

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



**COMMUNITY
ACTION
NETWORK**

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to share with you the new annual report for Community Action Network. This past year has been marked by exciting transitions and innovation, and we couldn't be more excited about the direction in which our organization is heading.

Transitions have been an integral part of CAN's journey over the past year with changes in our team structure and service offerings. These transitions have allowed us to adapt to the evolving and growing needs of our community and better serve those who rely on our support. I want to express my deepest gratitude to all the dedicated staff members, volunteers, and partners who have shown unwavering commitment and resilience throughout these changes. Your passion and dedication have been instrumental in driving our progress.

CAN has also become a driving force for innovation in our community. We recognize the importance of staying ahead of the curve and finding new ways to address the challenges faced by our community. CAN embraced digital platforms to expand its reach and enhance our impact—our online campaigns and communications were a huge success and allowed us to foster meaningful connections with a wider audience. One of the key highlights of this year has been the successful launch of several new initiatives. We introduced a comprehensive mental and behavioral support initiative, CAN CARES, and our environmental sustainability work gained significant traction, setting us up for an exciting year ahead as these take off. These new initiatives not only broaden our scope of impact but have also showcased CAN's ability to adapt and thrive in a changing landscape.

Collaboration has been a cornerstone of our success this year. We have forged strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations, local businesses, all levels of government, and academic institutions to pool resources and expertise. By joining forces, we have been able to amplify our collective impact and make a more profound difference in the lives of those we serve. The spirit of collaboration and shared purpose continues to be a driving force behind our achievements.

This year was no different in that challenges arose and our team stepped up to tackle them. I am so lucky to be surrounded by such dedicated colleagues who remain steadfast in their commitment to providing vital resources and support for those in need—even in the face of adversity. Looking ahead, we are filled with optimism and excitement for the future of CAN. Our organization is poised to build upon the successes of this year, and we are eager to explore new opportunities for growth. With your support, we will continue to empower individuals, foster positive change, and create a more inclusive and thriving Washtenaw County.

Thank you for your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Together, we are making a difference.

Sincerely,

Derrick Miller
Executive Director



AT A GLANCE

97% of CAN students graduate from high school

88% of CAN elementary students have an A/B grade average or improve a full letter grade by the end of the year

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

CAN students attend **4 more days of school** per student, per year than their socioeconomic peers

773,231 pounds of food were delivered from Food Gatherers - equivalent to almost **644,400 meals**



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 campaigns, to some big transitions in our organizational structure, there was no shortage of change. At CAN, we understand that change is necessary to grow and meet the evolving needs of the families we serve. Keep reading to see what we mean!

KITCHEN UPGRADES

This year, several CAN sites were able to upgrade their kitchens in an effort to continue providing students and families nutritious meals. Sites such as **Bryant**, **GBC**, and **Hikone** all got new refrigerators that will help store and keep food fresh longer during educational programming and food distribution! In addition to refrigerators these sites were able to replace older kitchen equipment such as microwaves, pots, pans, and utensils! The **Brick** Community Center also finished upgrading their whole kitchen! Thanks to the Galens Medical Society, Rotary Club of Ann Arbor, and the Kiwanis Club of Ann Arbor, Brick was able to improve their kitchen space by installing new kitchen appliances such as a stove, dishwasher, sink, and cabinets!



BASIC NEEDS DRIVES

This past March, CAN held its very first **diaper drive** for under-resourced families in Washtenaw County! With a month's supply of diapers costing anywhere up to \$100 per child, it's no wonder they're one of CAN's highly requested items during food distribution. After noticing this immense need within the community, CAN VISTAs took proactive measures in figuring out how to provide these essential items to the hands of families. Coordinating with other staff members, these VISTAs were able to set up a month-long diaper drive that supplemented the need for diapers in CAN pantries. CAN received **over 150 boxes** of diapers, wipes, and other baby related necessities for families across Washtenaw County. This drive set the stage for other basic needs drives, like menstrual products!



READY, SET, GROW!

This spring, several CAN sites got together and gave their **community gardens** an upgrade! Gardens have been a staple of CAN neighborhoods for years, but this is the first season since the pandemic that all community stakeholders really came together to make it happen. When the weather became ideal for planting, our friends at the **Ann Arbor District Library** and **Growing Hope** partnered with three of our sites to host garden parties! These were such great community-building events, especially with some new faces in our communities; working together to plant a garden creates opportunities for learning, making friends, beautifying the community, and helping the environment! We had so much fun, and we can't wait to hear how yummy each site's harvests are!



