# Annual Report 2011



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Omega was founded on the holistic worldview that the well-being of each of us is deeply connected to the well-being of all living things.





Despite a challenging economic environment this year, we experienced the second highest attendance ever achieved in Omega's 34-year history. Our attendance indicates the strength of our educational programs to help people deepen their sense of purpose, and people's desire to join with others dedicated to building a more balanced and sustainable world.

In 2011, Omega's commitment to sustainability was strengthened with the Passive House construction of muchneeded office space for the newly formed Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC), an exciting evolution of the Women's Institute at Omega. This addition to Omega's administration building is the first commercial project in the United States to achieve Passive House certification, which represents today's highest energy standards. Generous donors provided the

needed funds to meet a one-to-one, \$100,000 Sustainability Challenge Grant to support the creation of sustainability programs and initiatives, and placed us within reach of the Omega Center for Sustainable Living fundraising campaign goal of \$3.2 million. We are deeply grateful to all who supported these campaigns, which share the common goal of helping people discover how their actions, big and small, can make a difference in caring for our planet.

The OWLC office space was filled quickly with new staff members working together to develop inspiring new programs, including the first Women & Power retreat, a Transformative Leadership Dialogue Guild for staff, and a new Omega Teen Camp workshop for girls. The OWLC team also developed and launched the Women Serving Women Summit, a pilot program component of Omega's Service Week that offers organizations serving the needs and interests of women the chance to retreat, plan, and build bridges across organizations. Another new program we were proud to introduce this year is the Omega Veterans Leadership Retreat, designed to help professionals share information and plan the faster adoption and advance of new modalities to benefit veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. More than 20 leading caregivers attended. Veterans themselves benefited from an annual retreat that supports the healing of not only post-traumatic stress symptoms, but hearts and minds.

In these and other programs at Omega, people are gathering together to put into action new holistic solutions to world problems. With your support, I know we can continue to build a more healing, equitable, and generative way of living together.

Ship Baches

Robert "Skip" Backus Chief Executive Officer

## Creating a More Sustainable World



#### Omega Women's Leadership Center Addition is Named the **First Commercial Passive House** in the United States

Omega has added much-needed office space for the new Omega Women's Leadership Center (see page 4) in the most sustainable way possible. This addition to is only the second project in New York State—and the first commercial project in the United States—to be certified as Passive House. Passive House is a super low-energy building science developed in Germany in the 1990s that represents today's highest energy efficiency

#### Can Pharmaceuticals Be Removed From the Water Supply Naturally?

Manufacturers and consumers are depositing hundreds of millions of pounds of pharmaceuticals and personal care products into America's waterways. After hearing researcher Emma Rosi-Marshall speak at a Cary Institute forum about cattails in the wild effectively removing two different pharmaceuticals from the water, Omega approached her about the constructed wetlands of the Eco Machine<sup>™</sup>, a component of the Omega Center for Sustainable Living that includes cattails and bulrushes. We agreed it was a perfect opportunity to answer the question, "Can Omega's Eco Machine<sup>™</sup> effectively remove pharmaceuticals and personal care products from wastewater using phytoremediation, where bacteria and plants to break down and remove toxic substances from the environment?"

In the Cary Institute study, wastewater samples taken at Omega tested positive for many of the 15 most common pharmaceuticals and personal care products. During the water reclamation process of the Eco Machine<sup>™</sup>, most of those were removed. Omega is considering follow-up research to determine exactly how these chemicals are effectively removed from the water.





#### **Groups From Around the** World Tour the Omega **Center for Sustainable** Living (OCSL)

During 2011, approximately 2,800 people toured the OCSL, including third-grade to graduate students, a delegation from Ecuador, architects from South Korea, and scientists from Saudi Arabia. The OCSL classroom also provided space for sustainability workshops on biomimicry and compressed air technology, as well as a master class on sustainable urban planning.

## **Omega Sustainability Challenge Grant Goal Exceeded Ahead of Schedule**

Created in October 2010 with a gift of \$100,000 from a board member to support the planning and creation of campus sustainability programs and initiatives, this two-year Challenge Grant required that Omega secure an additional \$100,000 from private sources. We are pleased to report that generous donors contributed the funds to meet and exceed this requirement 10 months in advance of the deadline! We are deeply grateful for the generous support we received, including a \$30,000 first-time gift from the McCann Foundation.

#### **New Omega Sustainability Manager Oversees Campus** Upgrades

We're excited to announce the creation of a vital new position at Omega—sustainability manager. The sustainability manager oversees all initiatives related to Omega's Rhinebeck campus sustainability efforts. In 2011, these efforts included the installation of solar panels to provide heat and hot water to 64 participant rooms; 383 new organic cotton blankets and 231 new organic cotton guilts; and deck chairs, tables, and Adirondack chairs made from 90% post-consumer bottle waste with no wood fibers.

