



Annual Report FY09





President's Report Annual Meeting

October 13, 2009

On September 1, 2008, the Stern Center entered its second quarter century and began FY09. Two weeks later, our economy experienced an unprecedented jolt that influenced the corporate and nonprofit worlds. We feel very proud that the Stern Center continued to accomplish its mission with distinction during this extraordinary time in our history, ending the year with a modest increase in net assets thanks to an admirable stability of revenues and contributions. Despite the unknowns that characterized the economy during FY09, the Stern Center continued to serve learners, extend partnerships with educators, and advance knowledge about best practices for all kinds of minds through model programs and research.

Program Highlights

We take enormous pride in our staff, Board, and supportive community of donors and grant funders who share our joy in the following accomplishments.

The Cynthia K. Hoehl Institute for Excellence completed its first year as a model for accessibility and best practices in instruction and professional learning. Over \$100,000 was awarded to Stern Center scholars for intervention and \$30,000 was given to educators invested in extending their professional knowledge and effecting systems change. The Cynthia K. Hoehl Institute was splendidly inaugurated at the State House on September 12, 2008, complemented by a 25th anniversary presentation by Board member Reid Lyon on the science of reading.



Growth and opportunity across both our educational services to students and professional learning programs for educators propelled the restructuring of our program directorship. On August 1, 2009, the Stern Center welcomed Janna Osman, M.Ed. to the position of Program Director for Professional Learning. She joined Sally Conant, John Connell, and Ed Wilkens as a member of the executive team and organizational vice-president. Sally has become Program Director for Educational Services, enabling her to devote her incomparable talents and energies to evaluations and instruction across both the Williston and Upper Valley campuses.

Educational services during FY09 included 354 students seen for evaluations and 590 students enrolled in instruction. Evaluation revenue was stable, powerful given the vulnerability of this service arm to economic challenges. Instruction revenue increased 35% since last year, reflecting both a greater number of students attending the Stern Center for longer periods of time and the Supplemental Educational Services (SES) programs conducted both onsite and in the schools. SES is a federally mandated program within No Child Left Behind offering extra literacy support to children whose schools do not meet its Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) criteria.

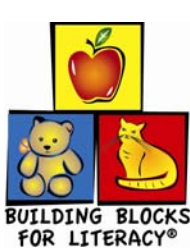
Professional learning also expanded during FY09 with more course offerings than ever in our history. Over two thousand participants attended programs that addressed a diversity of topics and were presented across numerous geographic locations. We also welcomed outstanding leaders in educational and medical aspects of children's learning, including Dr. Daryl Mellard from the University of Kansas for our Spring Symposium and Dr. Karen Miller from Tufts Medical Center for the Charles M. Poser, M.D. Lecture.

The Enrichment Center for Social Communication, Language and Early Literacy also contributed to growth in both instruction and professional learning. Social thinking programs swelled as Camp Compass welcomed 35 students over the four-week summer program, the strongest enrollment to date, and social thinking groups during the school year reached their peak with 39 students. Mary Cotton and Coreen Woodbury, speech language pathologists, saw an increasing number of infants and toddlers for language intervention at the Enrichment Center. Nancy Clements and Julie Erdelyi also designed and taught the first Social Cognition graduate course and conducted social thinking evaluations for students ranging from preschool through high school. We were proud to congratulate Julie on the publication of an inspiring article on her professional perspective working with children with autism.



A total of 207 scholarships were awarded to children and adults in need of Stern Center services. Although we had to limit dollars given fewer grants received and endowment performances, we were pleased to be able to award close to \$130,000.

We were pleased to announce the publication of our research article on Showcase Schools, a project we conducted that evaluated both teacher knowledge and reading outcomes when educators participated in T·I·M·E FOR TEACHERS. Jane Nathan and Barbara Moore continued their strong contributions to research throughout the Stern Center, with outcome data and project analyses far exceeding the size of this department.



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY[®] launched as both a 12-hour online course for early care and education providers and a family forum for parents and caring adults. Six hundred and seventeen registered users from 42 states and 22 countries have visited the site. In addition, our three-credit undergraduate BUILDING BLOCKS course has been piloted in both Duxbury, VT and West Lebanon, NH to enthusiastic participants who also demonstrated significant increases in their knowledge acquisition about how to best prepare our

preschool children for school success. We are now evaluating how to maximize the effectiveness of our BUILDING BLOCKS product and value an impressive Think Tank of community business leaders who have helped us brainstorm future direction. Eve Pratt Hoar, who designed the original business plan for BUILDING BLOCKS, continues to lead us as we consider extending our social networking, marketing, and corporate partnerships. We have also benefited from the expertise of Tuck Business School MBA students, alumni, and professors who share our excitement about this program's potential.

