

# WorkExpress,

a program of Father Bill's & MainSpring



**WorkExpress** is a social enterprise that provides commercial maintenance and cleaning services to customers in southeastern Massachusetts. Operating within Father Bill's & MainSpring (FBMS), a nonprofit organization providing shelter, housing, and services to meet the needs of the homeless, the purpose of WorkExpress is to help homeless men and women achieve self-sufficiency through regular employment and stable housing. Through WorkExpress, FBMS provides participants with a stable living environment, supportive case management, positive work experience, and assistance in finding employment and permanent housing. WorkExpress enrolls FBMS shelter guests who are not ready for job and housing placement due to various obstacles, but who demonstrate a commitment and physical ability to overcome their barriers to self-sufficiency. Men and women, most in the early stages of sobriety, work in landscaping, commercial cleaning, apartment rehab, painting, and graffiti removal. Founded as a social service program, WorkExpress was restructured as a social enterprise in 2009. Since then, earned income has grown to cover 76 percent of the budget from 48 percent. In the same period, graduation rates doubled, and today 80 percent of graduates find employment and 100 percent find permanent housing. WorkExpress seeks to ensure that men and women experiencing homelessness have opportunities to develop life skills, job skills, and the support necessary to obtain housing, employment, and the sense of self-worth necessary to live independently.

**Founded 1996**

**\$452,000**  
Current Program Budget

### Contact

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## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

WorkExpress aims to raise \$570,000 over the next two years to achieve its goals, including growing by 40 percent to serve 50 homeless men and women annually, expanding its reach to serve more southeastern Massachusetts communities, and hiring the staff necessary for sustainable growth.

## THE NEED

In the midst of America's slow economic recovery, homeless adults have faced tougher barriers to employment and diminished resources for support.

- Between 2008 and 2009 Massachusetts **unemployment nearly doubled** from 4.5 percent to 8.7 percent, costing 150,000 jobs.
- FBMS has seen an **increase of 54 percent** in utilization at its emergency shelters from 2008 to early 2012, while Massachusetts investment in homeless services has **fallen 10 percent** since the pre-recession peak.
- There are more than **6,300 men and women** in Massachusetts that sleep at a shelter or in the streets every night.
- FBMS serves **200 homeless** guests nightly and **1,955 annually** at its emergency shelters. Only 25 percent of these guests could feasibly re-enter the workforce using traditional employment services.
- Nearly **400 more** members of the current FBMS shelter population could be helped to self-sufficiency with effective wraparound services and transitional employment as offered by WorkExpress.

## THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

WorkExpress targets a hard-to-employ segment of the shelter population that might otherwise fall into long-term homelessness and provides these adults with a chance to become work ready and independent.

- WorkExpress has a 71 percent graduation (program completion) rate.
- 80 percent of participants completing WorkExpress achieve employment and 100 percent obtain permanent housing.
- The wraparound services plus work-experience approach of WorkExpress produced a 18 percent higher job placement rate than traditional job placement services at FBMS for candidates that were work-ready upon entering the shelter.
- WorkExpress pays for 76 percent of enterprise costs through earned income. The WorkExpress social enterprise model will match every philanthropic investment four times with earned income.
- WorkExpress is the only program that provides housing, intensive services, and work experience for homeless individuals in southeastern Massachusetts.

## TWO-YEAR GOALS

### Increase the number of homeless people employed by:

- Increasing capacity by 40 percent to serve 50 men and women annually
- Launching a 10-member crew to cover Quincy and the surrounding area
- Expanding to new communities in southeastern Massachusetts

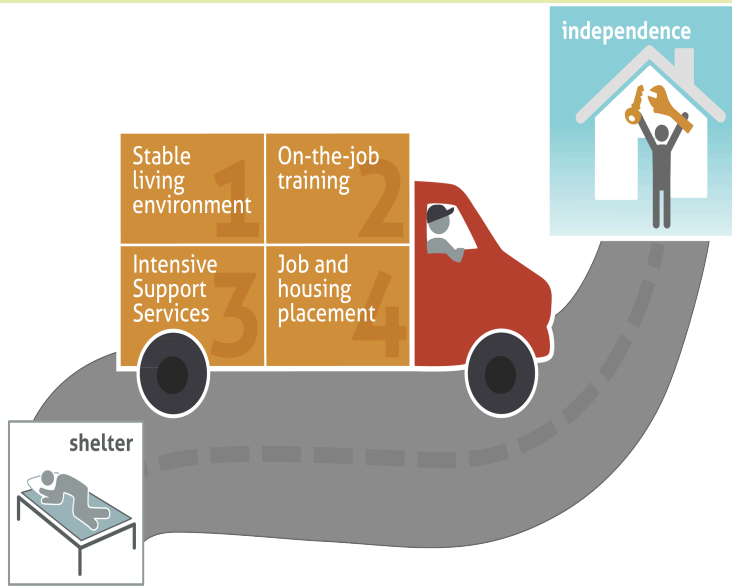
### Increase financial self-sufficiency by:

