

ANNUAL REPORT



SEPTEMBER 28TH
2021



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings Everyone.

I am finding it hard to wrap my head around the fact that I have been at The Arc Community Advocates for almost 2 years. It has been an interesting time to step into a role and much of my purview has been dealing with Covid; along with learning the ins and outs of running such a fantastic organization.

Following our annual meeting last September, we finalized and secured a lease for office space in The Central Corners on the Vine building which is managed by The Vine Neighborhood Association. We were able to secure grants from The I.S. Gilmore Foundation and The Jim Gilmore Jr. Foundation totaling \$28,000 to assist with the cost of the move itself, along with updating the flooring and some of our existing furniture, making it accessible (automatic doors!), and all the odds and ends that a big move entails. It has taken us the last 8 months to finally settle in. We began to return to the office this spring and have been open to the public since early Summer. This all culminated in our Grand Opening celebration on the first Friday in September.

While we were settling in, we still managed to keep things up and running. We hosted our 2020 Annual Inclusion Conference (virtually) and had a great turn out. Since that time, we have been rebroadcasting a number of those excellent presentations throughout the remainder of 2021.

The number of cases in 2020 were reduced during the Covid Lockdown as a direct result of the adjusted school and life schedules. In 2021, things are on the upswing and in the last year,

we have been engaged in supporting several adults with long term planning. We are excited to see how things will emerge from here. What we do know is that there are still plenty of people in our community who could use our support and we are excited and well positioned to continue to do that.

Financially the organization is in good shape. We were lucky to have secured a second Payroll Protection Grant early in 2021 and that has allowed us to retain all our staff, despite slightly reduced caseload numbers during the Covid Pandemic. We had several grantors that were able to meet our requests for additional funding and we secured a new grant from the Stryker Johnston Foundation for the first time. All of this has left us on firm financial footing for the 2021 fiscal year.

At this time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff members and the board for their ongoing support as we navigate these unusual times. I would like to send a special shout out to Kelley Howard and Allison Hammond. Without their (almost) daily support, I am not sure we could have navigated these last 2 years as well as we have.

There is a lot of information in this report. Feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Schwitek', written in a cursive style.

Sheldon Schwitek
Executive Director

BOARD & STAFF

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2020-21

Allison Hammond - Board Chair

Steve Leep - Secretary

David Ullrey - Treasurer

DIRECTORS

John Argo

Sarah Carmany

D'Jaris Coles-White

Phil Copeland

Kelley Howard

Jen Nap

STAFF

Sheldon Schwitek, *Executive Director*

Annie Gaertner, *Individual & Family Advocate*

LaTaynia Conant, *Marketing & Communications
Coordinator*

Kati Wright, *Individual & Family Advocate*

Beverly McBrien, *LMSW, Special Education
Advocate*

ELECTIONS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & NEW DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Tamiko Garrett, Director

Grace, Gheen, Director

Anne Lipsey, Director

Jim West, Director

Tiffany White, Director

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME

ALLISON HAMMOND, BOARD CHAIR

ADULT ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT

LAURA AND DAVID DETHORNE

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD & STAFF

SHELDON SCHWITEK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS AND SERVICE UPDATES

SHELDON SCHWITEK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION OF 2020-21 SLATE OF NOMINEES & ELECTION

ALLISON HAMMOND, BOARD CHAIR

GENERAL MEMBER COMMENTS

ADJOURN

Joseph A. Cekola Memorial Fund



Nick Cekola

Joe Cekola was a pillar of the community in Kalamazoo. Not only was “Big Joe” a successful entrepreneur and businessman operating a number of iconic establishments in the Kalamazoo area, he was also generous with his time and money, finding ways to support the community around him. He was known to help family, friends, and practically anyone who showed up. He did this with little fanfare or public acknowledgement and often in secret. His philosophy around philanthropy was that “it was important to give until it hurt and then to give a little more.”

Big Joe was also a family man; married to Dee, they had 6 children and each one of them has made a contribution to the family businesses over the years. The eldest sibling, Nick, experiences Down Syndrome and the family was encouraged to place him in an

institution after he was born. Like a number of families in the Kalamazoo Community, the Cekola’s chose to keep Nick at home. This choice came with a personal and financial burden; yet not a single family member would say that it wasn’t worth it. Nick’s siblings would agree that he is the glue that holds them all together and their life would be so much less without him.

In 1994, Big Joe Cekola passed away at the age of 62. Yet, his legacy endures through his children, who continue to be business owners and entrepreneurs in Kalamazoo and beyond. The family also wanted to continue his legacy of giving. So, in 1995, the family gathered to discuss how to utilize the generosity of the community following

their dad's passing. That decision has led to an annual fundraiser, paid for by the family, with all the proceeds going into The Joseph A. Cekola Memorial Fund. The intention was to honor Big Joe's love of family, generosity, and kindness towards others. The fund's mission is to provide financial assistance for the families with permanently disabled children who desire to maintain the family unit by caring for the child in their home.

The Arc Community Advocates is proud assist with their mission by screening and allocating funds to families who meet the fund's criteria.

