

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Director's Note.....	2
CAN: At a Glance.....	3
Spotlight Sections.....	4
Programs & Services.....	7
Donors & Volunteers.....	14
Financials.....	19
Board of Directors.....	20



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on the past year at the CAN, I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude and optimism. Our journey has been marked by significant milestones and challenges—growing pains that have ultimately strengthened our resolve and commitment to the community we serve.

This year, we have focused intently on the health and wellness of our community members. With each new initiative (like Environmental Sustainability and CAN CARES), we have aimed to better address the holistic needs of individuals and families, ensuring that our programs foster not only physical well-being but also emotional and mental health. Our suite of programs and services has expanded, incorporating new strategies and partnerships that are helping us reach more people in more meaningful ways.

Of course, growth comes with its challenges. As we have scaled our services and extended our reach, we have encountered the inevitable hurdles that accompany expansion. These experiences have provided us with valuable lessons, reinforcing the importance of adaptability and resilience. Despite these challenges, our team has remained unwavering in their dedication, demonstrating incredible creativity and determination in the face of adversity.

Looking ahead, our primary focus will be on refining and enhancing our existing programs and services. By doubling down on what we do best, we will make an even greater impact. Our educational initiatives, youth development programs, and community engagement efforts will continue to be at the forefront of our mission. We are excited to deepen our relationships within the community, ensuring that our services are not only accessible but also aligned with the evolving needs of those we support.

If you're reading this, thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your unwavering support and belief in our mission have been the cornerstone of our success. Together, we will continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape with positivity and purpose, building a resilient, more vibrant community for all.

With gratitude,

Derrick Miller
Executive Director



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97% of CAN students graduate from high school

CAN students attend **19 more days of school** per student, per year compared to their economic peers at Ann Arbor Public Schools

98% of CAN elementary students have maintained or improved academically overall by the end of the school year

1,037,652 pounds of food were delivered from Food Gatherers - equivalent to almost **838,700 meals**

>99% of evictions due to nonpayment of rent *prevented* since **2002**



SPOTLIGHT SECTIONS

So many amazing things happened at CAN this year - it's hard to just pick a few to spotlight! From upgrades at several community centers, to new initiatives and programs, and a new strategic plan, CAN took the opportunity to grow and better meet the needs of the families we serve.

COMMUNITY CENTER UPGRADES

This year, we made impactful upgrades across our community centers to better serve our residents. At Hikone, a fully cleaned and reorganized basement now offers a **refreshed** and **accessible** space for use. Green Baxter Court received a much-needed spring cleaning, revitalizing its facilities for all to enjoy. Bryant saw the addition of a new kitchen upgrade and a set of computers generously donated by the **Jack and Jill Foundation**, enhancing access to technology and improving meal times. At Brick, we installed a long-awaited refrigerator, further supporting our food distribution efforts. And finally, the outdoor space at Arrowwood got completed with addition of a pavilion. These improvements reflect our commitment to maintaining **vibrant, welcoming spaces** for our communities.



SAFETY



This year, CAN took a significant step forward in enhancing safety measures across all sites, thanks to the leadership of Torey Madura and Colette Johnson. For the first time, CAN implemented intense, trauma-informed **ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate)** active shooter training at each location. This helped site staff prepare for crisis situations at their respective sites. Additionally, Torey led multiple **CPR training** sessions, allowing every staff member the opportunity to become certified. These critical initiatives mark **a new era** of **preparedness** and **commitment to safety** within CAN, and they are now rolled into annual staff training!

TEEN PROGRAMMING

This year, CAN launched **new** teen programming after years of planning and development with the goal of creating a program that is **by teens and for teens**. Throughout the year, CAN hosted several teen-only events like video game nights and field trips to the arcade, which helped build a strong sense of community among teens from different CAN communities. We are thrilled to be rolling out the **official curriculum** in the coming year as we continue to nurture and expand this new piece to our education programs!



STRATEGIC PLAN

June 2024 marked the end of CAN's last iteration of its 5-year strategic plan! Looking back, we are so proud of the goals we were able to achieve—especially considering we did not account for a global pandemic when that plan was created. Below is a list of what we were able to accomplish!

- Launched year-round services at 3 new sites (Arrowwood Hills, Brick, Creekside)
- Created new positions to match organizational growth and client needs: Director of Human Resources, Director of Behavioral Health, Director of Community Wellness & Engagement, Director of Community Outreach, Director of Teen Programs & Staff Development
- Institutionalized an IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Advocacy) Committee to spearhead these efforts internally and externally
- Established a core development team to diversify funding streams

Last fall (2023), CAN began working with two Board Fellows from the University of Michigan to create a new 5-year strategic plan to steer our decisions and goal-setting over the next few years. The Fellows spearheaded our 3-step process which involved 1) a survey sent out to all CAN stakeholders, 2) a 30-minute phone interview with key stakeholders from all groups (staff, board, clients, partners, funders, etc.), and 3) a half-day, in-person workshop with representatives from all stakeholder groups. The result of this process revealed **two key areas** for CAN to focus on: **1) Program Growth**, with detailed objectives as they relate to Program Expansion, Existing Program Improvement, Evaluation; and **2) Organization and Infrastructure**, including objectives related to Operations and Staffing, Fundraising, and Board. Let's get to work!