BIG TRANSITIONS

Every year comes with its own changes, challenges, and new beginnings. In that sense, it was a particularly exciting year for CAN! Since last summer, CAN has hired **3 new community center directors** (Brick, Green Baxter, and Bryant), a new Director of CAN Art & Design, 2 site directors transitioned into **brand new roles** (Director of Behavioral Health and Director of Teen Programs and Staff Development), and CAN's **first** Director of Human Resources! In June, we started to say goodbye to our Director of Operations, Katie Lampen, who has been with CAN for 8 years—beginning as an AmeriCorps VISTA. We also said goodbye to Tyla Tolbert, our Bryant Education Program director who has been a source of stability in that community. We are sad to see them go, but so excited to continue this work with the team we have built and we look forward to seeing where we go!



New All-Sites Staff



New Site Directors

CAN PARTNERSHIPS

Since 2022, CAN has partnered with the **Humane Society of Huron Valley (HSHV)** to provide enriching educational visits to our After School Program. Throughout the school year, HSHV staff visited students at our community centers, bringing along an adoptable friend every time. Students were able to learn a variety of **educational activities** such as animal body language, as well as the proper steps in approaching/asking to pet someone's pet. Additionally, students made gifts for the animals back at HSHV, such as colorful bandanas and warm blankets that they could use while waiting for their forever home!

This year, CAN has partnered with **Washtenaw Rock Stars** to provide students access to **free musical instruction** in an effort to bring a **lifetime joy of music** to students here in Washtenaw County. The Washtenaw Rock Stars made biweekly visits to students at our Brick, Bryant, and Hikone community centers and provided a variety of musical instruments for students to practice on. Students learned the basics of instruments such as guitars and electric keyboards. At the end of ASP, students had the opportunity to showcase their new musical abilities by performing a musical piece they worked on throughout the year to their peers.



CAN PARTNERSHIPS



Another program CAN had the opportunity to partner with this year was **Telling It**, a community based program that focuses on enhancing social-emotional learning and supporting the well-being of individuals. They do this by using a blend of **expressive arts** and **social work methods**. Telling It members visited students at our community centers throughout the semester and collaborated to create and drive content in uncensored, emotionally safe and judgment-free spaces.

CAN was lucky enough to have the **Ecology Center of Ann Arbor** back at summer camp this year! Students learned all about **composting**. They were able to see and hold decomposers such as millipedes, worms, and even snails! If that wasn't cool enough, students were also able to design their own t-shirt or tote bag! A big thank you to all our amazing partners for continuing to make CAN's educational programs a success!



PILLARS OF CAN: EDUCATING CHILDREN & YOUTH

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 throughout all of our educational programming, nutritious and filling snacks/meals are offered to students. In an effort to drive the importance of healthy eating CAN has recently revamped their highly successful 2019-2020 summer camp theme; The Kids' Table. This year **The Kids' Table: Reheated** is better than ever and focuses on culinary arts, restaurant development, utilitarian uses of food, and expanding cultural taste and taste horizons.



PILLARS OF CAN: BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

CAN is dedicated to creating **safe, clean, nurturing communities** where families can thrive. Each of CAN's community centers are used to meet the needs of the community in which they serve. Throughout the year, centers hold After School Program and summer camp. In addition to maintaining year-round educational programs, CAN's community centers are also core spaces for community members to gather for potlucks, back to school BBQs, celebrations, and much more. Recently, CAN has focused on outdoor additions to community centers, including **new gardens** and **outdoor sitting areas** at GBC, Arrowwood Hills, and Hikone.



PILLARS OF CAN:

STABILIZING HOMES

CAN continues to support families in meeting their **basic needs**. Demand remains high - our food output jumped **14%** since last year! The stabilization work CAN is able to do in the community is in large part thanks to grants we receive from local organizations, such as the Ann Arbor Thrift Shop. This year CAN was awarded a total of \$25,000 from the AATS for **housing and utilities related needs**. These funds were used to prevent utility shut-offs and evictions for families living in CAN's public housing sites. We know families shouldn't have to worry about meeting their basic needs, that's why CAN is dedicated to obtaining essential items for our community. From hosting **emergency food pantries** to launching **resource drives**, CAN is committed to supporting families now and in the future.



CAN AND SUSTAINABILITY



CAN's scope of Stabilization is **growing**! The goal of this work has always been to assist families in meeting their basic and foundational needs, empowering them to create better futures for themselves and foster community resilience. Historically, this has looked like food distributions and traditional housing stabilization services—like eviction prevention—to help families make the most of their income and not have to decide between putting food on the table and paying the bills. *What if those utility bills were drastically decreased, or even disappeared?* **Imagine** under-resourced families living more comfortably—both physically and economically—while also tackling climate change on the frontlines. Since 2021, CAN has been partnering with the **City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovation (OSI)** to co-design a path to sustainably enhance the quality of life in communities across Ann Arbor, beginning in CAN's largest partner community: Bryant. The "**Bryant Sustainability Project**" aims to identify and sustainably address issues in all 262 homes in Bryant related to comfort, health, and safety while centering the **goals, dreams, and aspirations** of Bryant community members every step of the way.



SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUED

In November 2019, Ann Arbor City Council passed a resolution in support of creating a plan to achieve community-wide carbon neutrality in Ann Arbor by 2030. To initiate this work, OSI launched **A2ZERO**, a framework which aims to implement a just transition to carbon neutrality. CAN immediately became a collaborator to ensure the City engages the most vulnerable communities. CAN understands how much this shift could benefit our families and beyond, so when the City approached CAN as a potential partner, we agreed, and the “**Bryant Sustainability Project**” launched in 2021.

Since then, CAN and its partners have been building capacity and conducting community outreach to ensure resident voices are heard and that we have the resources necessary to carry out a long-term project of this scale. In these first two years, CAN has hired residents from the neighborhood as outreach specialists, conducted more than **70** home energy assessments for **free**, secured large sums of funds to build capacity and begin home renovations, built strong, cross-sector partnerships, and most importantly, gained community trust and support. Now, contractors are on the ground in Bryant making sustainable improvements in almost 20 homes in the neighborhood, with funds secured to begin working on 20 more. This work is just getting started, but we are so excited to share our progress with you as we look ahead and make plans to replicate this program in other Washtenaw County communities.

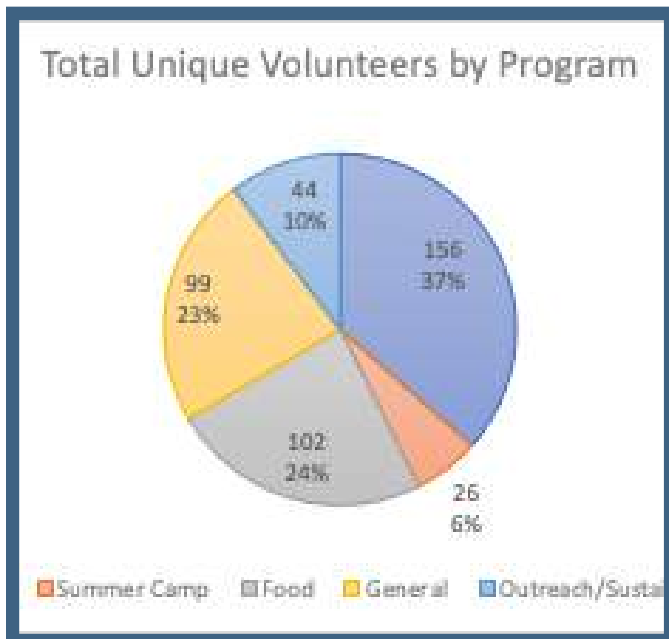


DONOR & VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

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 almost **1,200 volunteers** donate **3,650 hours** of their time and we are so thankful! Check out how volunteers spent their time:



- Value of volunteer hours: **\$116,086**
- **31** different volunteer groups



"One of TACAM's mission is to support the communities that we live in. As part of that, TACAM board and members volunteer for and donate to several nonprofit organizations. TACAM chose CAN as a focus organization due to CAN's impact in the causes that are important for TACAM members such as families and children. We appreciate the agility and approachability of CAN organization allowing both the organizations to plan as needed, when needed."

-Fatos Kocer (TACAM) and CAN Board Member



"I enjoy visiting the kids at Brick Elementary because I enjoy the breath of fresh air as us volunteers and the kids are able to step away and just have some fun together for an hour. The science projects are, of course, important in their educational objective, but above all else, being able to give the kids an outlet after a long day of school is something we take pride in."

-Ilyaa Rasheed, Kids in Science

"Volunteers are the lifeforce at Bryant, they are the familiar faces that clients see day in and day out. Veteran volunteers Bob Abraham and Gwen Bowens set a standard for culture and work ethic that we are incredibly lucky to be a part of. The staff loves working with Bob and Gwen and appreciates the empathy, experience, and knowledge they share with us."

-Fayiza Nabils, Director of Bryant Market & Facilities



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:
\$277,896
- Total monetary donations:
\$509,638



In-kind donations are a **huge** part of operations at CAN! It's with the generous support of over **277 donors** that we are able to meet the unique needs of thousands of families in Washtenaw County.



"First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor enjoys bringing smiles to kids' faces. Whether it is a back to school drive, holiday gifting or a diaper drive, we are proud to support CAN as this crucial agency continues to assist families in our area."

