, affordable housing, it will foster an environment that further supports and empowers participants because all tenants would share a similar belief in education and be on a similar journey. Further, this program could create cash flow for the organization and improve its sustainability.