Chair Steve Waltien called to order the first two meetings of the Past Chairs Council. All twelve of our past Board Chairs attended to address questions posed to this impressive brain bank regarding issues of organizational importance.

Development

With enormous pleasure and appreciation, I report that once again, for the sixth consecutive year, our development effort has surpassed \$1 million in total dollars raised. This is an especially outstanding achievement given the economic climate of the past year. We felt fortunate that our Major Donors maintained very strong giving. On the other hand, we saw grants from corporations and foundations decline significantly given that endowments have suffered. Despite submitting 33% more grants this year, we won 30% less in grants than last year.

A new source of potential revenue introduced during FY09 is the Federal government's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. These funds have been made available to local school districts that in turn have begun to use them by investing in professional learning services. Thanks to targeted, aggressive marketing and information campaigns, we have seen local schools investing their resources at the Stern Center.



This year's Jeff Stone Memorial Tennis Tournament ended its 25 years with a celebration rather than a fund raiser. And it was a celebration indeed with special guests from throughout the history of the Tournament as well as Stone family members from all over the northeast. The 3-day tournament and the dinner at the Davis Center combined for a wonderful celebration of Jeff's legacy and the great relationship between the Jeff Stone Foundation and the Stern Center supporting scholarships for 12 years.

Also this year, we introduced a new special event, the Stern Center's Family Fun Festival, which combined themes of our BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY program with rocket launches, music, and other festivities. We were pleased to net \$35,000 for scholarships and generate ideas for next year's special events.



Marketing

FY09 saw several strong advances in our Marketing efforts including:

- A complete overhaul of our website: content, graphics, navigation, and search engine optimization have all been significantly improved.
- We supported our internet launch of BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY with a robust marketing blitz guided by professional media consultants. This effort included multi-media releases including thousands of print and e-source press releases as well as marketing notices to broadcast outlets, newswire services, related websites, and trade publications.
- We initiated a Stern Center presence by opening accounts in social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube, which we have used for general information sharing, fundraising, and event promotion.
- We had two major print campaigns during FY09: the “Success” campaign and the “Sharpen Your Image” campaign, both of which furthered our efforts to strengthen our brand and streamline our message to the public and potential clients.
- We enjoyed a free media highlight through a two-part television story on WCAX TV, which focused on the challenges of dyslexia and featured a strong Stern Center presence.

While nonprofit organizations like the Stern Center work hard to fulfill their mission in good times, it is an especially rewarding feeling to do so in times of stress. Please take some time to honor the names of our staff that follow this report. In every role they fill, it is because of them and an exceptionally devoted Board and family of friends as well as donors that we end this year so positively. While the years ahead will certainly not be without challenges, having the knowledge of our strength during FY09 shall surely help us continue our journey fortified to assure success for all kinds of learners. Whatever your relationship is to the Stern Center, know that you are truly appreciated for your dedication to our mission, kindness, and support.



Blanche Podhajski, Ph.D.
President





Stern Center Staff

Administrative Team

Tess Adone, M.A.	Executive Assistant to the President
Ellen Bessette	AP/AR Assistant & Receptionist
Greta D'Agostino, B.A.	Evaluations Intake Scheduler
Barbara Forsyth, A.A.	Accounts Manager
Martha Fraser	Receptionist
Nancy LaBounty	Receptionist
Linnea Oosterman, B.A.	Professional Learning Assistant
Katie Palmer, M.Ed.	Instruction Intake Scheduler
Jenn Piette, B.S.	Marketing Assistant & Receptionist

Development & Marketing Team

Robin Bertrand	Development Coordinator
Laurie Caswell-Burke, M.E.	Development Officer
Diane Meyer, B.A.	Grant Writer
Kate Stein, B.Mu.Ed.	Marketing Coordinator

Evaluation Team

Sage Bagnato, M.Ed.	Evaluator
Fran Ingram, M.A.	Evaluator
Sharon Leach, Ph.D.	Neuropsychologist
Julia Molson, Psy.D.	Clinical Psychologist
Liz Pasquinini, Ph.D.	Evaluator
Lori Van Allen, M.S.	Evaluator
Stef Waite, M.Ed.	Evaluator
Angela Yartz, M.A.	Coordinator of Evaluations

Executive Team

Sally Conant, M.S.	Program Director for Professional Services
John Connell, M.B.A.	Chief Financial Officer
Janna Osman, M.Ed.	Program Director for Professional Learning
Blanche Podhajski, Ph.D.	President
Edward Wilkens, Ed.D.	Development Director

Human Resources

Bo Finnegan, M.S.A.	Human Resources Manager
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Stern Center Staff continued