PROGRAM & SERVICE OVERVIEW



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CAN supports students in achieving their highest academic potential by offering quality year-round educational programs. Our **After School Program** and **Educational Summer Camp** offer students a range of activities focused on topics such as reading, mathematics, science, social emotional learning, and enrichment activities. CAN also understands that learning can't happen with empty stomachs. That's why in all of our education programs, nutritious snacks/meals are offered to students--and they even get to try new cuisines!

CAN's thematic curriculum for the '23-'24 school year was *The Kids' Table: Reheated*, which focused on nutrition, culture, and the importance of a positive relationship with food. Through this curriculum, students got to create and do tons of hands-on activities. Most sites really honed in on literacy this year, and Brick students even participated in a **Battle of the Books** during ASP--so fun and engaging!

These flagship programs would not be possible without our partners. CAN secured a **\$300,000** grant from the Michigan Department of Education for summer camp staffing, and staff really strengthened CAN's relationship with Ann Arbor Public Schools to better support students in and out of the classroom.



FOOD PROGRAM

CAN's food program remained at a record-high output this year, and all sites have been meeting the need with grace and transparency. As a whole, CAN distributed at least **1,037,652 pounds** of food valued at over **\$2 million**. This is a **34% increase** from the previous year, which already a record-setting year for CAN. CAN remains Food Gatherers' highest capacity partner.

CAN's Bryant Community Center, whose pantry serves all of Washtenaw County, was a major player in CAN's total food output this year. Bryant hosts distributions 3x per week, and each of those days is met with over 100 clients, sometimes upwards of **200 per day**. Pre-pandemic, this number never reached those levels. Thankfully, Bryant has been able to serve more clients through a partnership with DoorDash, which allows food to be delivered to clients who can't make it to the pantry.



STABILIZING HOMES

CAN's Housing Stabilization work charged ahead over the last year, thanks to our wonderful housing partners and donors. For the second year in a row, we received a **\$25,000** grant from the **Ann Arbor Thrift Shop** to support families living at Hikone, Creekside, and Green Baxter. Every month, site directors can dip into that pot to help residents pay their bills, including rent and utilities. We were able to support **30 families** for one year.

CAN was also able to support families at all of our sites by increasing the amount of basic needs that are available at our pantries. We have been more intentional about obtaining **hygiene products**, **diapers**, **baby formula**, and **winter clothes**. Thanks to our amazing development team, we're happy to be able to help support families more in this way.



SUSTAINABILITY



Last year, CAN made significant strides in promoting sustainability and energy efficiency in the Bryant neighborhood. With the help of key partnerships and funding from MSHDA, Builders Initiative, and the McKnight Foundation, we conducted over **80 free energy assessments** and started or completed retrofits on **30 homes**. Our primary partner, the City of Ann Arbor, received a Department of Energy planning grant to explore the feasibility of a **regional geothermal district**, with the Bryant neighborhood as a central focus. Community engagement remains a key priority as we work to bring more residents into this transformative initiative. Thanks to our collaborative efforts, funding is secured to upgrade about **70 homes**, making homes more energy efficient and affordable for residents.

CAN is proud to now operate **four resilience hubs**—at Bryant, Green Baxter, Creekside, and Northside Community Centers. These hubs serve as pillars of sustainability and **emergency preparedness**, offering resources and support during times of need. Plans are underway to evaluate how we can bring similar infrastructure to our remaining sites. Through these efforts, we aim to create thriving, environmentally conscious neighborhoods equipped to face challenges together, ensuring the long-term well-being of the communities we serve.



CAN CARES

This year was the first full year of CAN CARES (Community Assistance and Resources and Support) led by our **Director of Behavioral Health**, Kayla Samuels LMSW in partnership with our **Health Equity Committee**. They spent the year building out what this program looks like from the inside out and really strengthening CAN's relationship with our students' schools. The intent of CAN CARES is to support the mental health, well-being, and quality of life for under-resourced families.

In practice, there are several components to this. Kayla rotates between different sites weekly to lead **mindfulness** activities with the kids and provide **behavioral management support** to site staff based on their needs. In the background, Kayla has been developing trainings on the subject to be integrated into regular staff training. Thanks to a grant from the **Galens Medical Society**, CAN was able to create Rest & Return spaces at all six of our sites so that students can have a place to take a break, reset, and return to program more emotionally regulated. Kayla has also been working on increasing mental health resources for the adults in our communities; CAN held its first **Mental Health Resource Fair** in June at Bryant, and it was a great turnout! We can't wait to keep building on this foundation next year.



