

# AUDACIOUS ACTION

CAMPAIGN PROGRESS REPORT 2006-2008

*“The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit: to choose our better history, to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.”*

— PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA  
Inaugural Address, January 20, 2009

*This is our shared ideal. This is what we work to accomplish in Baltimore.*

WWW.OSI-BALTIMORE.ORG

OSI-Baltimore focuses its work exclusively on the root causes of three intertwined problems – drug addiction, an over-reliance on incarceration, and obstacles that impede youth in succeeding inside and outside the classroom.

## CRIMINAL AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

### AN EXAMPLE OF HOW WE CONFRONT A CRITICAL PROBLEM

Every year, approximately 8,000 individuals released from prison return to Baltimore City. Many of these adults have limited education and few job skills and are homeless. They face overwhelming odds. Consequently, nearly 50% of people released from Maryland prisons are re-incarcerated within three years.

### WHAT MANY DON'T KNOW

**The challenges facing most newly-released adults are daunting:**

- ▶ They are ineligible to apply for public housing for at least 18 months.
- ▶ If they owe child support, they are likely to have accrued substantial debt while they were incarcerated.
- ▶ They must pay a monthly parole supervision fee but often do not have a job.
- ▶ They face severely limited options for employment because of lack of skills and discrimination.



### THE SOLUTION

Open Society Institute-Baltimore actively works to provide prisoners with pre-release services, such as drug addiction treatment, and fund programs to make their transition into the community more effective by supporting community-based treatment, job-training and other services. In addition, we work to promote effective alternatives to incarceration. We actively engage in policy reform to reduce the sky-rocketing growth of incarceration. And, we work with employers to address their concerns in hiring people with criminal histories.



*What's great about OSI is that they are willing to take risks and fund initiatives that make sense but that require some cool thinking.”*

— JASON PERKINS-COHEN  
Executive Director, Job Opportunities Task Force



## EDUCATION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### AN EXAMPLE OF HOW WE CONFRONT A CRITICAL PROBLEM

A significant proportion of school absences are the result of suspensions. In 2006-2007, 9,854 students were suspended, many repeatedly, resulting in 16,752 suspensions in the Baltimore City Schools. This represented an astonishing 12.5% of the total enrollment.

### WHAT MANY DON'T KNOW

**Contrary to popular belief, the overwhelming majority of students are not suspended because of violent behavior.**

- ▶ Overtaxed teachers and principals were suspending more and more children because of disrespect and disobedience.
- ▶ When children are suspended, they fall behind in school, engage in risky activities, and are more apt to drop out.
- ▶ The school discipline code provided little guidance, permitting suspension for every type of student misbehavior.

### THE SOLUTION

Open Society Institute-Baltimore recognizes that school is the one place where children, especially those living in poverty, are guaranteed access to the services they need to become productive citizens. Being in the classroom is a key to their future success.

We have brought nationally-recognized leaders to Baltimore to talk about the negative effects of suspension on children, pulled together data to let city leaders understand the scale of the problem, and together with key partners, funded model programs that provide suspension alternatives for schools—many of which have now been adopted. We engaged experts to help revamp the discipline code, which Dr. Andrés Alonso, the current CEO of City Schools, implemented in fall 2008. As a result, suspension are down by 1,500 in the first semester of the 2009-2010 academic year.



*A communitywide movement to support alternatives to out-of-school suspensions got under way two years ago, largely at the behest of the Open Society Institute-Baltimore...With a mission to address issues that contribute to chronic rates of poverty, dropouts, and crime, OSI-Baltimore zeroed in on the city school system's disciplinary record.”*

— EDUCATION WEEK

## TACKLING DRUG ADDICTION

### AN EXAMPLE OF HOW WE CONFRONT A CRITICAL PROBLEM

Heroin addiction has plagued Baltimore for years, yet we know that treatment works *if* it is available. All too frequently, those who need treatment simply can't get it, especially the uninsured. Untreated addiction not only ruins individuals, it destroys families and our community.

### WHAT MANY DON'T KNOW

**There are several known treatments for heroin addiction yet, up until a few years ago, the only effective out-patient treatment available in Baltimore was methadone, administered solely at drug treatment clinics—all with lengthy waiting lists.**

- ▶ Frequently, those suffering from addiction show up at hospitals and are treated for symptoms that arise from their condition—such as skin infections or HIV—but the underlying addiction is not treated.
- ▶ Up until recently, doctors were unable to prescribe medication for heroin addiction in their private practices and health clinics.
- ▶ Many individuals face financial barriers to pay for treatment—even Medicaid and Medicare presented obstacles.



*OSI's targeted investments have supported key expansions in capacity and improvements in care. OSI has been an essential partner for public health progress on substance abuse in the city over the last decade.”*

— DR. JOSHUA SHARFSTEIN  
Commissioner, Baltimore City Health Dept.



