

Community Unlimited Annual Report

October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022

221 Ellen Street
Union City MI 49094
517-741-4656

www.communityunlimited.org



Mission: To build a community of character for all generations to interact and grow as we live, work and play - a healthy community for all. **Long Term Goals:** Youth residing in the area communities will learn and practice the skills of economic self-sufficiency, healthy relationships, and community involvement. Residents of the area communities will have resources to meet the needs of youth.

History: Community Unlimited was established on September 25, 1999 by a group of citizens wishing to improve the community, defined as the geographical area served by Union City Community Schools. Non-profit 501(c)3 status was granted in December 2000, with final determination in 2005. The Board of Directors represents diverse age groups and the geographic service area. Active local and regional partnerships provide programming support and organizational sustainability. Community Unlimited is a member of American/Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, UC Rotary Club, and Union City Chamber of Commerce.

Annual Board Goal

To hire a new Executive Director.

Board of Directors (current): Meets at the Community Unlimited building, 221 Ellen Street, Union City in November, February, May and August. Call the office for dates and times.

- Judy Knowles, President
- Diane Haley, Vice-President
- Faith Robertson, Treasurer
- Alona Hayden, Secretary
- Sheryl Burlingame
- Deb Geiger
- Stacy Guertler
- Susan Morton (Emeritus)
- Julie Dunks
- Doreen Counterman

Current Central Office Staff: Chelsea Lofton, Executive Director; Lori Szarejko, GSRP Supervisor; Teasha McIntosh, Office Manager; Jolene Yeakey, Accountant/HR; Connie Kennedy, Grants Manager, and; Allie Ake, Receptionist/Assistant.

2022 was again a year of change in Community Unlimited leadership. Jenna VanDyke, Executive Director, resigned in May. The Board hired Chelsea Lofton as the new Executive Director in July. Lori Szarejko was hired in August in the newly created position of GSRP Supervisor. Connie Kennedy will be retiring soon.

2021-22 Programming

The pandemic and its many effects continued to impact Community Unlimited's 2021-22 programming. Challenges attributable to the pandemic include a decrease in student enrollment, an increase in difficult student behavior, and hiring/staffing issues. Hiring continues to be a challenge. The hope is that normalcy

will return this school year, though enrollment is still below pre-pandemic numbers. A positive is that the State of Michigan legislature has greatly increased GSRP funding two years in a row and has, for the first time, funded out-of-school time programming.

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)

CU operated **thirteen GSRP classrooms** with **219** children in Union City, Tekonsha, Homer, Harper Creek, Marshall and Lakeview school districts for the 2021-22 school year. We also offered six weeks of half day Summer GSRP in Lakeview School district for 32 children. GSRP utilizes high quality High Scope curriculum to prepare children from low/moderate income families **for success in Kindergarten**. GSRP is a vital contribution to the public-school educational mission and is so much more than "just childcare."

The 2022-23 school year has started with the same number of classrooms in the same school districts, though there are still a good number of seats to fill. Hiring staff continues to be a challenge. We appreciate the **significant revenue increase** the Governor and Michigan State legislature gave to GSRP for two years in a row. We were able to raise teacher and central office staff salaries last year and again this year, to stay competitive and retain our wonderful, trained staff.

CU-Early Childhood Connections

Staci Beckmeyer, our **Family Coach**, continued to provide resources and support to caseload families. For Oct-Sept 2021-22: the caseload served 13 families/14 children; 41 families received **Welcome Baby Baskets**; 42 children were registered in **Imagination Library** (each receives an age-appropriate book per month in the mail), and; 340 books were distributed at local events, plus 504 books were donated to Calhoun County childcare workers. The **Diaper Pantry** distributed 816 diaper packs and 274 wipe packs. All children being seen in the in-home coaching program increased their ASQ development scores this year. While there is no longer the need for CU to fund the cost of Imagination Library, donations are still very much needed for the Diaper Pantry, book give-aways, and other program expenses.

BLAST Out-of-School Time Program (OST)

CU received a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) grant to provide OST programming in **Union City Elementary and Middle Schools** from January through September 2022. We offered after school BLAST for **32** elementary students and summer BLAST for **41** elementary and middle school children. While we are excited about being able to restart this valuable local programming, the state funding stream so far has been for such short periods of time (9 months) it is difficult to hire, train and retain quality staff.

CU currently has an MDE OST Grant application under consideration to provide after school and summer programming at the **three Union City schools** from January through August 2023. Union City school staff were actively involved in planning the proposed program to better serve student needs at each of the three schools. We have a current employee, Stephanie Shultz, in place to be the BLAST Project Director. CU has also joined Kalamazoo Youth Development Network to enhance OST program quality. A grant application with Binda Foundation, Battle Creek, for \$20,000 is under consideration to fund innovative projects, investigations and field trips for the BLAST participants.