- Covering 80 percent of enterprise costs through earned income
- Securing six new customers that yield annual contracts of \$25,000 each to continue a shift to fewer, larger contracts

## WAYS TO INVEST

- Financial**
  - \$25,000 – Provides a portion of salary for a case manager
  - \$25,000 – Pays for a crew-cab pickup truck used to transport material and crew to jobs
  - \$5,000 – Covers comprehensive support service or wages for one new WorkExpress participant
  - \$1,000 – Buys a floor buffer, lawn mower, and other vital tools
- In-Kind**
  - Customer leads
  - Work supplies and equipment
  - Residential space

**SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ACTION:  
THE WORKEXPRESS MODEL**



**WorkExpress Participants:**

WorkExpress serves men and women, 18 and over, that face significant barriers to employment due to challenges that may include a history of substance abuse, mental illness, or significant gaps in employment. In spite of the barriers to their success, WorkExpress participants show that they are able and committed to take the steps necessary to address their challenges and exit homelessness.

Candidates are selected from the guests of FBMS emergency shelters by FBMS case managers. About a quarter of shelter guests are ready to take advantage of job-placement services upon entering the shelter. Another 25 percent of guests are not ready for employment services but are considered potential WorkExpress candidates because their barriers to employment are surmountable challenges, such as a lack of sobriety, experience, or soft skills rather than significant mental or physical disabilities. WorkExpress targets this segment of the shelter population that might otherwise fall into long term homelessness and provides these adults with a chance to transition toward becoming work ready and independent. Eligibility is determined by a candidate's commitment to sobriety, willingness to establish a consistent work ethic, commitment to working with a case manager to address the issues that caused his or her homelessness, and ability to complete work assigned to him or her. WorkExpress provides a unique combination of services and growth opportunities that guides participants to success.

**Stable Living Environment:**

WorkExpress participants live together in dormitory-style shelter provided by FBMS. Participants gain privacy and receive distinct privileges from those in the general shelter population. This helps build a cohesive participant team that benefits from group dynamics of shared responsibility and the opportunity to enhance conflict resolution skills.

The stable living environment is a critical foundation to the transformation process for WorkExpress participants. Not having to worry about where to sleep night to night gives participants a chance to focus on the other things they will need to get back on their feet. Finding shelter can be all-consuming and can keep a homeless person from getting mental health support, employment guidance, and other services.

**On-the-Job Training:**

WorkExpress participants learn more than job skills. By participating in a competitive social enterprise, they are pushed to perform to competitive quality standards, take leadership of the crew, and interact with customers.

Participants go through a three-phase process over one year with increasing responsibility, independence, and compensation along the way.

- *Phase One* – 60-day probationary period with four hours per day of supervised in-house work at Father Bill's & MainSpring properties earning \$8 per hour (minimum wage)
- *Phase Two* - four hours of work per day on supervised work crews at local work sites earning \$8 per hour
- *Phase Three* - six hours per day of work with increased independence and responsibility earning \$9 per hour

**Intensive Support Services:**

Outside of work responsibilities, participants spend the remaining hours of the day in an intensive schedule of case-management meetings. This includes continuing education; medical and mental health appointments; 12-step programs; housing searches; job searches; and on-site classes in resume writing, interview skills, money management, and life skills. A WorkExpress case manager guides each participant through a customized plan that is both comprehensive and laser focused on the areas that the participant needs to develop to become self-sufficient. Case managers draw from internal resources and external agencies to provide the men and women of WorkExpress the support they need.

**Job and Housing Placement:**

After participants have reached Phase Three of the WorkExpress process, they begin to focus on ensuring a successful transition to self-sufficiency by obtaining employment and housing. WorkExpress links participants to employment and housing opportunities in the community. An employment specialist assists with resume writing, interview preparation, job applications, and continuing education. The case manager assists with a search of affordable housing opportunities. WorkExpress business clients, who have observed participants' quality work, are a primary source for employment and in some cases housing opportunities.

In 2009, WorkExpress set three-year goals for employment and housing outcomes, and already by the end of FY2011 they had met the ambitious targets of 100 percent housing placement and 80 percent employment placement for program graduates.

