

HOCKING ATHENS PERRY COMMUNITY ACTION 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



HAPCAP: PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Hocking Athens Perry Community Action mobilizes resources to empower individuals and communities through advocacy and quality services that promote self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

The cover of this report features a new woodcut by artist Michael Keyes representing HAPCAP's collaborative work fighting hunger during 2020, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty-five years ago, we commissioned Michael to create a woodcut commemorating the opening of the Regional Food Center, now the Southeast Ohio Foodbank. HAPCAP has been fighting the War on Poverty for over 55 years, through several presidential administrations, shifting political landscapes, and economic turns. In 2020, all of us were faced with a storm unlike any other: a global health pandemic.

The pandemic not only introduced a new, infectious, and deadly disease; it also cast a harsh light on our nation's socioeconomic and racial inequalities. This pandemic has, and continues to disproportionately impact low-income families, but our team faced the crisis head-on from day , knowing that our response would be critical reinforcement woven into our country's frayed social safety net.

I want to take a moment to recognize the strength and commitment of our staff and community partners who have served as a lifeline for our most vulnerable neighbors.

I am also incredibly grateful for the support of you, our donors and our volunteers. Your generosity over the course of this difficult year has been nothing short of inspiring. Thanks to you, we will continue to work to deliver quality, responsive programs that mitigate the impacts of poverty in southeast Ohio. We will stand in this fight alongside our neighbors for as long as it takes, working to support our communities, until everyone has everything they need.



Kelly Hatas, Executive Director



Mary Anne Kieliszewski, Director of Finance & Administration



Carolyn Conley, Director of Transportation



Glen Crippen, Director of Housing & Community Development



Chris Delamatre, Director of Child Development



Jessica Stroh, Director of Community Services



Andrew Mayle, Director of Food & Nutrition

FOOD & NUTRITION

In March of 2020, the Southeast Ohio Foodbank's volunteer base was decimated due to the stay-at-home orders implemented to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Previously, most of the volunteers were college organizations, senior groups, and people with disabilities. Though the Foodbank was flooded with calls and emails from people inquiring how they could help, the doors to the Regional Food Center had to remain closed.

When Governor Mike DeWine called in the National Guard to help the state's food banks, HAPCAP staff felt an incredible sense of relief that help was on the way. Yet the troops who came into the Regional Food Center proved to be more than just hands on deck. They were a calm, steady, and reliable support in our agency and in our communities in a time of deep uncertainty.

Guard members ensured the efficiency of food distributions, speeding up the loading process and directing traffic as if they were conducting an orchestra. The National Guard men and women deployed to the Foodbank provided increased sanitation in the warehouse, and food boxes seemed to be assembled at the speed of light.

Lindsey Hackworth, HAPCAP's Community Relations Specialist, stepped up to the task of coordinating each mobile food distribution for all ten counties. Without the guard, she says, the Foodbank would not have had the capacity to feed the thousands of people needing assistance.

"Each month, the National Guard has done the work of about 100 volunteers. We have been able to increase our mobile distributions by 600% thanks to them. Their work has allowed us to reach more homes in Southeast Ohio, and it has been lifesaving."

The presence of the National Guard meant protection for Southeast Ohio. Their friendly faces were felt even behind the presence of their masks. The troops were Ohioans serving Ohioans, and families across the Foodbank's coverage area were incredibly gracious and grateful for their service. The impact their dedication has had on the Foodbank's operations will be felt for years to come.





HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the pandemic, estimates showed that nearly 40% of Americans already did not have the funds to cover a \$400 emergency expense. With massive and sudden layoffs in early 2020, alarm bells rang as rent and mortgage payments began to pile up.

The CARES Act recognized that people cannot follow stay-at-home orders if they lose their home. As a result, millions of dollars of funds poured into Ohio to assist with housing security. It was Ohio's Community Action Agencies who were called upon to administer these funds, and HAPCAP answered the call for its three counties without a second blink.

Stories poured in to front line staff about situations that were serious even before the pandemic. Grandparents who were raising grandchildren on a tightly fixed income found themselves having to pay for internet access for schooling. An extra ten dollars for cleaning supplies on a grocery bill could mean ten dollars not going towards a utility payment, which evolves into late fees and a stressful, disastrous debt spiral underneath the weight of a global pandemic.

Christine from Hocking County found herself navigating job loss, homeschooling three children, and surviving domestic violence in the wake of the pandemic. Her connections with Integrated Services for Behavioral Health led her to HAPCAP, where she was able to find relief in mortgage assistance.

"HAPCAP was able to provide me with a little hope when there wasn't a lot of it," says Christine. "It was such a huge relief to have something like this. It truly humbled me."

