

Single | MOMM

IMPACT100 TRAVERSE CITY

2022 FAMILY FINALIST: SINGLE MOMM

INITIATIVE: Rural Expansion to Single Mom Families

OVERVIEW OF INITIATIVE – IN THE APPLICANT’S WORDS

Single MOMM focuses on guiding single moms to healthy independence. In their 2021-2022 fiscal year they served 1,932 families. 80% of the families they serve are living at or below the poverty line.

As the price of living has skyrocketed, their families have struggled to maintain stability. Many of them through the guidance of Single MOMM have moved further into the rural areas surrounding Grand Traverse to find affordable living situations.

This reality has made it imperative that Single MOMM is able to reach the families they have identified as needing their services throughout Benzie and Leelanau counties.

Single MOMM is seeking funding to create a mobile office that would bring mentorship, classes, events, and financial assistance to these families. Together, Impact 100 and Single MOMM can help hardworking women advance in their vocational skills, create stable homes for their children, and increase in their self-worth.

The following sections contain certain key information from the application, as written by the applicant. While detailed financial information has not been provided here due to its confidential nature, each applicant submitted an initiative budget and supporting financial documents as part of their application. Each proposed initiative and the supporting financial documentation has undergone a thorough financial review by our Financial Review Committee (FRC) and the initiatives proposed by our finalists have met our standards for moving forward.

ORGANIZATION’S VISION STATEMENT

Core Vision: To impact every single mom in America who wants to move forward with purpose.

ORGANIZATION’S MISSION STATEMENT

We guide single moms to healthy independence, ensuring that the stability of the families is long lasting by investing in women who are hardworking, courageous, and willing to persevere.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND ITS HISTORY

Single MOMM is a non-profit organization that serves women from all walks of life. Incorporated in 2008, Single MOMM has guided thousands of families to healthy independence. Founded by Jennifer Finnegan Pool, who became a single mom when her children were one and three, Single MOMM has grown into a place where tired, overwhelmed and alone doesn't exist. Jennifer and her team have a passion to gather women and listen to their stories, helping them to heal and restart their lives. A core component of Single MOMM is the focus on helping a woman reach self sufficiency, then turning around and giving back to other women within our community. This discipleship model of single mom helping single mom is empowering.

Single MOMM foundational programs are:

- Mentorship360: An innovative and intentional mentorship program that addresses the everyday demands a single mom carries with purpose filled steps forward. Women are empowered to recognize, plan, and achieve what currently seems unimaginable. The program goal is to equip and heal each woman, enabling them to lead their families well and break through negative generational cycles. Mentorship builds upon a mutual trust between the mom and her mentor and ensures that no single mom walks alone.
- The ReVIVE course: This course provides an intense thirteen week experience for single moms looking to live courageously and strengthen their families. Facilitated by alumni of ReVIVE, each small group of women challenge and embrace one another to overcome barriers and rise up together. ReVIVE alumni have returned to school, come off of government assistance, become home owners, and become leaders for their children.
- No More Crazy process- a legal organization tool for women that have experienced trauma.
- Acquire: Specialized classes for women in areas of financial, parenting, vocational growth, legal matters, and leadership.
- A.R.R.I.S.E.: A restorative residential program to restart a family.

Single MOMM is expanding our geographical service area to reach families who reside in Benzie and Leelanau counties. Since 2020, many women have moved outside of Grand Traverse County seeking affordable housing. We plan to create a second mobile office, hire a local director to oversee programming and build relationships in these rural areas, providing community for single moms in Benzie and Leelanau counties. We are encouraged by the successful launch of Single MOMM in Wexford and Missaukee counties in 2021, where we now have in place a local director, church and business partnerships, and a mobile office that will be fully functioning in the fall of 2022. We have a three year goal of having all of our programming in a deliverable platform that enables us to teach and equip other communities desiring to start a Single MOMM organization in their own geographical areas. Our ten year goal is that every single mom in the Great Lakes states is aware that they can reach a place of financial and emotional stability and independence, and that they have the opportunity to do so with our materials.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF INITIATIVE

In 2020-2021 Single MOMM served 2,066 families living in the Greater Grand Traverse area and neighboring bedroom communities. This was a 31.2% growth from the number of families we were able to reach in 2019-2020. This growth made it apparent we needed to be more intentional and reach deeper into the rural communities we were serving.

Through the Rural Expansion Initiative Single MOMM is launching two mobile offices into the surrounding counties to meet the needs of women and families. These 28 feet “classroom on wheels” will serve our target demographic residing in the rural areas outside of Grand Traverse county. In the summer of 2021, we launched the initiative and are now over 50% completed renovating the first mobile office that will serve Wexford/Missaukee counties. We are requesting consideration from the Impact grant to complete our rural expansion by providing the funds to build out a second mobile office that will serve Benzie/Leelanau counties.

Single MOMM has spent two years strategically preparing for this initiative. We have onboarded key staff positions, a Local Traverse City Director to take over all programming within the TC area, and trained and transitioned our Area Director to begin fostering the relational groundwork in the rural areas to ensure we are meeting the direct needs of single mom families in those areas and building a network of support. We grew our staff from six to ten employees to meet the anticipated operational and program needs that will come with this growth. In addition we have worked with our Executive Board, Business Coach, and Auditors to ensure our budget will match the additional financial needs for the rural areas.

Our hope is that the resources needed for the second mobile office will come through the Impact grant. Every dollar given from this grant will go to the purchase of the “classroom on wheels”, refurbishing the interior, transforming the exterior to ensure the mobile office is identifiable as Single MOMM, purchasing the truck port for outside parking, and acquiring program material to use with the families we serve.

The refurbishing of the mobile office will be done in Elkhart, Indiana during the winter months of 2023. Stromberg Carlson, a local business in town has operations in Elkhart. A majority of RV dealerships, manufacturing companies that contribute to the RV industry, and companies that focus on refurbishing vans, buses, RV’s, etc. are in Elkhart, Indiana. We intend to purchase the vehicle and send it to this industry hub for a few months to be customized.

Single MOMM logos and branding will be applied to the exterior graphic wrapping with Image 360 in Traverse City. On the side of each mobile office our tagline will be displayed, “coffee, chocolate, and connecting changes everything”. This tagline truly conveys the transformational impact that will occur inside the mobile office. Coffee & chocolate is our way of saying, we will spend time listening, seeking to understand, offering the warm invitation for single moms to connect more deeply with us through mentorship and courses. The connecting speaks of our offerings. We offer to every single mom desiring to move forward in life the opportunity to do so. Our mission is to guide single mom families to healthy independence, ensuring that the stability of the families is long lasting by investing in women who are hardworking, courageous, and willing to persevere. Within the mobile office our Mentorship 360, The Essentials, reVIVE and INpowered courses, the No More Crazy Process, and our resource networking will

take place. Over the past fourteen years we have a track record of helping women heal from places of trauma, overcome personal barriers, move past societal obstacles, and build strong homes for their children. We believe that years from now we will have catalyzed a movement that assisted single moms in eliminating many of the invisible stressors their families carry, because we as a community engaged them in love, support, and opportunities – this is the transformation that will occur inside the Benzie/Leelanau mobile office.

COMMUNITY TO BE SERVED

The rural expansion initiative has two phases; expanding into Wexford/Missaukee counties in 2021-2022 and Benzie/Leelanau counties in 2022-2023. Single MOMM's Impact grant request is for phase two: expanding Single MOMM services into Benzie/Leelanau counties.

There are 247 female led households in Benzie county. Single MOMM is seeking to serve 173 of these families.

There are 224 female led households in Leelanau county. Single MOMM is seeking to serve 157 of these families.

*Single MOMM applies internal statistics, data, etc. to the government census to extract how many of these families would be a potential fit for our programming. Many households that the government classifies as female led have an active partner in the home and do not operate as single mom households.

80% of the families we serve are defined as the ALICE population or living at or below the poverty line. Our estimation is that out of the 330 families we would be seeking to serve, 264 would be living in this population.

Single moms that are living in the ALICE population, where they are asset limited, income constrained, and employed are mostly underserved. The ALICE population represents those among us who are working, but due to child care costs, lack of affordable housing, transportation challenges, and the high cost of living they are living paycheck to paycheck.

NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY TO BE SERVED

Many single moms need familial support to help them emotionally and physically thrive and care for their children. Due to child custody arrangements, loss of family structure through divorce or widowhood, and other factors, many of the single moms who walk through our doors do not have any family support. They feel overwhelmed, tired, and alone. These feelings lead to a sense of hopelessness and significant self-doubt. Coupled with the emotional obstacles these women face, they are typically in dire need of affordable housing, quality child care, reliable transportation, and vocations conducive to parenting. These needs often make it necessary for women to work multiple jobs, leaving their children unsupervised or in child care settings for many hours each week. Many women live in the areas

surrounding Grand Traverse county and commute long distances for work. With inflation and high gas prices, our women are in need of support in this area of their personal household budgets. Offering our programs and building relationships with women in the rural areas is one specific way that we can serve single moms outside of Grand Traverse county.

The families that Single MOMM serves often have experienced a degree of trauma. The children in these families are vulnerable due to different types of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse as well as neglect. ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) assessments and studies assess risk in families that have experienced substance abuse, violence against the mother, incarceration, divorce, and mental illness. These hallmarks of a dysfunctional household can lead to health problems for this population of children. Close relationships with a trusted adult helps build resilience and healing into children and families. Single MOMM mentors often lead these healing relationships, along with the trained staff at Single MOMM, volunteers, and other single mothers within our supportive community. Since 2008, the mom to mom experience has grown into a ministry that addresses the core issues of single motherhood and provides innovative and diverse solutions for families desiring to reach self-sufficiency. We exist to help women walk through personal barriers and the effects of trauma, resulting in their ability to integrate back into everyday life with purpose, hope, and strength.

The impact of Single MOMM relationships and programming is shown in our women who rise above statistics. Those who have engaged in our Event nights, the ReVIVE course, mentoring relationships, and done the hard work of healing after trauma have built safe and stable homes for their children, lessened the amount of state and federal assistance they receive, expanded their job skills, returned to college or trade school, and given back to the single mom community by leading ReVIVE and financially gifting other women.

This Impact grant proposal will allow our organization to expand into Benzie and Leelanau counties to encounter single moms where they live. We deeply desire to meet the needs of these women and children through the ministry of Single MOMM.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROPOSED INITIATIVE

The proposed initiative focuses on acquiring funding to create two mobile offices. We have raised to date \$156,881.83 and the Impact grant would get us to the finish line with funding. This guarantees sustainability.

Once the funding is acquired and used the long-term sustainability rests on our ability to fundraise annual giving for staffing and program needs. We have met our annual budgetary needs every year we have been in existence and have capital set aside to cover the initial financial needs of the rural counties.

In the fall of 2021 we acquired a grant to partially fund our Area Director's salary for the sole purpose of establishing the relational and programming services in Wexford/Missaukee counties. Starting in January 2022 our Area Director has been on the ground in these counties introducing Single MOMM to businesses, churches, individuals and agencies. She has begun running our Mentorship 360 program, reVIVE Course, and Event Nights in the area.

Her goals for January 2022-June 2022 were to:

- *Introduce and secure partnerships with ten agencies (completed)
- *Introduce and secure partnerships with ten churches (completed)
- *Have 32 single mom families actively participating (currently have 24)
- *Establish an eblast list for community engagement (in progress)
- *Identify key individuals, businesses and churches for fall 2022 financial giving (in progress)

We intend to repeat the same foundational model for Benzie/Leelanau.

We have a 100% success rate of financially sustaining all programs we start, we are committed to being debt free, and we have financial savings to draw from.