After School Pack Program provided over **1850 packs** for about **65 children** at the three schools in Union City during the 2021-22 school year. Each pack provided a weekend supply of nutritious, kid-friendly food. Thank you to all the donors to this program this year: Food Bank of South Central Michigan, Walters-Dimmick Petroleum, UC PS Food Mart (Pop Tarts!), Kodet's Hardware, and local families. We want to especially thank Stacy Guertler, Carrie Adams and Mandi McDonald, the school counselors, who distribute

the packs to students every week. More thanks to the UCHS National Honor Society students, Bob and Kathy Collins and the CU office staff who packed bags this year.

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), CU's free income tax site, operated from February to mid-April. It prepared 270 state and 228 federal returns, with \$76, 265 in Earned Income Tax Credit refunds, which increase local spending and help our community's high-need children and families. **Thank you** to our volunteers: Dennis Stanton, Sheryl Watson, Anne Lightfoote, Kris Clark, Judy Knowles, Kyle Stanton and Sandra MacDonald, as well as CU's Teasha McIntosh and Ali Ake. Our VITA site will provide free tax preparation for the coming tax season February 1-April 12 at the CU Building. Please call the office if you would like to volunteer.

Glow Run Mini-Grant Program provided a total of \$3000 in grants to four out-of-school time high school clubs: Ski, Spanish, Fashion (sewing) and Charger Pride Clubs. This year high school staff can apply using the form available from the Union City High School Principal or our office.

Community Unlimited Building

Renovation of our building began six years ago. We replaced all windows and doors, replaced the heating/cooling system, removed all asbestos, renovated the main office area including the Executive Director's office, and adult restrooms, improved the outside water drainage, replaced the roof, replaced the sidewalk on the building's east side, and completely finished one GSRP classroom, including a two-stall children's restroom.

In 2021-22 we moved and renovated the kitchen, relocated the Early Childhood Connections program to the front west room, completed a second classroom in the southeast part of the building, added a small meeting room and an office for the GSRP Supervisor, and installed a new fence on two sides of the playground. The 2022-23 plan is to **FINALLY finish** the building interior.

Sustainability

Revenue Summary:

Total revenue was **\$2,062,237** (\$1,902,176, 2020-21):

- **\$1,964,479 (95.3%)** of the revenue came from stable program **contracts** with CISD (GSRP, Coaching) and the State of Michigan (food programs)
- **\$91,184 (4.4%)** of the revenue came from non-stable or variable grants from MDE and Branch County United Way.
- **\$6,574 (.3%)** (.4%, 2020-21) were donations.

Annual audit reports, prepared by Taylor, Plant and Watkins, PC, Coldwater MI, are available upon request.

The continuity of GSRP, our main source of revenue, has been stable, with no anticipated future change, which indicates the organization's sustainability. While GSRP revenue is stable, the ECC revenue stream is variable. It is funded by revenue streams of renewing small grants, contracts, and donations. Establishing a more secure funding stream for this program is desirable, though Imagination Library, a major expense, is now covered by other area organizations. BLAST OST programming is also highly dependent on state legislative funding.

The **CU Endowment fund** with the **Branch County Community Foundation** has a value as of September 30, 2022 of **\$27,940.30**, a significant decrease from the 2020-21 value of \$34,448.14, which is regrettable but understandable. **We appreciate having community members contribute to this fund directly.**

Fundraising efforts in 2022-23 will benefit Early Childhood Connections (give away books, the Diaper Pantry and other program needs), the After School Pack program, and the Glow Run Mini-Grant program. Donors can now conveniently financially support Community Unlimited's programs:

- Use the **Donor Button** at www.communityunlimited.org. Consider an automatic monthly donation.
- Sign up at **Amazon Smile** to donate .05% of eligible purchases to Community Unlimited. Call the office if you need help setting this up.
- Send a check to **Community Unlimited, 221 Ellen Street, Union City MI 49094.**
- Donate to CU's **Endowment Fund** at **Branch County Community Foundation, 2 W. Chicago St., Coldwater, MI 49036.** Please write "Community Unlimited Endowment Fund" on your check.

Our 2021-22 Funding Partners:

- **Calhoun Intermediate School District** contracts with CU to provide thirteen full day, state-licensed GSRP classrooms and Family Coaching in rural Calhoun County.
- **Michigan's Child and Adult Care Food Program/Summer Food Service Program** reimburses meals/snacks.
- **Michigan Department of Education** - We received a \$81,450 grant for Out-of-School Time programs in Union City's school district.
- **Binda Foundation** funded \$16,000 per year for two years (2020-22) for our CU-ECC program.
- **Branch County United Way** - We receive an annual allocation for the CU-ECC program. In 2022 it was \$10,000.
- **Athens Area Community Foundation** - We had carry-over from a 2021 grant for CU-ECC.
- **Our community donors**, for whom we are **SO** grateful.