Another significant campus upgrade was the switch from bottled water deliveries to water dispensers that draw on Omega's well water. In addition to eliminating the use of plastic water bottles, we're keeping a delivery truck and more than 1,000 gallons of gasoline off the road each year by discontinuing twice-a-month water deliveries. The new water dispensers offer Omega guests and staff fresh, filtered water at no cost.



#### Because of Omega, I...

"While it's impossible to express all of the ways that my brief stay at Omega impacted my life, I want you to know that it had an incredibly positive influence on me. Here are a few of the life changes I've made in the six months since my visit:

- Studied minimalism and put principles into action by donating a lot of stuff to local thrift stores. resulting in more livable space in my life
- Replaced soap, all-purpose cleaning spray, and toothpaste with ecofriendly, nonpetroleumbased alternatives
- Began critically evaluating my purchases in light of how much petroleum (plastic) went into packaging them, and how easy the packaging will be to recycle
- Replaced synthetic sponges, paper napkins, paper towels, and tissues with cloth
- Started getting up early to fit in 30 minutes of exercise each day

Thank you for the wholesome environment at Omega which inspired me to make these changes."

—Suzanne, Potsdam, New York

## Transforming Leadership







## Creating Relationships in the World

The Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) joined in partnership with Women for Women International for their Join Me On the Bridge events in honor of the 100th International Women's Day. We participated in celebrations both at the Brooklyn Bridge and Walkway Over the Hudson, where Omega cofounder Elizabeth Lesser spoke. We also reached out in partnership with Barnard College's Athena Center for their Women and Leadership Film Festival, cosponsored the Womensphere Global Summit, and cosponsored the conference Sex, Power and Speaking Truth: Anita Hill 20 Years Later, at Hunter College.

OWLC's online program manager served as a panelist for Women and Girls Matter, a day of panels and workshops designed to look at the obstacles and opportunities for women and girls in filmmaking and new media. At the Paley Center for Media panel discussion, Can Mothers Stop Terrorism? with Aicha el-Wafi and Abdul Hagg Baker, director of the OWLC, Carla Goldstein, moderated a questionand-answer session. Carla also represented the OWLC at the Daily Beast Conference, Mother's Move Conference in Vienna, and TEDx Women.

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The Launch of the Omega

Approaching

Women's Leadership Center Is

The Omega Women's Leadership

launching in September 2012. An

evolution of the Women's Institute

at Omega, the OWLC is dedicated

leadership can and will change

We envision women's leadership

Center (OWLC) is officially

to the belief that women's

advancing a future where:

• Women and girls are valued

for their full human potential,

can express themselves and

spheres of life.

contribute meaningfully in all

• Men and boys are free to express

the full range of human qualities,

qualities, and share equitably

including masculine and feminine

live in safety and freedom, and

the world for the better.

#### omega women's leadership center

#### inspiring women to become the kind of leaders the world needs now

owlc OMFGA

with women and girls in life's responsibilities and joys at home, at work, and in the world.

• Our global society fosters nurturing and mutual relationships, healthy families and communities, and a peaceful, just and sustainable world—for everybody.

#### The Omega Women's Leadership Center Challenge Grant

The Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) has received a major challenge grant and new funding commitments of more than \$9 million from a number of donors, including generous support from the NoVo Foundation and F.I.S.H. Foundation. The resources needed for OWLC programs will total more than \$14 million over five years. For every \$1 contributed to this initiative, Omega will receive an additional \$4.



#### Omega Women's Leadership Center

#### Cofounders

Elizabeth Lesser Carla Goldstein Sarah Peter

#### Advisory Council

Isabel Allende Jennifer Buffett Majora Carter Sister Joan Chittister Eve Ensler Sally Field Eileen Fisher Jane Fonda Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela Ubaka Hill Pat Mitchell Hibaaq Osman Edit Schlaffer Gloria Steinem Loung Ung Ann M. Veneman

#### Omega Women's Leadership Center Welcomes New Staff & Celebrates Opening of Passive House Certified Office Space

In 2011, the Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) hired an assistant director, on-site program manager, administrative coordinator, and online program manager. In June, the team held an open house to share with Omega staff how the OWLC is growing and to reveal the OWLC's beautiful, new, sustainable offices in the first commercial building to be certified as Passive House in the United States (see page 2). Longtime Omega teachers Llyn Roberts and John Perkins attended and offered a special blessing.