*"WorkExpress changed my life...I learned how to communicate better with others... and how to manage my money. Most importantly...I received housing and my independence."*

- WorkExpress Participant





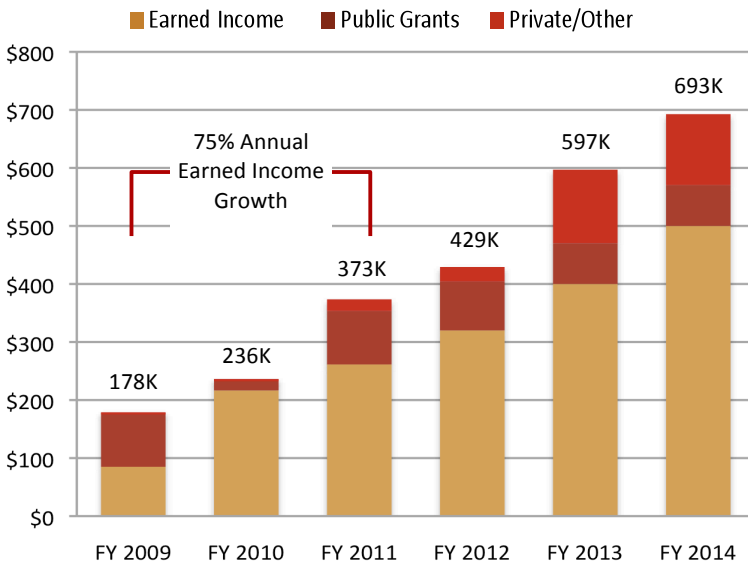
## TEAM AND GOVERNANCE

Paul Key, Father Bill's & MainSpring's workforce development director, has the skills and experience to advance WorkExpress' business model and forward its social mission. With over 10 years in employment and business development, Key specialized in turning around underperforming companies by improving workforce performance. Drawing on his private sector experience, Key focused on customer satisfaction, improving service quality, prioritizing larger and more profitable jobs, and building a team of crew leaders who could effectively engage WorkExpress participants. Key infuses WorkExpress with his sense of mission and determination, earning the respect of both homeless participants and business clients. Customer satisfaction is Key's top priority, and his success in this area is reflected in WorkExpress' 97 percent customer satisfaction rating as well as the significant growth in customer referrals as a source of new contracts.

John Yazwinski, president and CEO of Father Bill's and MainSpring, has prioritized workforce development and the social enterprise approach used for WorkExpress. As WorkExpress has delivered strong outcomes in a cost-effective manner, John sees WorkExpress as a critical piece of FBMS and a model for future innovation.

Paul and his team receive additional support from the WorkExpress advisory committee, composed of FBMS board members and local business and civic leaders. The advisory committee provides expertise on marketing, business development, and management. Advisory committee members include executives from Super Stop & Shop, Michaels, various employment training agencies, and other businesses in the communities that FBMS serves.

**WorkExpress Enterprise Source of Revenue**



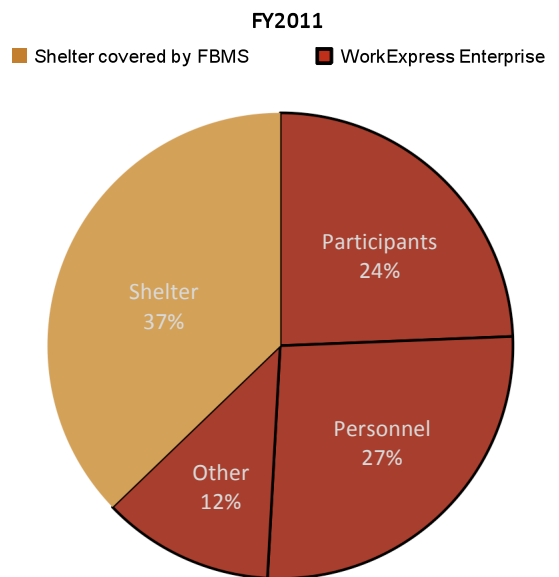
For the future, WorkExpress' strategic focus is on building larger and more consistent contracts in three growth areas: 1. City graffiti removal: graffiti services have provided an entrée to other work in Brockton and Plymouth and represent a promising path for growth. 2. Residential rehab and maintenance: by creating strong alliances with housing agencies, such as Neighborhood Housing Services (servicing 15 apartments), WorkExpress is developing capacity in high-demand apartment rehab services and creating opportunities for steady revenue. 3. FBMS Facilities: FBMS made the strategic decision to scale back its facilities department and have WorkExpress take on the agency's cleaning and rehab contracts for its housing and shelters. With six facilities serviced and an average of 10 apartments flipped monthly, FBMS facilities work is projected to provide a stable source of 50 percent of WorkExpress earned income. Geographically, WorkExpress will expand its footprint in Quincy by the end of 2012, by increasing its work crew there from three to 10 participants. It is expected that contracts will increase to \$450,000 annually in Quincy and Brockton by 2014, with additional contracts in Plymouth and other locations. In order to support this growth, WorkExpress plans to add a program coordinator, crew supervisor, and training and case management capacity by 2013. Director Paul Key will reduce the fraction of his time dedicated to WorkExpress and take a broader focus across the portfolio of FBMS employment programs. While the percentage of earned income will fall as WorkExpress invests in growth, earned income from contracts will cover approximately 80 percent of the enterprise budget by 2015. The balance will be funded through government, foundation, corporate, and individual support. Government and private support will be highly leveraged, as each donated dollar will be matched 4:1 by earned income.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Originally conceived and operated as a social service program rather than a social enterprise, WorkExpress had historically underpriced contracts, provided services beyond the required scope, and often performed work for public sector clients without receiving compensation. In 2009, after more than a decade of operation, WorkExpress lost a significant grant, and the \$85,000 it earned annually from work contracts at the time was not enough to keep the program afloat. In response, Paul Key was hired as program director to revive and restructure the program, which would otherwise have been cut. WorkExpress prepared a three-year business plan to guide its growth and is currently about a year ahead of schedule for revenue growth and program outcomes.

