

OMEGA

Case For Support

A Woman's Bridge to Change

They crossed over years ago. Poor choices. Addiction. Abuse. Crime. Incarceration. Women who found themselves on the other side; the side they never imagined they would be on, a side they desperately want to escape from.

How do you change how your past affects your now, your future? The who you "were" is no longer the who you "are." But your past holds you hostage. A bridge is needed. A bridge to empowerment and sustainable life.

"Omega is about bringing hope and healing to women who have only seen the dark and dirty of the world. It's a place where women can find hope and be loved Here, they can learn valuable skills and be given an opportunity to grow and tangibly experience who He is, the Creator of all things beautiful." – Janna Kainos, Executive Director of Omega.

Understanding the Need

Today, there are hundreds of women in the Portland, Oregon area who have experienced homelessness, incarceration, addiction and abuse who desperately want to re-engage in society in productive ways. But they are blocked.

These women find themselves with few employment options because of their background. Employers are often unable to hire women who have felonies, who were incarcerated, or who have gaps in their employment, like most of these women have experienced.

The result is this cycle is perpetuated.

Women who have been through a recovery program, like that of a rescue mission, have often left their problems behind them. But the mission's programs can only take them so far. They still need a bridge in order to get back to a productive, sustainable life.

We must give these women that bridge back to hope. This bridge is about helping women gain sustainable employment, which will allow them to return to a productive life. A real chance. Real change. Real hope.

Omega is that bridge. It is the bridge back to employment and productivity. It is the bridge back to a hope filled future. It is the bridge back to the community.

“The support I received during my time at Omega was unreal. My mentors and the rest of the Omega team believed in me when I wasn’t sure I believed in myself. My internship helped restore my confidence and dissolved my insecurities about re-entering the workforce. I love Omega and I am so thankful for their encouragement, love and guidance.” - Omega intern

Omega – The bridge

Omega provides paid internships for women who would otherwise be unemployable. We serve the community by providing basic employment and life skills equipping participants for success in the workplace, transforming their lives, and giving them hope.

Mission

Empowering women from a life of dependency to one of sustainability through employment opportunities resulting in a hope filled future.

Vision

Empowering women to achieve sustainable life.

How is the Bridge Built?

- ❑ **Transformational mentorship** – participation in a mentorship program is a core commitment of every paid intern as they change old behaviors and thinking patterns and aspire to a new way of life.
- ❑ **Support System**- partnership with organizations, financial contributors and local businesses allow us to fill a needed gap of employment opportunity.
- ❑ **Volunteer involvement** – opportunities for mentors to provide accountability, encouragement, and practical assistance to interns as they pursue their goal of a hope filled future.

“I am very excited that we are able to refer women who have gone through our program to Omega. We have a one-year drug and alcohol recovery program, and many of our graduates do not have appropriate job skills, or it has been a long time since they’ve worked.

Omega is exactly what they need. It will give our women an opportunity to earn money to begin paying off debt and save money for getting into an apartment. It is important

that these women do not leave our program until they can enter safe housing and have an ability to support themselves and their children.” - *Gloria Hall, Women’s Director UGM*

“Divine Threads is honored to partner with Omega. Over our years of working together, they have served many of our clients, taking time to get to know each individual, the circumstances they are in, and their skill sets. You will never meet two more caring, engaged women than Susie and Janna. Their compassion and love for each person they serve is evident, not only as they dialogue with each client, but also providing resources for each woman’s needs regarding employment. It has been our joy to not only work with Omega but also to call these women our friends.” -Kathy Towne, Founder, Divine Threads

Omega is the bridge that provides these women with credible work experience because women need:

- ❑ **Marketable skills** – an opportunity to learn all aspects of the coffee business can help them obtain and keep long-term employment.
- ❑ **A track record** – we give them job experience that demonstrates their commitment to a stable, responsible life.
- ❑ **Training** – we provide a combination of work experience, coaching, mentoring, and community to help them over the hurdles that exist and give them hope for their future.

Omega differs from other programs because we:

- ❑ **Work with women side-by-side**, coaching to each individual woman's strengths.
- ❑ **Work with women who have completed a full rehab program** but would otherwise have no realistic options for employment.

Employers seldom provide the accountability these women really need to succeed. Omega does! If they get out into the workforce too early, they may unnecessarily struggle. We are that safe place where they can grow and transform. We're that bridge to success.

What Does this Bridge Look Like?

Omega provides a three-phase, up to 30-week paid internship program with a partnering business. Each internship requires a signed three-phase progressive agreement of each individual intern's goals. These goals focus on attendance, communication, and work skills. The Omega coach/mentor goes over each category with the intern before the first ten-week internship begins.

The coach/mentor also signs an agreement which includes:

- Providing one-on-one coaching/mentoring 1 hour a week
- Help with communication between intern and partnering business when needed
- Availability through the week for additional mentoring.

Phases of Internship Program

Phase One – Includes 3 requirements:

1. **Attendance:** The intern will maintain respectful and professional 10-week attendance by being on time and committing to each scheduled day of work. Tardiness and or absences must be communicated to the business manager and Omega's staff via call or text.
2. **Communication:** The intern will maintain open and growing communication with Omega, Staffing Agency, and Partnering Business.
3. **Work Skills:** The intern will follow directions, accept feedback, and make changes as needed. She will communicate concerns and/or questions and will fill out timecards to track working hours with accuracy and submit to the Staffing Agency.

Phase Two – An additional 10-week internship upon successfully completing Phase One and decided upon by the partnering business owner, Omega coach/mentor and intern. It will include all of the requirements in Phase One, with the addition of *measurable personal goals* for development in work and life skills.

Phase Three – The concluding 10-week internship upon successfully completing Phase Two. Phase Three allows the intern and mentor to expand personal goals, including spiritual and financial goals. In this phase the intern will dig deeper and become even better prepared for re-entry into the workforce outside of the Omega program.