#### The First Women & Power Retreat: Leading From the Inside Out

The first Women & Power Retreat—a new biennial program inspired by Omega's popular Women & Power conferences drew nearly 300 participants, including 75 scholarship recipients, some from as far away as the Republic of the Congo. Many agreed this was the most powerful Women & Power event to date. Best-selling author Martha Beck led a daylong

 ip workshop, Finding Your Own North Star, and founder of Breakthrough, Malika Dutt, spoke movingly about her work "using culture to change culture." Omega cofounder Elizabeth Lesser and poet Sapphire gave inspiring keynote talks, and Sapphire spoke at the Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) scholarship reception, where thoughtful individuals contributed more than \$30,000. The OWLC also hosted a faculty dinner that included teachers, generous funders, and special guests for an evening of sharing stories

world most needs now.

#### Exciting New Programming From the Omega Women's Leadership Center

and visions of the kind of leaders the

The Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) and Omega's people and culture department jointly designed the Transformative Leadership Dialogue Guild to test ideas about the process of developing and supporting leaders who envision a better world. During the 12-week course, staff engaged in thoughtprovoking presentations, experiential exercises, and interactive discussions presented by a variety of teachers, including Omega cofounder Elizabeth Lesser and social activist Seane Corn. The OWLC also joined with Omega Teen Camp to develop a leadership program for young women featuring Rachel Simmons, cofounder of the Girls Leadership Institute.

## Programs for Lifelong Learning



#### Workshops for Body, Mind & Spirit

Through yoga, meditation, spiritual, wellness, and personal growth retreats and workshops, Omega participants explored the intimate connection between body, mind, and spirit, and discovered new truths to unlocking their full potential.

A sampling of the many body, mind, and spirit workshops we offered in 2011 includes the first-time-on-campus and highly successful Centering Prayer with Cynthia Bourgeault, a senior student of Thomas Keating, founder of the centering prayer movement in the Catholic tradition. One of the top Anusara Yoga<sup>®</sup> teachers in the country, Desireé Rumbaugh, was another popular firsttime teacher and Kundalini Yoga<sup>®</sup> teacher Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa and kirtan leader Snatam Kaur Khalsa taught the newly created and well-received Radiant Power of Women workshop to more than 100 women.

Renowned shamanic teacher Sandra Ingerman returned to Omega to join anthropologist Hank Wesselman in teaching a 21st century shamanic journey, and emerging spiritual teacher Panache Desai returned to offer Awakening Your Authentic Soul Signature.

Omega was pleased to welcome Pema Chödrön for two weekend workshops in 2011, including Living Beautifully With Uncertainty & Change, which happened during a rare late October snowstorm. "The snowstorm coincided beautifully with Pema's teachings, allowing us to put into immediate practice the lessons we were absorbing, and cherishing, in the workshop," said one participant.

#### Focusing on Health & Healing

Wellness retreats, mindfulness programs, and workshops in fitness, nutrition, personal growth, and energy medicine are always popular with those looking to enhance their well-being. In 2011, participants explored mind-body healing in Dawson Church's Emotional Freedom Techniques Level 1 training. In addition, Living Well With Cancer proved to be a timely and popular program, whose faculty included inspirational speaker, Ruth Bachman; *Crazy Sexy Cancer* documentary director, Kris Carr; naturopathic physician, Paul Epstein; noted artist and dancer, Gabrielle Roth: The Emperor of Maladies author, Siddhartha Muhkerjee; psychologist, Lura Shopteau; and Omega's chief external affairs officer, Carla Goldstein, and Omega's chief executive officer, Robert "Skip" Backus, both cancer survivors.

Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, taught a workshop on Mindsight and was part of the Mindfulness & with Goldie Hawn, Sharon Salzberg, and other notable leaders in the field. The conference offered instruction for teachers, childcare providers, and parents to teach mindfulness to kids from grades K through 12. Mindfulness was also the focus for longtime Omega teachers Melissa Blacker and Florence Meleo-Meyer's workshop, Mindfulness Tools for Living the Full Catastrophe: A 5-day Intensive in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, presented for the

Dan Siegel, codirector of the



#### **Inspiring Sustainable Living**

Workshop participants discovered how their actions, big and small, can make a difference in three hands-on, low-cost sustainability programs. They learned to source and prepare food right in their own yards and window boxes with vegetable farmers Deb Habib and Ricky Baruc. Guided by former Buddhist monk and cook, Deborah Eden Tull, they learned to adopt an ecofriendly relationship with food, and with educator Audra Wolfe, they discovered how to preserve local foods for yearlong enjoyment.

This year's Design by Nature conference focused on preserving life's essentials, and participants learned how carefully choosing what we eat, where we live, and how to preserve resources can truly change our life and help us remember that we are part of a greater whole. Inspiring talks were given by environmental activist, Erin Brockovich; founder of Sustainable South Bronx, Majora Carter; producer of An Inconvenient Truth, Laurie David: director of Gasland, Josh Fox; author of Diet for a Small Planet, Frances Moore Lappé; founding principal of BNIM Architects, Bob Berkebile; and visionary behind the Omega Center for Sustainable Living, Robert "Skip" Backus.

