

# COA YOUTH & FAMILY CENTERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020



*Serving Children • Strengthening Families • Building Community • Since 1906*



# DEAR COA FRIENDS,

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. challenged us when he stated, “The ultimate measure of a man (sic) is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken more than 200,000 American lives, closed businesses and schools, and has driven many into isolation. And this pandemic has taken a disproportionate toll on people of color, exposing the deep-rooted and pervasive impacts of racism. While facing extraordinary challenges created by COVID-19, we must also reckon with racial injustices which are all too ubiquitous in our city, our nation, and throughout history.

During this crisis, and with your great support, COA has accepted and risen to the challenge. COA implemented strict health and safety protocols: enhanced cleaning, social distancing, mandatory masks, and more. With these measures in place, COA continued providing critically needed services and support for more than 10,000 low-income Milwaukee children and families:

- We kept our Early Education Centers open to provide critical child care to families of essential workers.
- Even with periods of quarantine, COA's HIPPI home visitation and instruction program reached more children and parents than ever before, and 86% of all families continued and completed the entire school year.
- With classrooms closed, COA implemented safe youth engagement programming with arts, STEM programming, and academics at both of our centers, six schools and two parks.
- We expanded our food pantry at our Goldin Center and launched a new meal program in the Amani neighborhood. In 69 days, COA's food pantry provided more than 62,000 pounds of food to 12,348 people; and in 102 days our free summer meal program served 30,954 meals.

The pandemic has demonstrated the interconnected nature of our world both in danger and in opportunity. It's an invaluable lesson reminding us once again of the words of Dr. King: “No one is free until we are all free.” In July, COA issued a public solidarity statement alongside other local nonprofits pledging to become anti-racist organizations, and to help drive collective and sustained action toward greater racial equity in Milwaukee.

In this moment of challenge and controversy, COA is more committed than ever to helping Milwaukee children and families reach their greatest potential. And most importantly, we are committed to doing so together along with our dedicated staff, board of directors, supporters, volunteers, community partners, and of course, the children and families we serve.

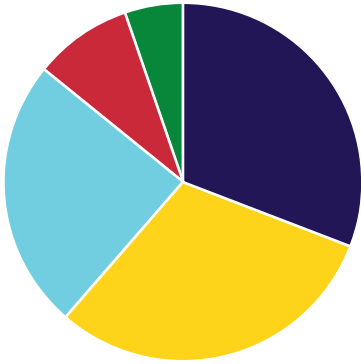
Sincerely,



*Thomas P. Schneider*  
Executive Director

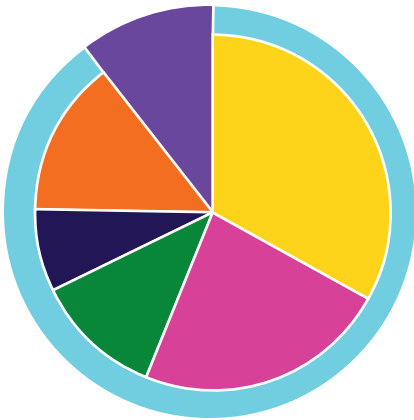


*Christine McLaughlin*  
Board President



## ANNUAL OPERATING REVENUE

Contributions and Grants	\$2,235,339	30.9%
Program Service Fees	\$2,209,114	30.5%
Government Grants	\$1,785,273	24.6%
United Way	\$636,734	8.8%
Special Events	\$378,124	5.2%
<b>Total Annual Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,244,584</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