In 2020, we helped 2 families. So far in 2021, and The Cekola Fund just approved an application to assist a family in upgrading their new van to make it

wheelchair accessible for their 5-year-old daughter. If you know or meet a family with specific needs, please have them reach out to The Arc Community Advocates.



Cekola Family

The mission of the fund is to provide financial assistance for the families with permanently disabled children who desire to maintain the family unit by caring for the child in their home.

SERVICE IN NUMBERS

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020

CLIENT CONTACTS: 424

TIME SPENT ON CLIENT CONTACTS: 267 HOURS

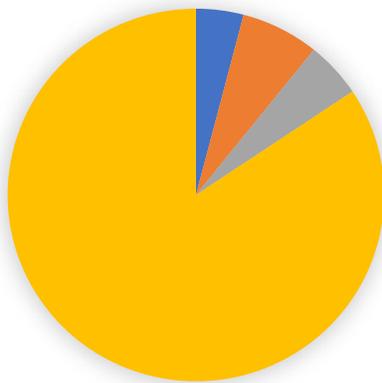
TOTAL SERVED:

Intakes 4%

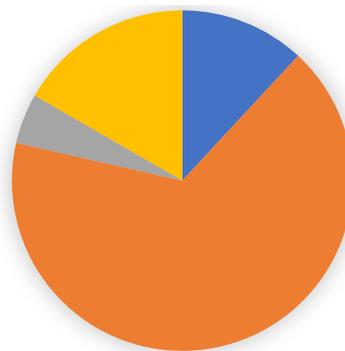
Screenings 7%

Trainings 5%

Community Engagement 84%



ETHNICITY



African American
12%

Latino
5%

Caucasian
67%

Other
16%

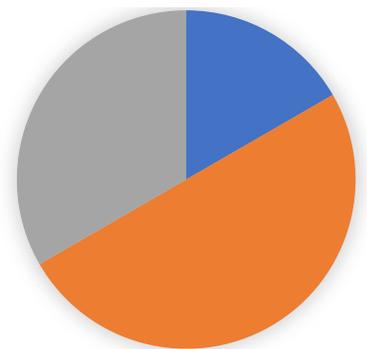
INCOME LEVEL

Individuals with and IDD are 1-2 times more likely to be in poverty.

Above Poverty
17%

Below Poverty
50%

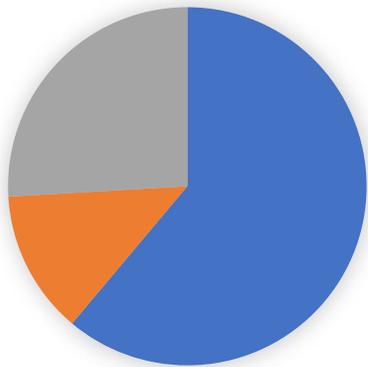
Did Not Disclose
33%



YEAR IN REVIEW

CLIENT GOALS

Each client has an advocacy goal whose team (advocate, school, guardian) works hard to achieve.



Completed 61%

In Progress 13%

No Longer Being Pursued 26%

AREAS OF ADVOCACY

Majority of our clients reach out for help in Education Advocacy, but we also provide advocacy in other areas!

Community Inclusion 9%

Education 67%

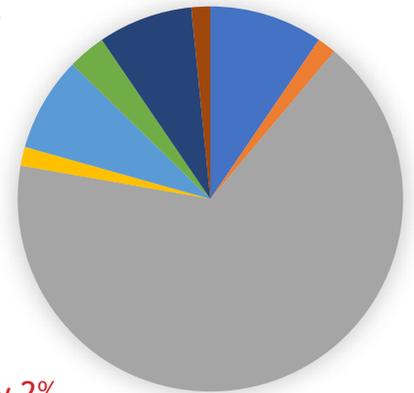
Housing 3%

Employment 2%

Long Term Planning 8%

Power of Attorney 8%

Medicaid/Social Security 2%



EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY

BY COUNTY

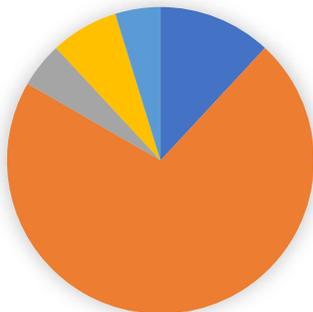
Berrien 12%

Kalamazoo 71%

Lewis/Cass 5%

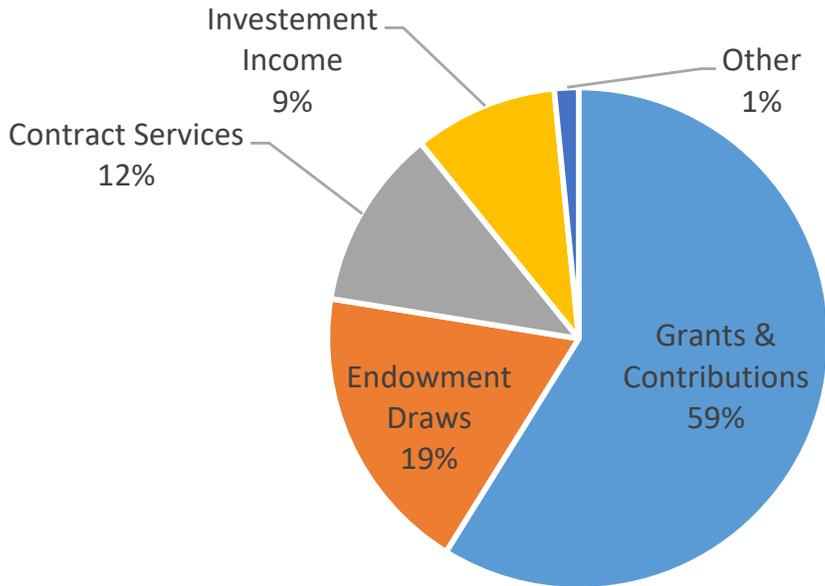
St. Joseph 7%

VanBuren 5%



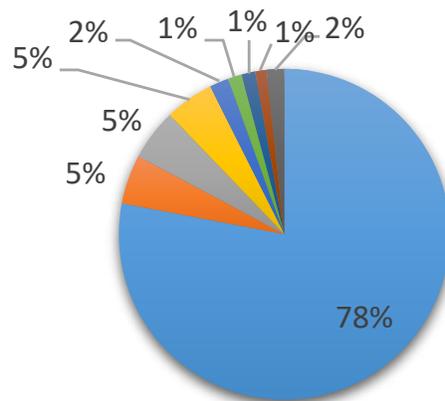
2020 Finance Report

2020 Income



2020 Expenses

- Salaries & Wages
- Facilities
- Audit & Accounting
- Office Supplies
- Depreciation
- Dues & Subscriptions
- Inclusion Conference
- Insurance
- Other





THANK YOU SUPPORTERS

- AMAZON SMILE
- ANGELA FIORI
- BRIAN SOMERS
- CATALYNA WESTCOTT
- CHARLES LANDIS
- D. K. FITZSIMMONS
- DAVID & DEBORAH SACKETT
- DENNIS & LAUREN O'MEARA
- DEREK AND LATAYNIA CONANT
- DOROTHY U DALTON FOUNDATION
- EARL HAAS FUND AND RESPONSIVE GRANTS
- EATON CORPORATION
- ELIZABETH SEMAAN
- EVELYN STURKIN
- FRONTSTREAM
- GEORGE & GAIL MARTIN
- GIRL SCOUT TROOP 80449
- GRACE TIFFANY
- HAROLD AND GRACE UPJOHN FOUNDATION
- IRVING S GILMORE FOUNDATION
- JAMIE AND KELLY SCHURING
- JEX JUDD
- JOHN E. FETZER INSTITUTE FUND
- JULIE HEATH
- KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION - GLEN C. & GAIL C. SMITH FUND
- KELLEY HOWARD
- LORRAINE MOSIER
- MARILYN HAMILTON
- MARVIN AND ROSALIE OKUN FOUNDATION
- MOLLY MORGAN
- NETWORK FOR GOOD
- PATRICIA GARBER
- PFIZER ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN
- PFIZER FOUNDATION MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAM
- RICHARD & SANDRA EDWARDS
- SARA SHIELDS
- SASHA OSPINA
- SUSANNE JOHNSTON
- TYLER HOWARD
- VICKI JOFFE
- YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL GRANT

2020/21 HIGHLIGHTS

Staffing

- Hired a new part-time advocate in 2020
- Hired a new full-time advocate in 2021 as Director of Advocacy stepped down to a part time position

Covid

- Navigated organization through transition to pandemic work environment and the return to in person work in 2021

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health

- Provided trainings to SWMBH in 2020 & 2021
- New Funding
- Pursued and applied for grants from 3 new foundations in 2020
- 3 additional foundations in 2021

Stryker Johnston Foundation

- Funded us for the first time in 2020 for the 2021 fiscal year
- Applying for a more significant grant for 2022

Inclusion Conference

- 2020 was in person - We held the conference 1 day before the state issued Stay at Home orders
- 2021 was virtual - Utilizing some of the recorded presentations for rebroadcast monthly throughout 2021

Payroll Protection Grant

- Received one for 2020 & 2021
- 2020 grant has been forgiven
- 2021 is in process to be forgiven

Office Relocation

- Received an additional \$28,000 from 2 local foundations to fund the move.
- December 2020, new vinyl flooring installed and painted prior to the move.
- Moved January 7, 2020
- Completed Accessibility accommodations finally in September

Michigan Think Tank on Planning

- Worked with statewide professionals with the goal of shaping Person Centered Planning in Michigan

Charting the Life Course

- Staff participated in the introductory course
- Executive Director will be certified as a CtLC Ambassador
- Working with ISK Supports Coordinators to embed the planning process in their work

Board Recruitment

- 5 new board members in 2020, 2 of who are people who experience disability
- 5 new board members proposed for 2021

Continuing Education credits

- Able to provide Social Work CEU's in 2020
- Able to provide SCECH's for teachers in 2022