BUILDING COMMUNITY

Last year, CAN hosted several events that brought neighbors together and celebrated the vibrancy of our communities. From back-to-school BBQs where we distributed **more than 350 free backpacks** to our youth, to festive holiday parties where **gifts** were given to youth, we've prioritized moments of joy and togetherness. Seasonal favorites like harvest parties, Halloween events, and spring garden parties allowed families to connect and create **cherished memories**. At Bryant, community clean-ups brought residents together to take pride in their neighborhoods and foster a sense of collective care.

This year, CAN embraced **placemaking** as a tool for community pride, thanks to the leadership of our **Director of Art & Design**, Keegan Carriveau. Nearly every site now features a vibrant mural designed by the children in our programs, serving as a lasting symbol of **creativity** and **collaboration**. These murals have transformed our spaces into colorful reflections of the spirit of each community. Combined with the connections made through our events, these initiatives have strengthened our neighborhoods, fostering a deep sense of **belonging** and **pride** that will inspire us for years to come.



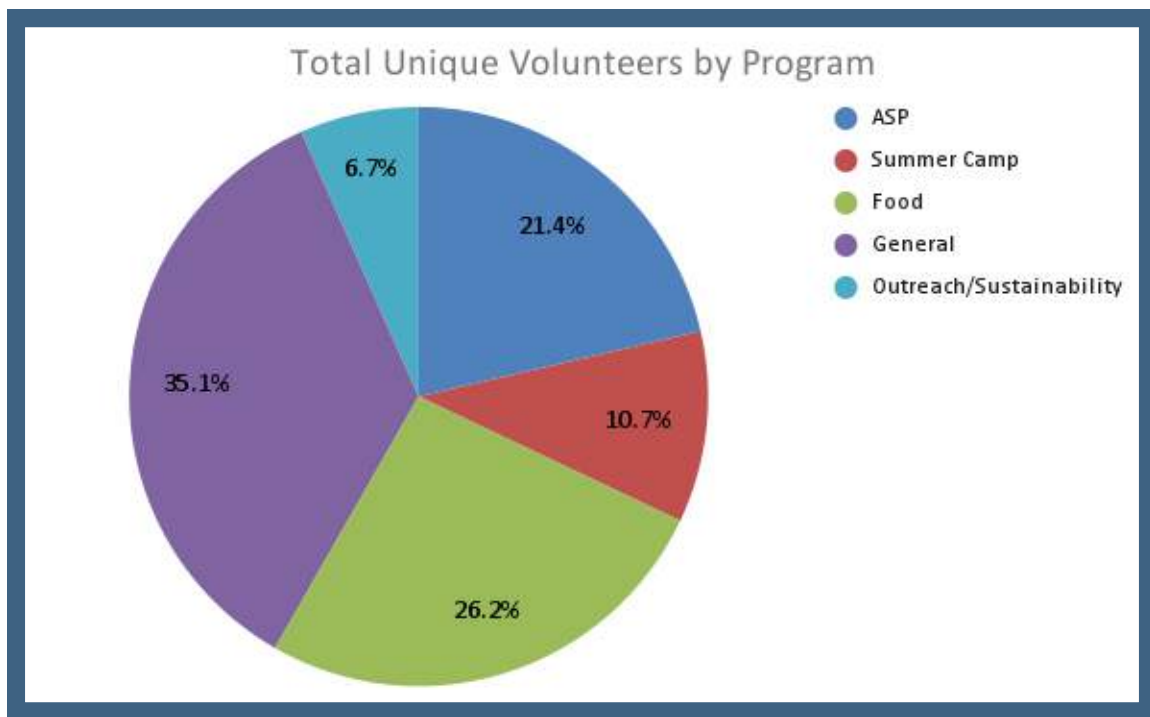
DONOR & VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS



We would not be able to accomplish everything we do without the support of the community. Whether it's individuals and groups giving donations, monetary or in-kind, or volunteers giving their time or talent, it's amazing to see so many generous people uniting together to give families a brighter future. We are so grateful for all of the donations received last year, and all we can say is thank you!

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers at CAN can wear many different hats, from volunteering in our food pantries and education programs, to community clean-ups and Back to School BBQs. This last year, CAN was lucky enough to have **386 unique volunteers** donate **3,630 hours** of their time and we are so thankful! Check out how volunteers spent their time:



- Value of volunteer hours: **\$121,537.89**
- **23** different volunteer groups

“Seeing the kids light up when they connect with a story is the most rewarding part of volunteering. You can tell we’re helping them build confidence and a love for reading.”