## Leadership at Work & in Community

Positive ways to change oneself and community were found in leadership courses, professional trainings, and continuing education programs throughout the season. Richard Leider returned to Omega to lead a workshop based on the 25th anniversary edition of his classic work, The Power of Purpose; Seane Corn, Hala Khouri, and Suzanne Sterling led their inspiring social action training, Off the Mat, Into the World<sup>®</sup>; and Shauna Ries, chief executive officer of Mediators without Borders<sup>®</sup>, empowered others to adapt effective communication and relationship skills.

We also offered professional trainings for the psychological healing of trauma, such as Transforming Trauma With EMDR with clinical psychologist Laurel Parnell and Brainspotting with creator David Grand, and trainings in the clinical application of mindfulness, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction in Mind-Body Medicine with acclaimed teachers Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki F. Santorelli.

Omega also joined with John Perkins to create, and provide scholarships for, a leadership program designed for college students, where they learned to transform the old goal of maximizing profits regardless of the environmental and social costs into a commitment to lead sustainably.

## **Programs for Creating, Relating & Relaxing**



#### Letting Creative Expression Loose

An array of arts classes, movement workshops, performance programs, and writing retreats provided many opportunities for participants to express themselves. Guests turned inspiration into art and social action in an Omega Arts Week workshop with environmental activist Julia Butterfly Hill and fabric artist Helema Kadir, and moved out of their heads and into their bodies with Dance Your Bliss<sup>™</sup> creator Rachel Fleischman. Creative Coaching founder Eric Maisel helped participants awaken their inner muse, and acclaimed poets Billy Collins, Mark Doty, Marie Howe, and Patricia Smith helped participants bring a depth of soul to their writing. We were also pleased to welcome back Bobby McFerrin and the infectiously fun choral community he creates.

Another popular music community at Omega, the Gospel Music Community said goodbye to creator and leader Sister Alice Martin, who announced her retirement after more than 15 years of teaching. "When I signed up for Sister Alice's workshop, I expected to have fun! I did, but I also learned the lesson that community is not just the people you like to hang out with—it's the whole community," said one longtime participant.

#### **Building Better Relationships**

Many participants came to Omega to strengthen relationship skills in programs like couples retreats and mother-daughter workshops. We were delighted to have Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt teach two couples retreats in 2011. They have been teaching at Omega for more than 20 years and their retreats are as popular as ever. Joel and Kate Feldman, codirectors of the Conscious Relationships Institute, led another well-attended retreat for couples, Deepening

Your Love, and mother-daughter team Sil and Eliza Reynolds continued to draw crowds for their retreats. The Gay Men Spirituality Retreat returned to Omega for its second year with Omega's development director Brett Cobb, medium James Philip, and scholar Toby Johnson helping participants explore answers to questions such as, "How do we, as gay men, best express our innate sacredness as spiritual beings?"

#### **Omega's Growing R&R Program**

The number of returning Omega Rest & Rejuvenation Retreat guests continued to increase dramatically. Participants relished the ample unscheduled time provided in our retreats, allowing them to enjoy the tranguility of our campus as well as all of the services available, including a special daily class designed just for our R&R guests. By helping people slow down and do less, our R&R Retreats continue to offer the opportunity to return home renewed.

Omega presents **Thich Nhat Hanh** Monks and Nuns of Plum Village Global Ethics for Our Future October 14 & 15, 2011



# Bringing Mindfulness to New York City & Washington, DC

#### **Renowned Peace Activist Thich Nhat Hanh Speaks to** Packed Audiences

Omega has hosted Thich Nhat Hanh for more than two decades, and we were pleased to bring him to a large American audience in 2011, at such a critical time in our nation's history. The Zen master and human rights advocate spoke about peace to a full house of 1,800 in Washington, DC, and 1,900 people in New York City.

"Considering the social protests on Wall Street and at Freedom Plaza in DC, Thich Nhat Hanh's message of compassion and mindfulness could not have been more timely. He offered us all a powerful recipe for change," said Robert "Skip" Backus, chief executive officer at Omega.

#### **Mindfulness in New York City**

In 2011, Omega took bold steps to bring mindfulness to a greater number of people with events in New York City. Inspiring spiritual teacher Adyashanti appeared for an evening talk about liberation at the Manhattan Center, and Buddhist psychology expert Jack Kornfield and interpersonal neurobiology expert Dan Siegel presented The Wise Heart & the Mindful Brain at New York University's Skirball Center.

We also joined with Mindful.org and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society for a landmark gathering on the integration of mindfulness practice in American life. Faculty, including U.S. Congressman Tim Ryan, Jon Kabat-Zinn, and other leaders in the field, explored the proven ways that mindfulness can benefit individual lives and society. Six hundred participants attended and the event reached more than 2,000 individuals worldwide via livestream in partnership with Sounds True.