Instruction Team

Linda Bancroft, B.S.	Instructor
Lyndsy Blais, M.Ed.	Instructor
Sandy Boyer, M.Ed.	Instructor
Alicia Burris, B.S.	Instructor
Nancy Clements, M.A.	Enrichment Center Curriculum Coordinator
Mary Cotton, M.S.	Instructor
Julie Erdelyi, M.A.	Instructor
Pat Greene, B.A.	Instructor
Mary Guarino, B.A.	Instructor
Sandy Murphy, B.A.	Instructor
Colleen Schuster, M.Ed.	Instructor
Ann Sharfstein, M.Ed.	Instructor
Chris Shaw, M.Ed.	Instructor
Jeanne Smith, M.S.	Instructor
Andrea Todd, M.A.	Instructor
Elizabeth Towle, M.Div.	Instructor
Coreen Woodbury, M.S.	Instructor
Ellen Rogers, M.Ed.	Instructional Coordinator
Michelle Szabo, M.S.Ed.	Coordinator of Instruction

IT

Kevin Paskiet, M.S.	IT Coordinator
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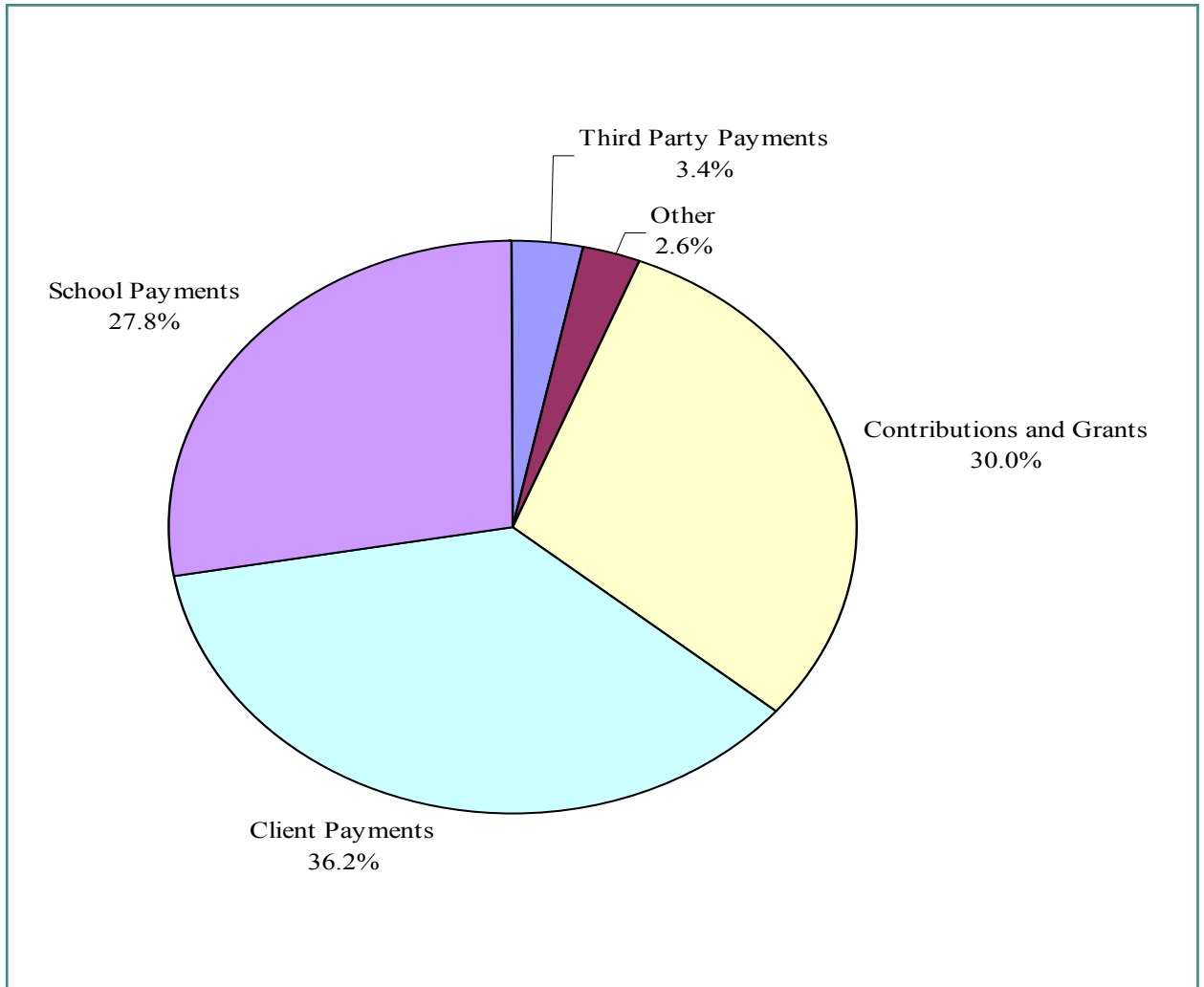
Professional Learning Team