Thanks to HAPCAP's efforts, Christine was able to stay safe in her own home. Though there are millions of stories like hers throughout the expanse of Community Action, each story is different, a fingerprint left from the people who held on and weathered the storm. Federal funds are still coming in to keep people afloat, and HAPCAP will continue to answer each call with both urgency and compassion.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Hand washing has long been a staple of basic hygiene, and panic from the pandemic wiped out entire stores of soap and sanitizer. Yet the poverty and infrastructure challenges in some Appalachian communities leaves many residents without basic running water, posing a health hazard for the whole family that is only exacerbated during a global public health crisis. HAPCAP's Water Bill Assistance Program became a lifeline, keeping 833 families connected to this vital service.

There are 34 water districts in HAPCAP's core service area. In the days leading up to the stay-at-home orders, HAPCAP staff reached out to all 34 of those districts and found that each municipality had residents behind on their water bills, putting them in danger of a shutoff.

"There are different ways that families can be flexible with their budgets," says Amanda Sawvel, HAPCAP's Community Resource Navigator for Athens County. "You can go to the food pantry that month so you can pay your rent, and you can turn the heat down to save on gas or electric. But it is terrifying to have your water turned off. You enter survival mode. You feel like you are in danger and your house no longer feels like home."

Though the entire country was overwhelmed with the glaring effects of its socioeconomic inequities, the first step in making sure that everyone was safe was to turn on the water. Communities in all three counties felt the sense of urgency in helping their neighbors restore water access. Concerned neighbors contributed thousands of dollars in discretionary funds, ensuring that HAPCAP's Community Resource Navigators could help anyone and everyone who approached them with this need.

In addition to HAPCAP's resources to ensure that faucets will run, leadership is also fighting to improve infrastructure and advocate for policies to protect and empower vulnerable residents. Water is not just a necessity. Water is a fundamental human right, with or without a pandemic.

TRANSPORTATION

While the rest of the world felt ground to a halt, the wheels kept turning in public transportation. For essential workers and others in our community with mobility needs, transit is essential. Public transit also ensures access to essential services. HAPCAP's transportation programs navigated the new obstacles in front of them with speed and creativity.

In February 2020, Logan Public Transit expanded its horizons to serve all of Hocking County. Staff were eager to reach neighbors from every neck of the woods, but COVID-19 had different plans.

Ridership fell dramatically as residents sheltered in place. Drivers and staff immediately implemented the new CDC cleaning and disinfecting protocols for sanitizing all of their vehicles. Masks went from recommended to mandatory, all in the effort to protect drivers and passengers who often fell into high-risk categories for severe complications from COVID-19.

Logan Public Transit worked closely with Bus Services in Canal Winchester to develop a protection prototype for the vehicles. Though the science surrounding the disease was ever-changing, the solutions were simple: mask, distance, and shield. Clear plastic curtains were installed in the vans along with hand sanitizer dispensers. Boxes from food pantries were delivered to doorsteps. HAPCAP limited the number of passengers on vehicles to promote social distancing. Anyone who needed a mask received one, and a transit aide was hired to ensure each vehicle stayed safe and sanitized.

Logan Public Transit is a tight-knit group. The program is the perfect example of how HAPCAP is staffed with members of the community serving their community. The deep connection HAPCAP's transportation programs have built with their communities has driven this urgency to protect passengers. Athens Public Transit, Athens on Demand, GoBus, Mobility Management, and Logan Public Transit are still working diligently to develop innovative solutions to keep people on the move. Drivers and staff are focused on the road ahead, through the pandemic and beyond.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The pandemic showed how the creativity of HAPCAP's child development division goes beyond the curriculum and the classroom. Before concepts of "remote learning" took shape across the country, teachers and home visitors connected with students by uploading story time sessions to YouTube. Children were so excited to see their teachers that they asked their parents to play the videos multiple times. Food boxes and cleaning supplies were loaded into school buses and delivered to front doors. Home visits were transformed into porch visits, with families and teachers socializing safely.

Staff knew early on how the effects of the pandemic would extend beyond COVID-19 itself. Patti Anderson, a home visitor with Corning Head Start, was particularly aware of how limited access to mental health services would affect her families.

"We saw people in our Head Start families who were in recovery, but suffered a relapse due to the isolation. A virtual support group was just not the same as connecting with someone in person."

Appalachian Ohio was not isolated from the effects of the pandemic. If anything, families were made more vulnerable due to the already-limited access to basic needs. Not having broadband means not having access to telehealth. Not having minutes on a cell phone means not being able to call a sponsor during a difficult day. This drastic change in routine combined with the survival mode that many families already experience can have consequences on the health of the entire family. Yet the families and children experiencing such hardship have an advocate and a friend in people like Patti.