#### **Omega NYC**

More than 1,500 people stepped out of their busy lives for a weekend of renewal at Omega NYC. Participants experienced some of Omega's most popular and inspiring teachers, including Byron Katie, Debbie Ford, James Van Praagh, Alberto Villoldo, Harville Hendrix, Helen LaKelly Hunt, Geneen Roth, Joan Borysenko, Elizabeth Lesser, Robert Thurman, Narayan Liebenson Grady, Norman Fischer, and Judith Lief.

ack **Kornfield** Tara **Brach** 

Mark **Epstein** 

OMEGA

#### The Gifts of Buddhist & Western Psychology

Omega was pleased to bring The Gifts of Buddhist & Western Psychology, an exclusive weekend program featuring three of the West's most prominent Buddhist teachers—Jack Kornfield, Tara Brach, and Mark Epstein—to Washington, DC. In talks and a group question-and-answer session, similarities, differences, and the ability of Eastern Buddhist psychology and Western psychology to awaken unlimited capacities for happiness were explored.

## What's Happening on Campus



#### First Women Serving Women Summit Held During Service Week

Omega welcomed more than 350 people to our seventh annual Service Week, a retreat designed to be both productive and rejuvenating for nonprofit organizations. Service Week is funded in part by a generous grant from the Dyson Foundation, as well as significant underwriting from Omega. Participants receive a 2-day, 3-night retreat on campus that includes room and board, a private meeting space, a consultation with the New York Council of Nonprofits, and use of all Omega's facilities—free of charge.

This year, the Omega Women's Leadership Center (OWLC) launched a wonderful addition to Service Week, the Women Serving Women Summit. This pilot program offered 14 organizations serving the needs and interests of women and girls the chance to convene, collaborate, and contemplate. The program supported reflective experiences and encouraged the development of new connections. Women Serving Women Summit faculty members included OWLC cofounders Elizabeth Lesser and Carla Goldstein; chief executive officer of the New York Council of Nonprofits, Doug Sauer; celebrated drummer Ubaka Hill; the interactive Hudson River Playback Theatre; and the women's AfroCaribbean dance

#### Special Showing of Wavy Gravy's Movie, Saint Misbehaving

Did you know that Omega's tradition of blowing the conch shell at mealtimes was originated by countercultural icon and early Omega faculty member Wavy Gravy? Poet, clown, activist, and FUNdraiser, Wavy Gravy returned to Omega's campus in July for a screening of his new movie, *Saint Misbehaving*, a film the *New York Times* calls "an unabashed love letter to the world that defies the cynicism of our age."

## Ram Dass Library Brings Back the Sunday Night Series

The Ram Dass Library was pleased to announce the return of our Sunday Night Series, where speakers share their knowledge and expertise with the Omega community. Popular presentations included Elizabeth Cunningham's dramatic reading from her novel, *The Passion of Mary Magdalen*, and Brett Bevell's group energy healing session.

On Sunday, June 19th, the library held a birthday celebration in honor of scholar and Eastern meditation teacher Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan. Personal stories about Pir Vilayat and his great contribution to Omega were shared by former students and current Omega teachers. "Pir Vilayat's high standards of scholarship and aesthetics have always been 'the wind beneath the sails' of everything we do here," said Omega cofounder Elizabeth Lesser. "I often tell people that Omega is Pir Vilayat as a place—a vitally alive, openminded, inclusive, and exciting place of learning."

#### Omega Prepares New Website & Online Learning Initiative

We are pleased to announce the research and development of a dynamic new website designed to translate our mission online by providing rich and interactive content to a growing global community of more than 1.5 million annual visitors.

"As a nonprofit lifelong learning organization, Omega's mission is to 'awaken the best in the human spirit,' says Carla Goldstein, chief external affairs officer at Omega. "At this time in history, with so much promise for advancing human development, and so much at stake, we wanted a website that could extend our reach dramatically."

Together with the design and building of the new website, Omega has conceived an online learning initiative to deliver interactive online courses and livestream events with high-profile teachers such as Thich Nhat Hanh, Pema Chödrön, and Caroline Myss. We look forward to further developing the wealth of video and audio content we already have in our archive and delivering unique Omega experiences to our online visitors, wherever they are.



Main Hall Stage Upgrade

Generously funded by a grant to the Omega Women's Leadership Center, Omega's Main Hall stage has been upgraded to the Staging Concepts modular staging system. The new system gives us the flexibility to create the staging we need to deliver workshops most effectively, both in Main Hall and our other classrooms. From a low stage extending out into the audience for workshops such as the Women & Power Retreat, to a multi-tiered stage for events such as Ecstatic Chant, we are able to deliver a more visually pleasing, professional experience for faculty and participants on campus, and online. New stage dressing also offers the opportunity for a variety of color schemes and the inclusion of event banners to keep our staging looking fresh and contemporary.