Brenda Buzzell, B.S.	Building Blocks Coordinator
Jackie Earle-Cruikshanks, M.A.	Sr. Language Specialist
Juliet King, M.Ed.	Professional Learning Provider

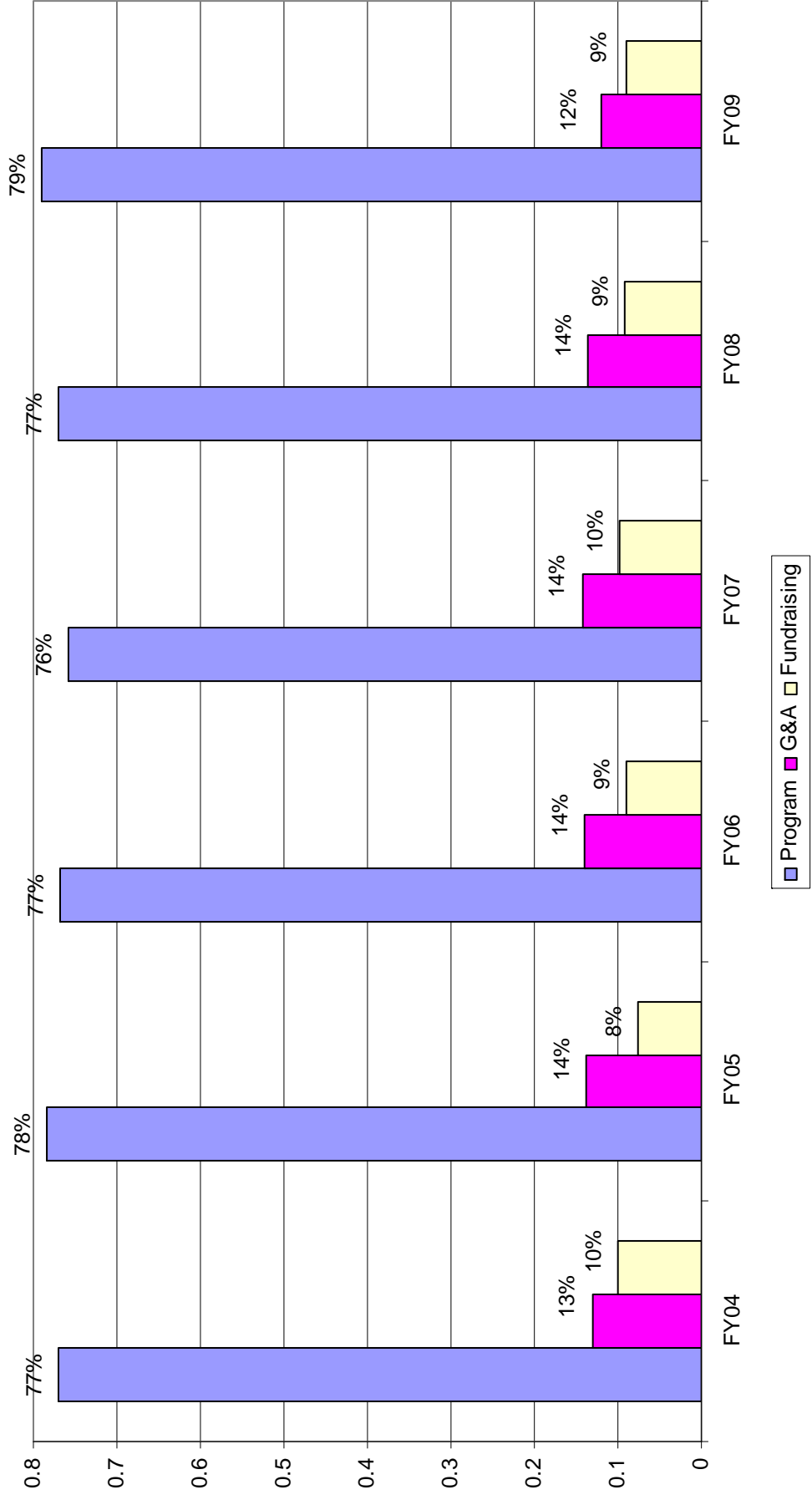
Research Team

Barbara Moore, B.S.	Research Associate
Jane Nathan, Ph.D.	Research Coordinator, Psychologist

FY09 Stern Center Revenue Sources



Expense Breakdown: Program/G&A/Fund Raising





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Norwich, Vermont

Eve Pratt Hoar

Program Manager, Physician Advisory Boards
ALLSCRIPTS
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Stern Center Friend
Ferrisburgh, Vermont

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Montpelier, Vermont

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Waterbury, Vermont

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Research Associate Professor of Pediatrics
University of Vermont
South Burlington, Vermont

Dolores T. Smith

Stern Center Friend
Williston, Vermont

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Stern Center for Language and Learning
Essex Junction, Vermont

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