

Summer Issue Focus: The Oasis GED Program

From Kitchen to Pharmacy Women Rise with Your Support



Your gifts have helped Mary move into a career and a home of her choice. Thank you.

"When I was 13 going on 14, my father died. I lost myself. I dropped out of school. I couldn't handle my father being dead." As a child, Mary was shattered by her father's death. The trauma she suffered altered her life.

Mary's story is not uncommon. Nearly every adult who has dropped out of school has a back story that includes childhood trauma: family disruption, the sudden death of a loved one, overwhelming trouble. Your gifts offer women like Mary a chance to recover the education they lost as wounded children.

Mary had a daughter at the age of 17. She worked low-wage jobs, always trying to return for her GED. "I worked, and then whenever I got laid off, I'd return to classes. But as soon as I found the next job, I'd let go of the coursework. I tried, but I could never get that GED."

Most GED programs offer little or no personal support. As soon as I found the Oasis GED program, I realized I'd never been in a program like this. Oasis has actual teachers,

standing up, teaching you, helping you. Teachers who care. And that's what made the difference. I was on my way to the GED."

As I was taking classes, my daughter was diagnosed with cancer. Then my mom died, and we were forced out of the house. I was desperate. Eventually, I found a basement apartment. We moved. And then my daughter died."

"I continued with the Oasis GED classes, but I was spiraling down."

In the time of her crisis, Oasis offered Mary a job as a kitchen aide. "Having the job helped me so much," she says. And she helped Oasis: She was a fantastic worker, reliable and kind.

But now, Mary and her son needed to leave their basement dwelling. It was unsafe. "I thought we were going to end up in a shelter. Then Oasis helped us find a place to live."

Mary completed her GED, and this June, she left Oasis to become a pharmacy technician. She now has a job of her choice and lives in a place of her choice.

"People at Oasis don't give up on you.

I've never before been in a place where they help people so much. It really heals my heart."

Your support is a lifeline to women who were unable to complete their formal education. You give women like Mary a second chance. Thank you.

A Message from Executive Director Jennifer Brady

Dear Friend,

This Summer Newsletter is focused on inspiring women working to earn a GED and make life better for themselves and their children. I'm delighted to share it with you!

You're just as inspiring—giving the support that makes this program happen.

I know you agree with me: Education is a precious thing. The women described here lost the opportunity for education as teenagers. Your support of the Oasis GED program gives them a chance to get the education they lost and helps them pull their children out of poverty.

We'll launch a vocational counseling program in the coming school year with your support. The program will allow Oasis students to move beyond the GED and into careers by providing the individualized support of a vocational counselor.

This, and all Oasis programs, is possible only because of you.

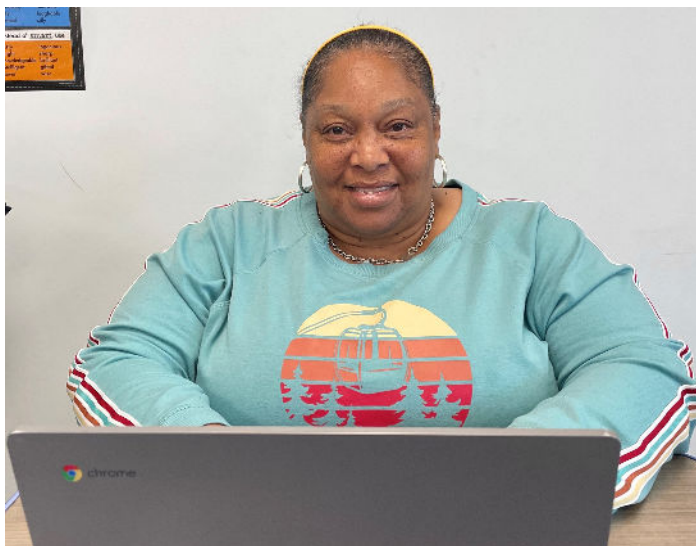
Thank you for your gifts.

In gratitude,



Jennifer Brady
Executive Director

The Doors Were Closed You Opened Them



Your donations provide Oasis student, Sunday, with GED courses and test prep at Oasis so she can move up into a healthcare job.