Community Unlimited is sustained by passionate people who contribute to a healthy, thriving community. We appreciate our volunteers and employees who embrace our dedication to children and families. CU is known for being eager to learn, striving toward excellence, and embracing best practice procedures, squeezing a lot out of a little while providing high quality programs, maintaining our sense of humor as we push beyond our comfort zones, taking sensible risks - and *always* asking "how does this positively impact children and families?"

Established in 1999, **Community Unlimited** is committed to improving the **quality of life** for all who live in Burlington, Sherwood and Union City. We provide enriching opportunities for **children and their families**, with a focus on **early childhood** and helping **youth** achieve their academic goals and practice community involvement.

Keep in touch with what we are doing at www.communityunlimited.org or like us on **Facebook!**

This organization is an equal opportunity provider.

Questions? Contact Chelsea Lofton at 517-741-4656 or director@communityunlimited.org



Community Unlimited Annual Financials

October 2021 - September 2022

Revenue	Budget	Actual	Notes
GSRP ¹ (Includes Carry-over from 2020-21)	\$ 1,930,804	\$ 1,762,402.01	Variable, annual
GSRP ¹ Transportation Grant (100% in and out)	\$ 91,407	\$ 91,407.00	Variable, annual
MDE ² Child & Adult Care Food Program Emergency Operating Reimbursement Program*	\$ 25,699	\$ 92,585.74	Variable, annual
CU-Early Childhood Connections Funding (ECC)**:		\$ 1,395.00	
Athens Area Community Foundation/Tekonsha*	\$ 4,081	\$ -	Renewable, variable
Binda Foundation*	\$ 7,222	\$ -	Grant ends 6.30.22
Branch County United Way*	\$ 21,512	\$ 10,000.00	Renewable, variable
CISD ³ ECC Contract	\$ 15,422	\$ 15,000.00	Annually renewed \$15,000
MDE ² Out-of-School Time Grant (Feb - Sept 2022)	\$ 119,700	\$ 66,812.73	One time grant
Restricted Donations: Building Renovation			
Imagination Library/Tekonsha and Union City*	\$ 5,107	\$ -	¹ Great Start Readiness Program
Pack Program*	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,212.00	² Michigan Department of Education
Unrestricted Carry-Over	\$ 8,970	\$ -	³ Calhoun Intermediate Sch District
Saved designated funds (Glow Run, Building, GSRP)	\$ 16,383	\$ -	
Misc (Unrestricted: Interest, Local Donors, etc)		\$ 1,471.71	
Misc (GSRP: TEACH, LARA, CISD, etc)		\$ 15,707.78	
Misc (OST: LARA, UCCS, Local Donors, etc.)		\$ 3,243.18	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 2,249,806	\$ 2,062,237.15	
EXPENSES			
Payroll by programs: Central Office	\$ 194,409	\$ 191,532.24	
Great Start Readiness Program	\$ 1,087,367	\$ 929,459.63	
Early Childhood Connections**	\$ 45,254	\$ 43,366.35	
BLAST - Out-of-School Time Program	\$ 101,450	\$ 62,343.27	
Custodian/Maintenance	\$ 6,693	\$ 8,575.00	
Benefits-fica, retirement, health, WC, unemployment	\$ 313,611	\$ 267,981.72	
Programs:			
GSRP - supplies, food, playgrounds, school district \$	\$ 111,166	\$ 277,646.64	GSRP: Includes \$79,948.04 in Reimbursed Food Costs
Transportation (to school districts; in and out)	\$ 91,407	\$ 91,407.00	
CU Early Childhood Connections-IL, WBB, supplies, diaper*	\$ 6,900	\$ 7,638.33	
BLAST - supplies, field trip fees, food	\$ 2,810	\$ 11,088.31	BLAST: Includes \$8,121.98 in Reimbursed Food Costs
Pack Program - food	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,138.48	
Transportation - program; staff mileage reimbursement	\$ 11,043	\$ 6,291.75	
Insurance - program, organization	\$ 7,085	\$ 9,361.00	
Dues, misc, licenses, bank/benefit fees	\$ 6,272	\$ 6,589.30	
Office - communication, supplies, equipment, tech contract	\$ 24,579	\$ 13,027.25	
CU Building - Utilities/repairs/supplies/garbage	\$ 14,050	\$ 15,553.27	
CU Building Renovation (kitchen, ECC, classroom)	\$ 140,542	\$ 77,399.82	
Marketing/Advertising	\$ 300	\$ 173.00	
Professional Services: audit, translation	\$ 9,170	\$ 6,044.00	
Professional Development	\$ 35,502	\$ 23,987.14	
Glow Run Mini Grants		\$ 3,000.00	
TOTAL	\$ 2,213,110	\$ 2,055,603.50	
Surplus (Deficit)/Carry-over to 2022-23	\$ 36,696	\$ 6,633.65	

*Includes carry-over from previous year

**GSRP also pays for part of the Family Coach payroll