### THE SOLUTION

Immediately after the FDA approved buprenorphine, a tablet medication to treat heroin addiction, the Open Society Institute-Baltimore advocated for its greater use in Baltimore.

We supported efforts to educate physicians about its efficacy and encouraged community health centers and drug clinics supported by Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems to offer buprenorphine, making treatment much more widely available. Along with other funding partners, we persuaded hospitals to treat in-patients for addiction and, when appropriate, transfer them to physicians' practices. Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, the Baltimore City Health Commissioner, and a champion of buprenorphine treatment, led the effort to recruit more physicians to prescribe it, waiving fees for physicians' licensing. As of January 2009, the state has now added an additional \$1 million for this treatment in Baltimore City.



## BALTIMORE COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIPS

Because we recognize that solutions to challenging issues sometimes sprout from untested and unlikely places, we also support a growing corps of social entrepreneurs and visionaries committed to working with under-served populations in our city.

The Baltimore Community Fellows, now over 100 members strong, undergird our three priority initiatives to create opportunity and justice throughout the city. They are on the ground activists, working directly in our communities. They serve as an early warning system, in effect, alerting us to emerging problems and often creating solutions that not only work, but can be replicated elsewhere. In many ways, they serve as the “glue”

to make solutions stick—networking, bringing communities together and sharing effective strategies from one field to another.

The Fellowships program gives expression to one of our most central goals: creating lasting change by giving individuals from all communities the opportunity and resources to realize their talents.



*OSI serves Marylanders of all walks of life, from our children, to our single parents, to our seniors, to those who are summoning up the courage to challenge their addictions – and now we are a different and better city.”*

— GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY



MARCH 2009  
DEAR FRIENDS OF OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE:

We have wonderful news to share! Thanks to you, the Baltimore community, we have raised \$12 million toward the \$20 million challenge goal set forth by George Soros.

In recognition of our collective success in raising these challenge funds for Baltimore, George Soros has promised to continue to cover our operations and overhead expenses well into the future. We hope that this generous vote of confidence from our major benefactor will inspire your additional support for our path-breaking initiatives.

OSI-Baltimore provides vital grant support and shares its expertise about proven and promising practices with our grantees, the Baltimore Community Fellows, the business community, the broader philanthropic community, and city and state government leaders. We give voice to audacious ideas and examine

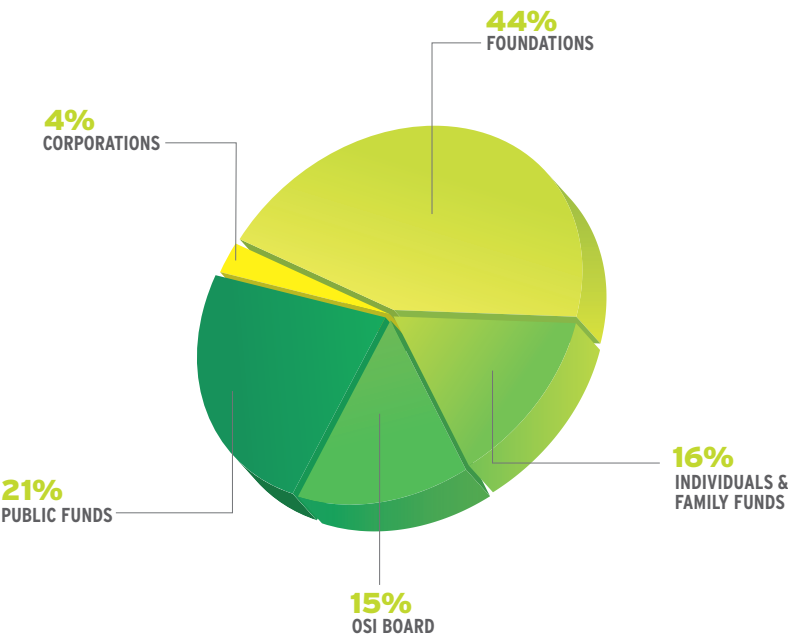
approaches that have shown good results elsewhere. We take calculated risks to change the status quo and advocate for the smart and efficient use of public monies. We craft strategies that produce results and build the partnerships that are necessary to bring about real change in our city. With your support, we get at the root of the problems that prevent opportunity from thriving in our city and address the needs of Baltimore's most vulnerable residents.

Please share this report and challenge others to invest in our work to help us reach our \$20 million campaign milestone by 2010. Contact us directly or visit us online at [www.osi-baltimore.org](http://www.osi-baltimore.org) to make a pledge or learn more.

Sincerely,  
WILLIAM C. CLARKE, III  
Board Chair

DIANA MORRIS  
Director

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TOTALLING \$12 MILLION



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“During OSI’s 10 years here, it has tackled some of the city’s most persistent challenges, including drug addiction, the high costs of incarceration and helping young people stay on track to become scholars and leaders.

— THE BALTIMORE SUN, May 2008

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