-Connie Nagle



- Monetary value of donations:
\$165,303
- In-Kind Drives FY 22/23:
 - Backpack and school supply
 - Fall food, meal baskets, and gift card
 - Personal care and household items
 - Holiday gift
 - Emergency food and gift card drive in response to ice storms
 - Diaper
 - Summer camp food and meals

Our supply drives make an impact. Read this story from one of our clients:
"...oftentimes cost wise it comes down to either [my] medication or diapers for [my] grandbaby, so [CAN] offering them out of the food pantry was a lifesaver."

-a Brick Grandmother

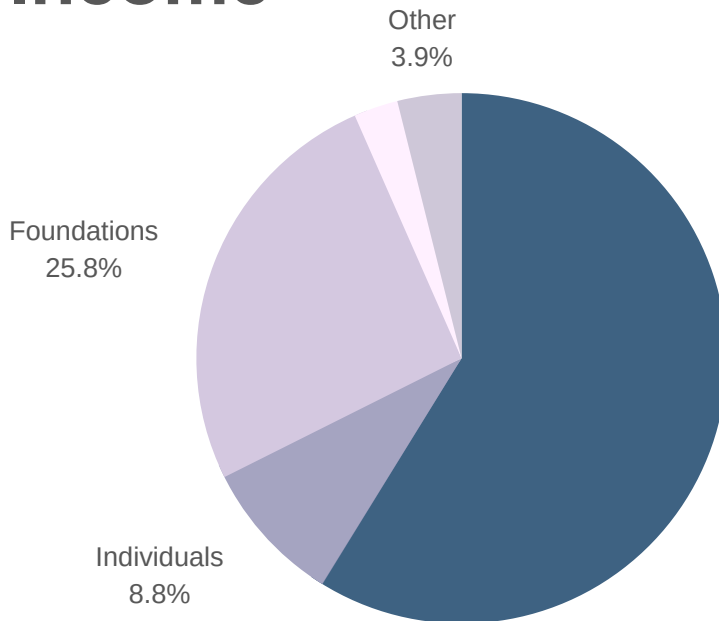


**Whether you give your time, talent,
or treasure, your contributions are
an invaluable part of CAN's work in
Washtenaw County. Thank you!**



FINANCIALS

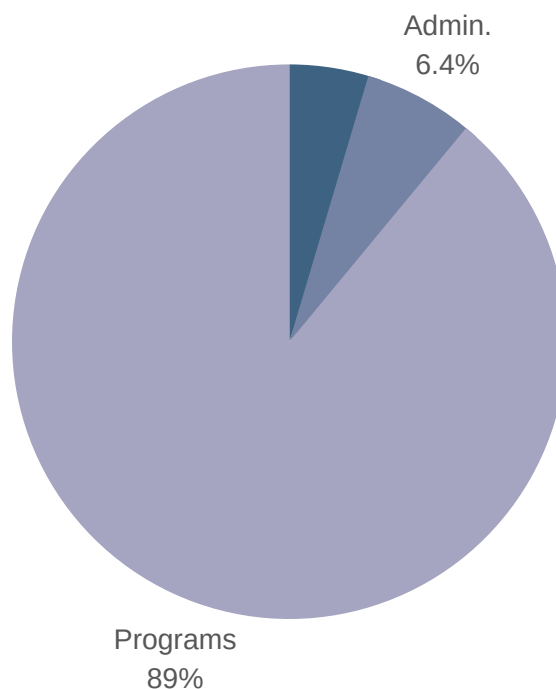
Income



Grants/Contracts
58.8%

The image above captures a check presentation at Bryant. CAN received a \$500,000 grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority for energy efficient home upgrades for homes in the neighborhood.

Expenditures



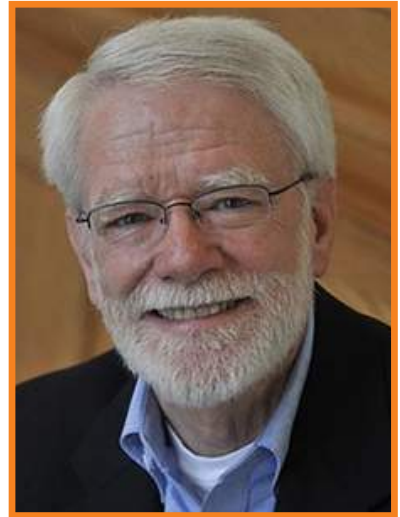
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PO Box 130076
Ann Arbor, MI 48113

(734) 994-2985
www.canwashtenaw.org
info@canwashtenaw.org