-ASP Reading Volunteer



Our volunteers are dynamic and show a deep connection and dedication to CAN - volunteers become staff, interns and staff continue to volunteer after their employment, service participants become volunteers, volunteers become donors, and donors volunteer.

DONATIONS

The community was very generous to CAN this year, both monetarily and through in-kind donations. Below are some highlights from the year...

- Individual contributions: **\$136,598**
- Group contributions: **\$180,383**
- Total monetary donations:
\$316,981



In-kind donations are a **huge** part of operations at CAN! It's with the generous support of over **350 in-kind donors** that we are able to meet the unique needs of thousands of families in Washtenaw County.

- **Monetary value of donations: \$2,149,785**
- In-Kind Drives FY 23/24:
 - Backpack and school supply
 - Fall food, meal baskets, and gift card
 - Personal care and household items
 - Holiday gift
 - Summer camp food and meals



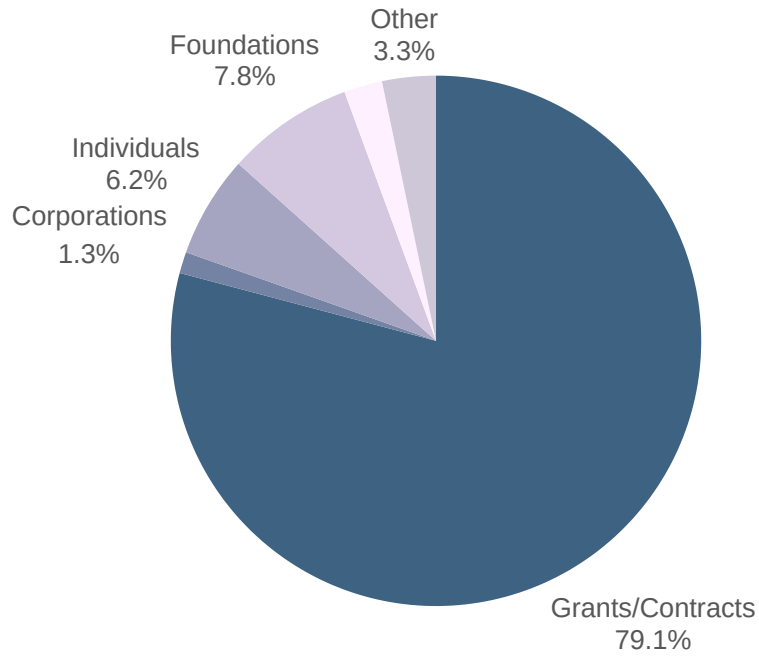


**Whether you give your time, talent,
or treasure, your contributions are
an invaluable part of CAN's work in
Washtenaw County. Thank you!**

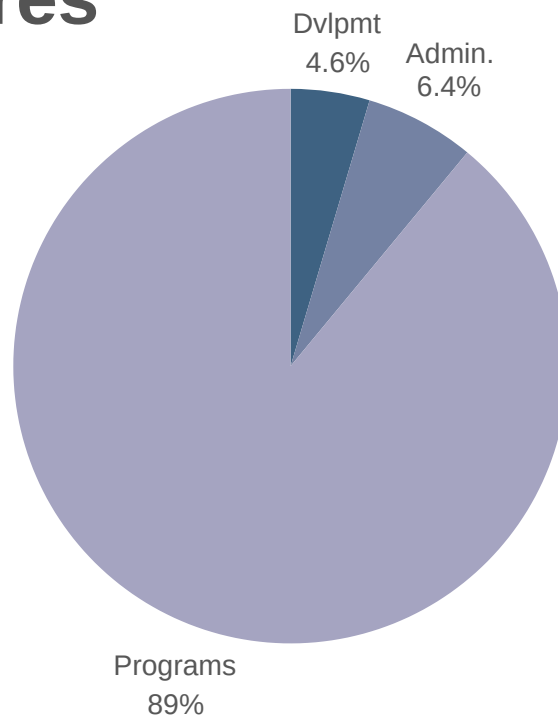


FINANCIALS

Income



Expenditures



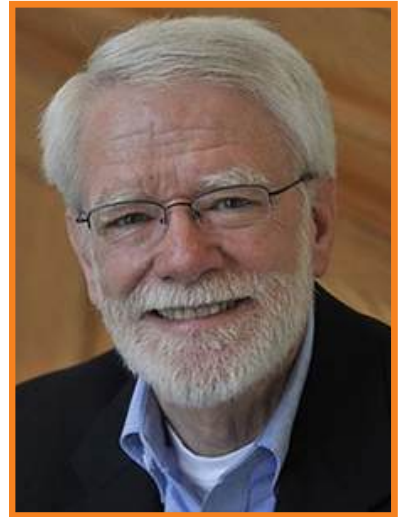
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