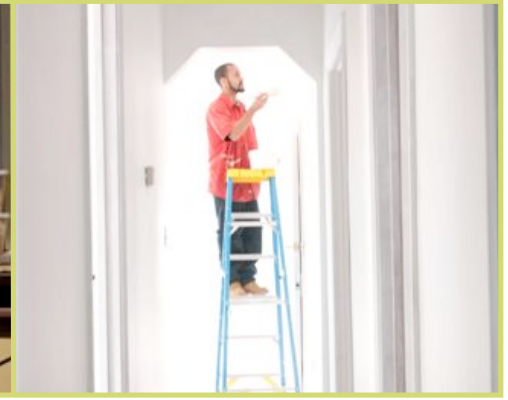
With an aggressive marketing campaign focused on sales and customer referrals, WorkExpress has added 11 customers while also increasing the average revenue per customer by 88 percent. Earned income covers 76 percent of the enterprise budget, up from 48 percent in 2009. The enterprise budget includes costs for WorkExpress personnel, participant stipends and support services, and business expenses. The shelter component of the WorkExpress program, about \$200,000 in FY11, is funded by government contracts and private sources through Father Bill's & MainSpring.

**WorkExpress Enterprise Expenses with Shelter**



*"As a real estate developer, being able to get projects completed quickly is critical for my business. My experience with WorkExpress has been so positive that I have referred them to colleagues who have also hired their crew for local projects."*

—John Fossetti, Eastern MA Real Estate Investors Association



## PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

### Program Performance and Organizational Health:

Below is a summary of the key measures that WorkExpress will track to demonstrate progress, capture lessons learned, and make course corrections as needed. Note: Fiscal year is July1 – June 30.

	FY 2012 (P)	FY 2013 (P)	FY 2014 (P)	FY 2015 (P)
<b>Program Performance</b>				
New enrollment	35	45	50	55
Graduation rate	75%	80%	85%	85%
Employed after 6 months	80%	83%	86%	86%
Housing at graduation	90%	90%	90%	90%
Crews operating	1	2	3	3
<b>Enterprise Performance</b>				
Earned income	\$320,000	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$625,000
Fraction of enterprise expenses covered by earned income*	76%	64%	69%	82%
Customer satisfaction	97%	97%	97%	97%
Average revenue per customer	\$8,000	\$10,000	\$13,000	\$16,000
<b>Organizational Health/Capacity Building</b>				
Program Director	80%	50%	50%	50%
Program coordinator	0	1	1	1
Crew supervisors	1.5	2.5	3	3
Case manager hired	0.5	1	1.5	1.5
Training specialist hired	0.5	1	1	1
WorkExpress residential spaces	20	30	40	40
WorkExpress enterprise revenue**	\$452,000	\$671,000	\$767,000	\$764,000

\*Rate decreases due to investments in growth FY 2013- 2014. FY 2015 reflects steady state.

\*\*Revenues exceed expenses in FY 2012-FY 2014 to reflect money raised for capital expenditures.

### Social Impact:

Currently, WorkExpress uses the metrics below to measure its impact.

Indicator	
Percentage of graduates in housing 12 months out	83%
Percentage of graduates employed 12 months out	75%



### SUCCESS STORY: KAREN

Two and a half years ago, a young woman named Karen came to a Father Bill's & MainSpring shelter. Karen struggled with addiction to prescription drugs, and because of it she could not hold down a job. She was evicted from her apartment and thrown out of her family's home for stealing from them. Karen was hired by WorkExpress and made serious commitments to improve her life. She learned new trades, worked closely with a substance-abuse counselor, and saved money. Within 12 months, Karen graduated from WorkExpress with a full-time job, and she is still with the company a year and a half later. Karen now lives in a studio apartment, has maintained sobriety, and is a freshman in college.