Head Start is one of the most successful and supported social welfare programs in the United States. Even through the pandemic, its strength in empowering families has never wavered. Such national success is attributed to local teachers and staff who are fiercely committed to the families they serve. Supporting families means supporting the future, and thanks to HAPCAP's Head Start programs, Southeast Ohio's future is expected to shine especially brighter.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2020



HAPCAP received over a 200% increase in donations during the pandemic, a testament to the compassion and generosity of Southeast Ohio. We could not fit all 3,000+ donors in this publication, so if you'd like to see your name, please visit our Website at hapcap.org/thankyou.



360 BOXES
of cleaning supplies
delivered to Head
Start families

60,000+

meals provided to
seniors through
Meals on Wheels
and drive-thru
congregate dining



5.64 MILLION

pounds of food
distributed by
the Foodbank



1,300+

households received
rent or mortgage
assistance



1 MILLION+

miles traveled
by GoBus
throughout Ohio



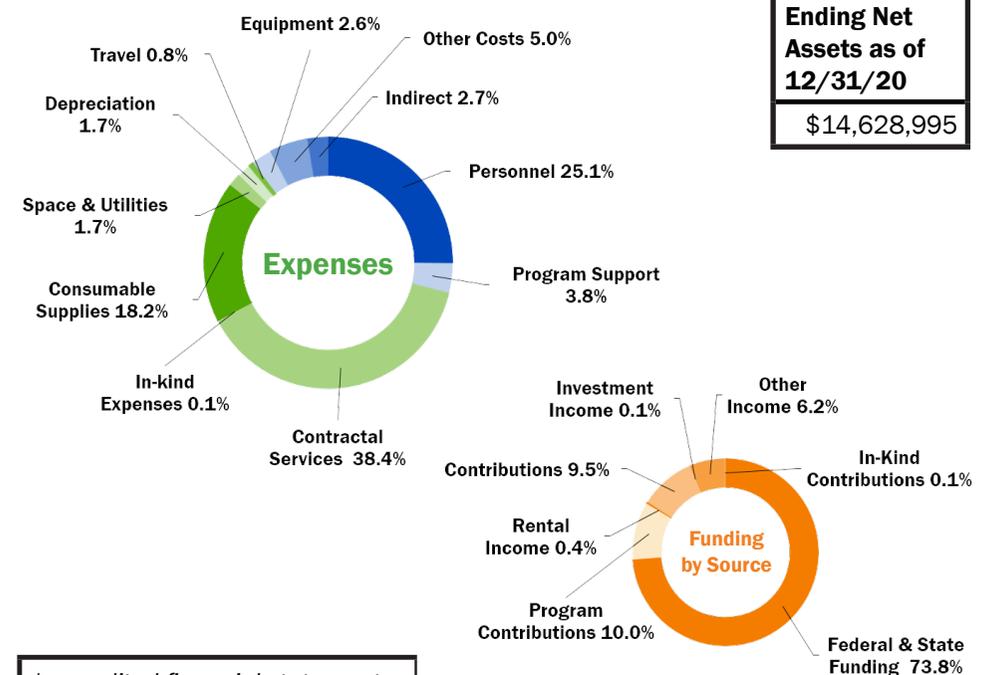
4,900+
HOUSEHOLDS

received assistance
with their energy bills.

"[I have] hearing loss in both ears. So hearing aids and lip reading makes it difficult to secure a job with a mask. So thankful for this program to help me get my house payments caught up."

2020 Financials*

Funding by Activity	Revenue	Expense	Net
Housing & Community Development	\$1,868,772	\$1,743,947	\$124,825
Child Development	\$4,923,985	\$4,931,897	(\$7,912)
Food & Nutrition	\$8,998,097	\$9,018,625	(\$20,528)
Management & General	\$1,820,180	\$628,088	\$1,192,092
Community Service Programs	\$5,458,389	\$5,440,180	\$18,209
Transit	\$17,809,807	\$17,608,858	\$200,949
Fundraising	\$3,551,670	\$184,422	\$3,367,248
Total	\$44,430,900	\$39,556,017	\$4,874,883



**Ending Net
Assets as of
12/31/20**
\$14,628,995

*unaudited financial statements

HAPCAP Board of Directors

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Remembering Mary Dailey

1958 - 2020



“When I think of Mary, I don’t want to be fumbling for the words of a eulogy - I want to be sitting with her in the office, talking over the latest in the endless string of operational hiccups, hearing stories of weekend dune buggy rides and the shenanigans of dogs and donkeys, basking in her common sense and wry humor. To say that I miss her doesn’t capture the extent of the loss, for our local transit community and for those of us lucky enough to have known her.”

- Michael Lachmann

Former Athens Public Transit Coordinator



- Additional Counties Served by HAPCAP Programs
- Core Service Area

