



YOU are Changing the Future Teaching Kids to Read



Teachers provide individualized instruction in the Oasis Saturday Reading Intervention program you support.

It was a Saturday morning at Oasis. The teacher watched Michael struggle with the pieces of a word puzzle. A second-grader, Michael hadn't yet learned the alphabet. He didn't know his letters.

The pandemic has decimated children's literacy skills across the nation, and Paterson's children have been hard hit. Paterson schools shut down in March 2020. Children here learned remotely, isolated at home and often without support, for more than a year.

When they returned to school in September 2021, the learning loss was irrefutable. Nearly every child in Oasis after-school programs scored a year or more below grade level in September 2021.

"The second graders left school while they were still in kindergarten. Now they're in second grade, and many are still at kindergarten reading level," says Dr. JoAnn Cardillo, Oasis Youth Education Director.

"It breaks my heart," she says. "Children need to learn to read by the end of third grade. We have a small window of time to help these kids."

Studies show that a low-income third grader who can't read well will probably always be poor. With your support, Oasis is helping these kids learn to read.

In February, Oasis launched a Saturday Intensive Reading Intervention program for children kindergarten through third-grade to help kids like Michael.

An Oasis reading specialist and highly skilled tutors provide the children intensive remedial help in 90-minute Saturday sessions. Oasis staff works with the parents to help them understand the basics of literacy and what their children need.

"We're using a different approach on Saturdays to reach these kids," says Cardillo. "The children have fun learning."

Kids who can't read by fourth grade are at high risk of dropping out of high school. They're condemned to a life of poverty.

Your support changes a child's future. Thank you.



Your gifts help reverse pandemic learning loss.

A Message from Executive Director Jennifer Brady

Dear Friend,

Spring is here and it's going to be action-packed at Oasis!

Your gifts help women and children every day.

The **Saturday Intensive Reading Intervention** program isn't the only new thing happening at Oasis.

We are launching the **Thrift Store Internship**, which provides unemployed women with retail training.

We've begun **The Mommy Series**, a maternal health program for expectant mothers.

And, we've set the dates for the year's events!

We'll start with a **ribbon-cutting ceremony** on May 4. **The Golf Outing** is set for June 9, the **Sporting Clays Classic** for September 29, and **Oktoberfest** for Friday, October 14.

These events raise a huge portion of the funds that support Oasis programs. I hope to see you at one this year!

In gratitude,



Jennifer Brady
Executive Director



Sisters pose for the camera on the Oasis rooftop garden. By supporting families, you help improve children's academic outcomes.

Maya Attends School Now Because You Support Her

Paterson first-grader Maya was absent from school for 50 days from September through December 2021. "She only came to school one or two days a week," says Jessica Abreu, Oasis Community School Coordinator.

The classroom teacher tried to call Maya's mom many times to no avail, and the school administration couldn't make contact either.

"I spotted the mom in the school parking lot and asked her to meet with me," says Abreu. "Mom is very young, and I'm pretty sure they're homeless. Right away, I told her we'd open up a space in our after-school program for Maya. And I helped the mom register Maya for the Oasis Saturday reading program."

"Maya's mom came to meet with me several times."

Since Maya enrolled in Oasis programs in January, she's only

missed three school days. Says Ms. Abreu, "She's going to school now, and now she always comes to the Oasis after-school and Saturday programs too."

Chronic absenteeism is high among children who live in unstable housing—kids who are temporarily sleeping on a relative's couch or in a shelter. The chaos of frequent moving makes it hard to get to school.

And chronic absenteeism feeds the cycle of poverty: Children who don't go to school often fail to learn to read, with devastating consequences.

"I'm not sure what shifted," says Abreu. "Maybe Maya's mom felt my concern for her. Or maybe Oasis programs gave Maya a feeling of connection."

"What counts now is that Maya is coming to school."

Thank you for making this happen.

Your Gifts Improve Nation's Cybersecurity

Oscar was born in Paterson to immigrant parents. His mother brought him to Oasis when he was eight years old. "My mom discovered Oasis when she had some bad personal struggles and Oasis helped her. There are no words for how grateful I am for what Oasis has done for my mother."

As a child, Oscar participated in Oasis summer camp. He was a member of the Oasis Robotics Team and dreamed of studying cybersecurity in college.

Oscar's parents didn't attend college, and his high school didn't provide the help he needed to apply. At Oasis he met Maria Herrera, Oasis Guidance Consultant. "Miss Maria helped me fill out the FAFSA and HESAA applications (for federal and state financial aid). She explained to me how college works and what happens there."

The complex process of applying to college excludes many immigrant children from higher education, especially those from low-income communities. Immigrant parents (no matter how loving) often can't help their children write essays, attend interviews, tour colleges. Low-income high schools can't provide children with the guidance they need to overcome these barriers.



18-year old Oscar excelled in high school as a varsity swimmer, lacrosse player, and a Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer. With your help, he's headed for college.

Oscar was committed to achieving a college degree. With Oasis' help, he submitted over five applications and was awarded scholarship funds to attend Ramapo College. Even with tuition funded, Oscar still had unmet financial needs—he had no way to cover the cost of living, books, and other necessities while in school. A generous Oasis donor has committed to helping Oscar financially to ensure he graduates.

"I'd like to work for the FBI or CIA, to create software," says Oscar.

Thank you for giving this young man a chance to succeed. We know he'll make a significant contribution to this nation. His talents won't be wasted.

Sporting Clays Classic
**Hudson Farm Club
Andover, NJ**

9.29.22



Save the Date

Save the Date *Robert L. Pash
Memorial Golf
Classic*

6.9.22

oasisnj.org/golf

**Upper Montclair
Country Club
Clifton, NJ**



Working Families Face Setback This Spring

Will You Give Hope in the Season of Hope?

Claudia graduated from the Oasis GED program a year before the pandemic struck. With her high school diploma in hand and her three children old enough for school, she found a full-time retail job. The family gained stability. Claudia dreamed of attending community college.

Then the pandemic hit. Claudia lost her job, and schools shut down. Claudia had to stay home with the children (one of whom has autism). Her husband held on to his construction work, but the family struggled.

Claudia remained at home through the fall due to frequent COVID-related school closures (meaning she had to stay home with her children). Even as she searches for work this spring, things aren't improving. The price hikes on essentials—food, energy, rent—squeeze the budget. And pandemic-related government relief programs are gone.

Low-income families spend nearly all their earnings on necessities. They have no room in their budgets for rising prices: Today's soaring inflation throws low-wage families off track even more than higher income families.

For families like Claudia's, the waning of the pandemic brings a new kind of crisis.

Your gifts of food, hot meals, and support greatly ease the burden of those who, having battled the pandemic, now face a different crisis.



The need is great. Your contribution ensures that a woman receives a hot meal at lunchtime, which makes a great difference in her life.



Women in need can take home up to three hot meals from the Oasis dining room. Your gifts mean a family eats, despite rising food costs.

Yes, I'd like to give a woman and her child a hot meal in this season of hope. And I will support all the vital antipoverty programs Oasis provides to women and children in need.

- \$33 can help provide 60 hot meals.
- \$66 can help provide 120 hot meals.
- \$132 can help provide 240 hot meals.
- \$264 can help provide 480 hot meals.
- \$528 can help provide 960 hot meals.
- \$1,056 can help provide 1,920 hot meals.
- My best gift _____.



Please use the enclosed envelope or give securely online at oasisnj.org/spring. Thank you for your generosity.