#### Omega Wellness Center Is a Growing Part of the Participant Experience

The launch of the new Omega Wellness Center microsite in the spring of 2011 helped guide a record breaking number of guests to schedule a service, or two, or three! All Wellness Center guests were greeted by upgrades to our treatment rooms. In addition, staff, providers, and guests alike enjoyed relaxing on the Wellness Center's new front porch.

# The Omega Circle: Spreading Hope & Healing to Everybody



#### Join the Stewardship Council

#### Members of Omega's Stewardship Council are thoughtful, generous supporters who donate \$5,000 or more each year and contribute in many ways to Omega and our key initiatives. The council is a nongoverning body that shares the mission and values of Omega. Members are encouraged to identify missiondriven activities that they're passionate about and have a desire to help bring to fruition. Omega's Retreat for Veterans Living with PTSD, led each year by Claude AnShin Thomas, is a perfect example of a program greatly enhanced by the work of the Stewardship Council.

At our November 2011 world café style event in New York City, Stewardship Council members engaged in active dialogue, birthing many new ideas that are helping to shape Omega's vision for the future. The Stewardship Council is increasingly active and we encourage your participation.

#### Legacy Giving

Legacy gifts play a vital role in the future of Omega as we work to secure our long-term strength and impact in the world. Legacy gifts, also known as planned gifts, include bequests made in a will, beneficiary designations of a life insurance policy or retirement plan, and other ways to make a difference. Please consider making a lasting, permanent connection to Omega and our mission.

#### Stay Informed & Get Involved!

Stay in touch with Omega by joining the eOmega community at eOmega. org/signup. You'll receive regular email updates about Omega programs and events, along with special discounts and invitations. You can also follow us on Facebook for a daily dose of inspiration and community. eOmega.org/FB

Each year, volunteers join the Omega staff to be a part of something larger than themselves and to work and grow alongside like-minded people. Join us as a short-term volunteer or consider spending some time on our seasonal staff.

You can also join Omega's community of supporters—the Omega Circle—for opportunities to reconnect, share, and be inspired. The first event of 2011 was held Friday, April 1 during Omega NYC, where approximately 80 supportive individuals gathered to share their passion for Omega's vision, and more than 150 attended our third annual benefit in September on our Rhinebeck campus.

For information about all funding opportunities, contact development@e0mega.org.



#### Omega Center for Sustainable Living (OCSL) Campaign Update

By the end of 2011, Omega raised \$2.85 million toward the \$3.2 million capital campaign goal for the Omega Center for Sustainable Living. Thanks to the many generous funders who made gifts this year, phase I of the capital campaign is within reach! New gifts to this important endeavor are deeply appreciated.

#### Harvest in the Valley: Omega's Third Annual Benefit Celebration

On Saturday, September 17, 2011, we hosted our third annual benefit celebration, Harvest in the Valley, where guests experienced a taste of Omega and asked themselves, "What do I choose to harvest?" The funfilled evening featured live musical performances by the Perry Beekman Trio, as well as John Hall of the band Orleans. Omega cofounder Elizabeth Lesser and poet and writer Gloria Burgess gave inspiring talks and guests gratefully enjoyed a selection of the the best local Hudson Valley food and wine, chair massages, energy healing, and tarot readings.

We wish to extend special thanks to board member and benefit chair Patty Goodwin, as well as benefit cochairs Jacalyn E.S. Bennett, Sil and Peter Reynolds, and Gail Straub and David Gershon. With their guidance and the help of all the Omega staff and volunteers, we were able to create an unforgettable evening and surpass our fundraising goals, with contributions of more than \$130,000 in cash and inkind support.

## Omega in Local & Global Community



#### Omega Receives Honor From the Northern Dutchess Alliance

At their annual meeting and awards ceremony in January, the Northern Dutchess Alliance (NDA) presented Omega's chief executive officer, Robert "Skip" Backus, with the Charting Our Course award in recognition of Omega's longterm efforts and many successes in contributing to the vitality and economy of Dutchess County. We continued our strong relationship with NDA throughout the year, hosting both the NDA executive committee for their monthly breakfast meetings and the NDA's annual newly elected officials gathering.



#### Omega Contributes to Local Conservation Easement

Omega was pleased to contribute \$10,000 toward a conservation easement for Pleroma Farm, a diversified biodynamic farm and therapeutic retreat center located at the base of the hill where renowned Hudson River School painter Frederic Church built his home to take advantage of sweeping views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains. The easement also safeguards critical wildlife habitat, increasing the size of protected contiguous forest to more than 100 acres and conserving a portion of a 169-acre wetlands complex. The Open Space Institute (OSI) and Scenic Hudson partnered to protect the 95-acre farm and the Olana Partnership also contributed funds to complete this important conservation project.



#### Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Hosted at the OCSL

Omega hosted the June 2011 Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event at the Omega Center for Sustainable Living (OCSL), where Omega's chief executive officer, Robert "Skip" Backus, talked about building a sustainable future for the Hudson Valley and led a tour of the award-winning environmental education center and water reclamation facility. "As an important component of continuous community relations and relationship building, the event was a big success in introducing many local and regional companies to Omega and the sustainable work we do," said Carla Goldstein, chief external affairs officer at Omega.

#### Omega FoodWorks Tours Local Farms

Local produce and dairy products are important ingredients in the delicious vegetarian meals created by Omega FoodWorks. In 2011, we increased our purchasing from regional farmers and the Omega FoodWorks team took time out to visit several local farms, including Hawthorne Valley Farm (yogurt), Markristo Farm (greens), and Old Saw Mill Farm (fruit). "We're happy and grateful to connect with our local community," says Omega FoodWorks executive chef and general manager Bob Turner.

#### Mothers MOVE: Mothers Opposing Violent Extremism

In June, Carla Goldstein, director of the Omega Women's Leadership Center, helped facilitate a pioneering event in Vienna, Austria, called Mothers MOVE: Mothers Opposing Violent Extremism, a conference of mothers who have been affected by violent extremism. The event highlighted the potential of mothers to create a more stable and secure future for the world. Edit Schlaffer, founder of Women Without Borders, organized the conference as part of the first global anti-terrorism platform that relies on the wisdom and experiences of mothers to combat extremist violence.

#### Omega CEO Speaks at the World's Largest Green Building Conference & Expo

Robert "Skip" Backus, chief executive officer at Omega, attended the 2011 Greenbuild International Conference and Expo in Toronto to celebrate what's next for green building. Backus was featured on a panel discussing reclaimed materials used in the Omega Center for Sustainable Living, one of 15 projects profiled in the Design for Reuse Primer. The process of incorporating reclaimed materials into the construction of the OCSL—from cypress wood siding from a mushroom farm, interior doors from a hospital, and plywood from President Barack Obama's Inaugural stage—provides a road map for others seeking to build with reused materials

#### First Planning Retreat for Caregivers of Veterans With PTSD

Through new outreach efforts, Omega received all needed funds to produce our first planning retreat for caregivers of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). During the 3-day gathering, more than 20 leaders in the field convened to share information and plan the faster adoption and advance of new modalities to benefit veterans with PTSD, including Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE), Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), yoga, acupuncture, and more.

"I was honored and inspired to sit down with some of the nation's most forward-thinking professionals involved in treating PTSD, and hear and learn about all the wonderful work they are doing. The Omega Institute is a paradise providing hope, healing, and inspiration to all those who experience the serenity of their campus," concluded participant Montel Williams, Emmy Awardwinning talk-show host, decorated former naval intelligence officer, and active voice for veterans.

#### Omega Sponsors the Speakeasy at Vermont Wanderlust Festival

Wanderlust festivals bring together yoga teachers and rock and roll in beautiful natural settings. At the 2011 Vermont Wanderlust festival, Omega proudly sponsored the festival's Speakeasy, a series of dynamic lectures covering a wide variety of subjects related to mindful living. During the unseasonably cool June weekend, participants enjoyed warming up with free tea and kombucha while listening to speakers such as Deepak Chopra, Robert "Skip" Backus, and Majora Carter.

## Thank You



"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs are people who have come alive."

-Howard Thurman, theologian, educator, and civil rights leader

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## Audited Financial Statement

#### **Balance Sheet**

\$1,694,359 \$3,915 \$138,116 \$0 \$244,145 \$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717 \$2,907,257	\$1,773,443 \$1,098 \$56,025 \$1,663 \$235,836 \$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579 \$2,991,644
\$3,915 \$138,116 \$0 \$244,145 \$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$1,098 \$56,025 \$1,663 \$235,836 \$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$138,116 \$0 \$244,145 \$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$56,025 \$1,663 \$235,836 \$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$0 \$244,145 \$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$1,663 \$235,836 \$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$244,145 \$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$235,836 \$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$474,124 \$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$53,418 \$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$7,296 \$340,585 \$4,717	\$7,296 \$862,286 \$579
\$4,717	\$579
\$2,907,257	\$2,991,644
	\$1,145,328
	\$16,084,297
	\$1,811,377
	\$2,117,774 \$0
	ېن \$7,163,338-
	13,995,438
\$18,078,538	\$16,987,082
¢η	\$0
	\$101,762
	\$30,513
\$5,357	\$2,960
	\$0
\$2,030,758	\$2,629,988
\$339,222	\$279,850
\$2,653,860	\$3,045,073
\$1,406,029	\$1,438,266
\$4,059,889	\$4,483,339
612 111 012	611 617 500
	\$11,617,508
\$906,787	\$886,235
14,018,649	12,503,743
\$18,078,538	\$16,987,082
	\$104,363 \$2,030,758 \$339,222 \$2,653,860 \$1,406,029 \$4,059,889 \$13,111,862 \$906,787 14,018,649