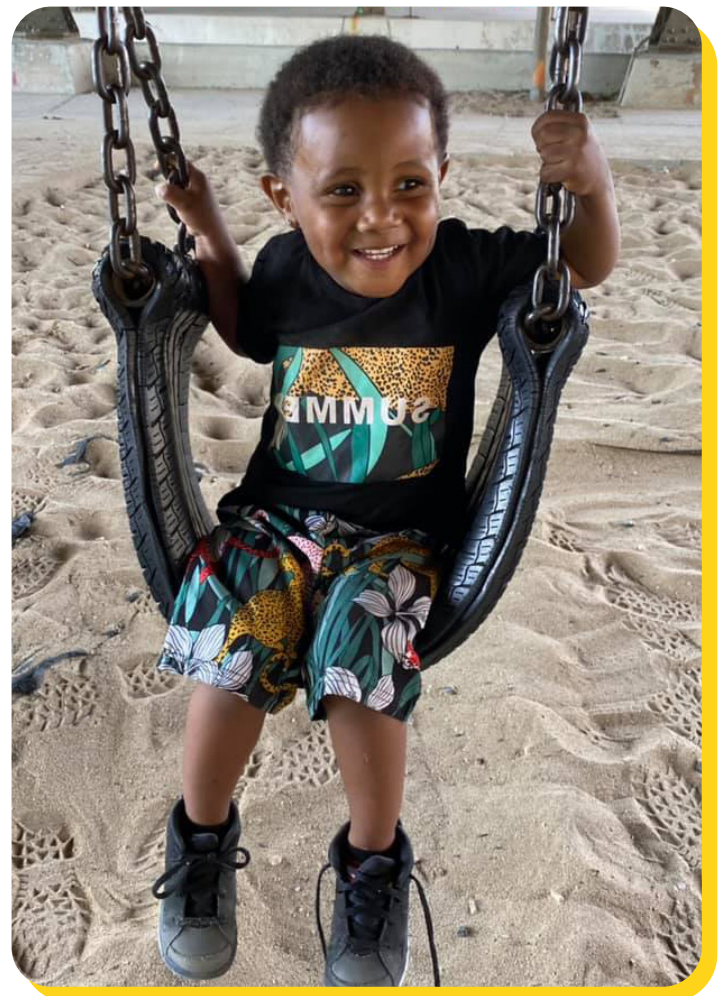


## EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

Early Childhood Education	\$2,394,859	33.2%
Youth Development	\$1,671,202	23.1%
Family Support Services	\$843,570	11.6%
Camping	\$553,812	7.6%
Community Services	\$1,031,551	14.2%
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,494,994</b>	<b>89.7%</b>
<b>Total Management &amp; Fundraising</b>	<b>\$745,980</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
<b>Total Annual Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,240,974</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



Charity Navigator awarded COA its highest 4-star rating for the 16th consecutive year. COA is Charity Navigator's highest rated children's and family services agency in Wisconsin!





## Programs

# EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

COA's Early Child Development programs offer a continuum of care for children (ages birth to six) and their families providing building blocks for healthy child development, successful parenting, and lifelong achievement.



## EARLY EDUCATION CENTERS

COA's Early Education Centers are prioritizing care for children of essential workers at this time.

### *One grateful parent said it best:*

**"COA has always been there for our family and is now more than ever. Because COA is open for essential workers, we can focus on our work while our children receive amazing care. We trust COA to keep our family safe. COA is a lifesaver!"**

# 99%

**of children at COA's Riverwest EEC improved their literacy and cognitive skills!**

## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS

COA's Harry and Rose Samson Family Resource Center (FRC) and Ethel Nutis Gill FRC give parents and their children access to vital resources like parenting classes, a food pantry, referrals, clothing, and support groups.

This year there were over  
**9,500 visits**  
from children and their families.



Families gathered daily (socially distanced) at COA's Kilbourn-Kadish Park for "Stories in the Park"



# HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY)

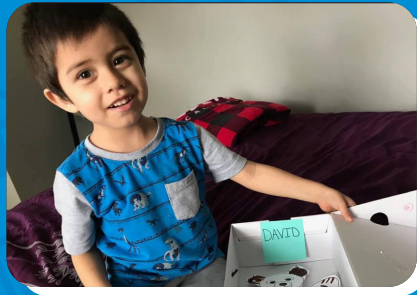
HIPPY equips parents/caregivers with the skills, tools, and confidence to be their child's first and most important teacher. HIPPY's 30-week curriculum is delivered in the home, through one-on-one peer instruction, and in the family's preferred language.

**This year, HIPPY Milwaukee served a record**

**758** children  
& parents

Through

**7,176** home  
visits



When Safer at Home orders were issued in mid-March, HIPPY's dedicated peer instructors ("Parent Partners") quickly pivoted to remote instruction. **86% of HIPPY children completed the full program year, up from 84% the previous year.**

Over 99% of parents improved their relationship with their child as a result of HIPPY. One parent said, **"HIPPY helped me better understand my child; we are two best friends now."**

## TERESA'S HIPPY FAMILY

**"With HIPPY, there's always someone who's got your back!"**

Teresa is a mother of three who joined HIPPY with her daughter Rosa. Rosa was born with a rare neurological condition causing developmental delays. Because of her condition, Rosa's family saw her as fragile making it hard to know how to best support her and connect as a family.

Everything changed for Teresa and her family when she joined HIPPY. Teresa's Parent Partner worked closely with her, teaching her activities to do with Rosa to guide her development. Rosa is now doing all sorts of things Teresa didn't realize she could do on her own, like selecting her clothes and dressing herself each day. Teresa built a mini library in the family home and filled it with books from COA. While Rosa cannot yet talk, read, or write, Teresa discovered she enjoys being read to. Rosa's book choices have become a powerful tool for her to express her feelings and needs to her family.



Teresa says that HIPPY has "integrated the whole family." They are closer than ever and even started eating regular meals together. Rosa's growth and self-confidence have skyrocketed. As a mom, Teresa has learned to let go of her fears. "As parents, we can all use a little help," said Teresa. "With HIPPY, there's always someone who's got your back!"



## Programs

# YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

COA's positive youth development program supports the achievement of Milwaukee youth (ages seven - 18) through quality programs and resources that empower these youth to realize their full potential. Programs encourage youth to grow academically, socially, physically, and as leaders.



## PRETEEN AND TEEN PROGRAMMING

COA's preteen and teen programs at our Goldin and Riverwest Centers holistically engaged 600 youth and their families this year through eight integrated modules: Academics, STEM, Arts, Sports & Recreation, Leadership Development, Life Skills, Career/Post Secondary, and Parent Engagement.

## PROGRAM COLLABORATIONS

COA collaborated with community partners to enhance the impact of its youth program: SPARK Literacy, the Wisconsin Humane Society "Book Buddies" program (pictured right), Milwaukee Bucks, Milwaukee Admirals, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Milwaukee LGBT Center, Cream City Skills Basketball, