

Ms. Inez Bergquest
The Wells Foundation
519 Oak Grove Street
Minneapolis, MN 55403

July 18, 2019

Dear Ms. Bergquest and Members of the Wells Foundation:

Thank you once again for your generous support of \$5,000 for The Lift Garage in December 2018. This letter will serve as our 2019 report. Funding from the Wells Foundation contributed to the costs of moving and reopening in our new location. Thanks to your support, we were able to be fully operating in a very short time period. This clearly had a positive affect for low-income individuals and families who are so severely impacted when their vehicle breaks down.

Fewer repairs were provided that anticipated due to being closed for 10 days to pack and move to our new location and not being able to find an automotive technician to staff the mobile diagnostic van. We interviewed a candidate this week, and if their references check out and the person accepts the position, the van will be back up and running. Plan B is to have each of our five automobile technicians cover a mobile van shift one afternoon a week. Having the mobile capacity is an important factor in shortening our waiting list, which is currently at 700. This frees up bays of cars not worth fixing and expedites appointments due to being able to order parts in advance.

Qualitative outcomes for FY 2018-2019: In two decades of work with the homeless at St. Stephen's Human Services, I heard the same story over and over: The clients who became homeless often lost their jobs because their cars broke down and they either couldn't get to work or couldn't get to work on time because public transportation was unavailable or unreliable. After over five years in operation, I am even more aware of how the people we serve are dramatically more affected than most others when their cars break down. Suddenly their ability to get to work on time, to get their kids to daycare, to get to medical appointments and to put food on the table is threatened. Many of our customers are single parents and female heads of household. A large percentage deal with health issues that interfere with their ability to attain and keep a job. Access to just about everything associated with stability relies on affordable and accessible transportation. Our intake forms help us to understand the scope of impact of having reliable transportation.

- 80% of our customers rely on their vehicles to get themselves to jobs and/or job interviews.
- 64% of our customers rely on their vehicles to get themselves to medical appointments.
- 25% of our customers rely on their vehicles to get their children to childcare.
- 12% of our customers rely on their vehicles to get to school.



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We also keep dollars in our customers' pockets by:

- Saving them approximately 70% on what it would cost them to have repairs done in a for-profit shop
- Not doing repairs if the cost of repairs exceeded the value of the car and the car was not safe.
- Providing pre-purchase inspections to ensure our customers pay a just price for a car that will not leave them indebted and stranded.
- Providing free car-care classes to low-income individuals so they can do their own preventative maintenance and address easy fixes themselves, saving money and time.

Following is a first-hand account of the impact our services have on our customers:

“Maggie” had waited nearly three months to have her vehicle inspected by The Lift Garage. The total came to over \$480 and Maggie didn't have \$480. She was homeless and staying in a shelter. She had just received a new job offer and needed her car to get to get to that job. She managed to raise \$325 and thanks to our generous donors, we covered the remaining balance and Maggie was able to drive herself to her first day at the new job. Soon Maggie was packing her bags and moving into her own apartment. Three months later we received a call from Maggie – she said, “I wanted to thank you so very much. You have put my life back on track and for that I'll always be grateful.”

Quantitative outcomes for FY2018-2019:

- Number of customers served: 550
- Number of repairs made: 546
- Savings to the customer compared to market cost:
- Number of customers who took advantage of the free pre-purchase inspections: 50
- Number of customers whose free estimate and/or pre-purchase inspections resulted in a do-not-purchase recommendation: 144
- Number of participants who take the free monthly basic car care classes:

Customer Demographics (total surveys=102)

Females – 71%

Males – 29%

18-35 years – 30%

35-55 years – 40%

55+ years – 29%

**50% of our customers have children, averaging 2.4 kids

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We hope this report helps the members of the Wells Foundation understand the tremendous impact their generosity has on the low-income population in the Twin Cities. Dependable transportation is the foundation for a stable and productive life. Thank you for helping us to contribute to that foundation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cathy Heying". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Cathy Heying, Executive Director