#### Comparative Revenues, Expenses, and Net Earnings



# Cash Flows Provided by Operating Activities 2011 totals 2010 totals

	2011 totals	2010 totals
Net Increase from Activities	\$1,514,905	\$1,932,950
Adjustments to reconcile Net Increase from activities net cash provided by operating activities: Depreciation	637,322	672,248
Changes In:		
Inventories Accounts Receivable Donations Receivable Prepaid Expenses Deferred Programs Notes Receivable Accounts Payable Deferred program cost Taxes payable Wages Payable Program Credits	-8,310 -1,153 -82,091 -420,706 -599,230 52,193 521,702 2,397 92,333 59,372	19,320 4,791 -33,000 5,657 701,963 50,110 -234,408 -391 -117,066 41,481
Tax Refunds	-4,138	-579
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	\$1,764,596	\$3,043,076
Cash Flows From Investing Activities Mortgage Payable Investments in Marketing Securities Note Payable Land, Building, Improvement and Equipment Purchases Net Loans Receivable	-30,515 0 0 -1,813,165 0 -1,843,680	-28,885 0 -799,836 -742,263 1,775 -1,569,209
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash	-\$79,084	\$1,473,867
Summary Cash Balance at End of Period Cash Balance at Beginning of Period Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash	\$1,694,359 1,773,443 -\$79,084	\$1,773,443 299,576 \$1,473,867



#### **Income Statement** Revenues Unrestricted Restricted 2011 Totals 2010 Totals Program Revenues \$16,682,910 \$16,682,910 \$15,026,679 Programs and Housing 35,447 Meals Revenue 42,076 42,076 Media Works 57,594 57,594 82,646 Bookstore Revenue 1,357,081 1,357,081 1,351,879 Cafe Revenue 305,751 305,751 295,776 Wellness Center Revenue 758,467 758,467 715,341 Other Sales 3,362 3,362 965 19,207,241 19,207,241 17,508,733 Total Program Income Donations Revenue Donations - Unrestricted 330,625 330.625 207.671 Women & Power Donations \$89,213 89,213 \$11,995 \$1,811,152 Women's Institute Funding 1,811,152 \$1,213,479 Capital Campaign \$21,642 21,642 \$364,414 28,320 Scholarship Fund Donations 28,320 305,347 Ram Dass Library Fund Donations 0 0 875 Other Restricted Donations 262,425 262,425 53,822 330,625 2,212,752 2,543,377 Total Donations 2,157,603 Investment Activity 23,967 Revenues-Investment Income 23,967 41,710 Miscellaneous Activity Miscellaneous Income 83,041 83,041 36,985 -2,192,201 Net Assets Released from Restrictions 2,192,201 0 0 Total Revenues and Other Support 21,837,075 20.551 21,857,626 19,745,031 Expenditures Unrestricted Restricted 2011 Totals 2010 Totals Program Expenditures 4,904,862 4,904,862 4,197,198 Program Faculty Program Production 811,305 811,305 623,768 Other Guest Expenses 1,279,950 1.279.950 1,037,621 1,272,204 1,272,204 1,167,906 Kitchen and Housing 829,085 Campus Expenses 829,085 742,905 Bookstore Cost of Sales 786,343 786,343 786,731 Other Cost of Sales 36,315 36,315 25,571 Media Production Costs 12.609 12,609 33,232 Cafe Cost of Sales 183,412 183,412 193,545 449,234 Wellness Center 449,234 411,028 10,565,319 Total Program Expenditures 10,565,319 9,219,505 Administrative Expenditures Personnel 6,124,338 6,124,338 5,450,490 Administrative 901.058 901.058 673.498 Development 165,834 165,834 131,283 1,569,884 1,569,884 1,299,074 Marketing 378,966 General 378,966 365,983 637,322 672,248 Depreciation 637,322 9,777,402 8,592,576 Total Administrative Expenditures 9,777,402 Total Expenditures 20,342,721 20,342,721 17,812,081 Change in Net Assets 1,494,354 20,551 1,514,905 1,932,950 12,503,743 Net Assets Beginning of Year 11,617,508 886,235 14,542,116 \$14,018,648 Net Assets End of Year \$13,111,862 \$906,786 \$16,475,066

#### 2011 Overall Expenses





Program & Projects Expenses: \$10,565,319



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The Statement of Financial Position and Activities is summarized here. A complete copy of the last annual report filed with the New York State Office of the Attorney General may be obtained upon request by writing to the:

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Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation's most trusted source for wellness and personal growth programs. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change.

Located on 195 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people each year to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world.



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