Sunday left high school in her sophomore year when she gave birth to her daughter. She joined the Oasis GED program this past September, quickly passed two GED exams and is now ready to take the third. Her Oasis teacher, Miss Judith, knows she'll pass.

"For most people," says Sunday, "the GED is the starting point. But I didn't start there. Without a GED, jobs are limited. I've worked in maintenance and restaurants, but now I want more for myself."

Sunday is determined to complete the program. "Just being here at Oasis, working towards the GED, motivates me. It makes you feel better to have that GED. It pushes you to do other things."

Education changes people—which is why your support is so crucial. Just being present in Oasis classrooms is propelling Sunday to achieve more. She's already registered for a phlebotomy certification course, with plans to complete it once she's finished all her GED exams.

"Everything starts with the GED. You need a GED if you want something better for yourself. Any certifications, more money—everything requires the GED."

When asked how she feels about Oasis, Sunday says, "Oasis is opening doors for me. Doors that were closed."

The loss of an education should never be a life sentence. Thank you for giving women like Sunday a second chance.

10 Oasis Students Earn GEDS

Your Support = Better Futures

Ten hard-working Oasis students completed the GED this school year. You've changed the lives of their families radically and forever.

Before they came to Oasis lacking a diploma, these women were stuck in maintenance, fast food, or factory jobs without security or benefits. They had little hope that things would improve.

Most left high school as sophomores or juniors. Most left when crisis struck: early pregnancy, homelessness, tragedy. Leaving high school ended their childhoods and worsened their struggles.

As adults, they found Oasis. Each one came to class day after day while working night shifts or multiple low-wage jobs. They took the five required state exams (in math, science, social studies, writing, and reading). If or when they failed a test, they returned to class, studied more, and tried again until they earned their GEDs.

It's not easy to complete the GED coursework, which includes Algebra and Chemistry. Their perseverance is inspiring. Their achievements simply would not have been possible without your support.

With a GED in hand, their lives are forever changed. They can now pursue higher-paying jobs with the potential for advancement. They can step forward into college, vocational schools, or trade programs. Workers with a GED earn significantly more than those with no high school diploma.

You've also helped 14 other continuing Oasis GED students pass some of the state tests, with plans to complete the program in the coming year. More than 55 students participated in Oasis GED daytime, evening, and Saturday classes over the 2022-2023 school year.

Your generous donations allow these women to move past dead-end jobs into meaningful and sustaining work. Your gifts change the entire family, as these women move into a better jobs and increase family income.



Oasis GED graduate Emoni



Oasis GED graduate Monica



Oasis GED graduate Tahrin



Some recent Oasis GED graduates and some current students.

Will You Help a Women Overcome the Obstacles to Success?

Here's just some of what prevents a woman from earning her GED and lifting her children out of poverty:

- No money for GED courses or tests
- No money for a babysitter while she's in class.
- Can't get to class at night, with kids at home.
- Can't get to class in the daytime with a job at night.
- Has no idea of what steps to take or how to move through a GED program.

Here's what YOU can do to help a woman earn her GED and lift her children out of poverty:

- Give her free GED classes and testing, so she completes the program.
- Give her free childcare while she's in class.
- Offer her daytime classes, Mondays through Fridays.
- Offer her night-time classes online.
- Provide her with the support of a social worker, who will guide her through the GED process.

Your gifts will change the life of a family.



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YES, I'll help a low-income woman earn her GED so she can raise her family out of poverty and support all Oasis antipoverty programs.

- \$37.50** covers the cost of books and testing fees for **1 student for 1 semester.**
- \$75** covers the cost of books and testing fees for **1 student for 1 full year.**
- \$150** covers the cost of books and testing fees for **2 students for 1 full year.**
- \$375** covers the cost of books and testing fees for **5 students for 1 full year.**
- \$750** covers the cost of books and testing fees for **10 students for 1 full year.**
- My best gift _____ .

To give, please use the enclosed envelope or give online at oasisnj.org/summer. Thank you.