“Since 2017, All Star has had the privilege and honor of partnering with Omega. As we share the same vision of empowering women who have come from backgrounds of domestic abuse, addiction and/or incarceration, it has been our delight to come alongside this amazing ministry. In the past three years, we have seen lives changed, redeemed, and restored through one-on-one mentorship offered by Susie and Janna. Being a Second Chance Employer, All Star is happy to be an employment resource to the Omega graduates in the years to come. As long as there are lives to impact, the relationship between Omega and All Star will stay intact. Together, we will continue our endeavors to see women overcome obstacles as they experience the truth of who they are, whose they are and the possibilities that lie ahead!” -Lenanne Miller, Director of Community Relations, All Star Labor & Staffing

You can partner with OMEGA through a charitable contribution to sustain the Bridge leading to empowerment & hope filled future for our interns.

One time giving:

\$5400 provides three 10-week phases, a complete Omega program, for one intern.

\$1800 provides one 10-week phase for one intern.

\$600 provides 3 weeks, transportation, and a food handlers card.

Monthly Giving:

\$180 provides a one-week internship.

\$100 provides food handlers cards and transportation for **2** interns.

\$50 monthly provides food handlers card and a month's transportation for 1 intern.

Strategic Ministry Partners

Union Gospel Mission LifeChange Program

UGM is an intentional Christian community where people help and support each other to break cycles of addiction, abuse, and homelessness and live a transformed and abundant life in Jesus. My name is William Russell and I am the Executive Director of Union Gospel Mission in Portland, Oregon. I have been with UGM for 26 years in the nonprofit world for 33 years. I encourage people to support Omega.

Omega provides the under-employed with a job, the backbone of self-respect and hope. And Omega is more than an employer, but a catalyst, coach and confidence builder for people who need that next step in their personal development.

The principals at Omega, Janna Kainos and Susan Cottis, are credible and committed. The concept and planning they have invested in Omega is solid. I highly recommend them to those who seek to make a vital investment in women's lives that positively change our community. I see Omega as an important partner with Union Gospel Mission for years to come!

Please contact me with any further questions regarding Janna, Susan or Omega, and I would be happy to speak further.

Sincerely, William Russell, Executive Director

Divine Threads

Divine Threads is a gathering of volunteers and board members with one passion: making every woman we work with feel loved, feel beautiful, and know she has a purpose for her life. Divine Threads began because one woman felt the grace and love of Jesus Christ and wanted to share that grace with other women. We are blessed to

provide clothing, styling services, and more for every woman who comes to Divine Threads. Whether she is fleeing domestic violence or is pulling herself out of poverty, we are here to support her.

All Star Labor and Staffing

All Star Labor & Staffing, founded in Portland in 2009, is a boutique staffing agency that offers local companies a level of customer service and customization that larger, corporate employment agencies are unwilling or unable to provide.

Board Members

Omega is governed by a dedicated group of volunteer board of directors. We would not exist without the vision, passion, and skills each person brings to this team.

Janna Kainos, Executive Director

Janna has been rescued from a lifestyle of addictions and has overcome the scars of abuse. Janna not only has the credentials, with over 20 years of retail management including five years at Starbuck but also has a love for people. Her desire to lead women to the hope she has found has driven her to start Omega

Susie Cottis, Board President

Over the past 30 years, Susie has been a franchise owner, a volunteer in youth ministry, and the co-owner of a small business. Her experience at Starbucks for over 11 years has taught her about customer service, what it is like to work shoulder to shoulder with others from all types of backgrounds and life experiences just to name a few. Learning the ropes at an espresso machine and cash handling skills was new and daunting at first. She understands what it feels like to be new at something, and the feeling of accomplishment after tackling a difficult task.

The ministry of working with high school students put to test any of her lurking leadership skills. Yet the pleasure of building relationships in these experiences is a key foundation with Omega.

Anna Carlson, Board Treasurer

Over the years Anna has worked and volunteered with many groups and boards. She is passionate about using her organizational skills and love of numbers to help others succeed. Supporting family and friends is one of her greatest joys in life.

Anna works full time for a family-owned manufacturing company. She also works in office management and bookkeeping roles for her family's own small business. She enjoys serving in her local church too. In her free time, you can find Anna researching family ancestry, snuggling with a kitty, and reading a good book.

Julie Gatewood, Board Secretary

Through her years of experience in mentorship and serving on the women's ministry board at her church, Julie has felt her heart become shaped uniquely toward loving and helping women in times of need. After 16 years in North Clackamas Christian School's front office, from receptionist to office manager, she retired to move to Austin, Texas with her husband. In her personal time, Julie enjoys rowing, photography, and coffee with friends old and new.

Lenanne Miller, Board Member

Director of Community Relations for All Star Labor & Staffing, I encounter people with a "moment before." They come from points of crisis in their lives. They seek hope through employment and opportunity—desperate for a second chance to pursue the life of their dreams.

Rod Cottis, Board Member

Rod has 15+ years of ministry service with youth, and experience as a Reserve Sheriff Deputy. Rod also has a background in small business ownership. His current role in customer service allows him to build relationships, easing customer's stress through his easy-going character and friendliness. Volunteering as a Sheriff Reserve he sees people at their best, and diffuses situations when people are struggling to find hope.

Chuck Gatewood, Board Member

Chuck has served on the board of a private Christian school and as an elder on a church board. Chuck brings to the board more than three decades of retail and integrated supply chain management, including 20 years with Nike, as well as independent consulting specializing in business processes for companies based in Asia, Australia, and the United States. Currently, Chuck works for the City of Austin in Texas as a Business Process Consultant and is learning the fine art of BBQing brisket!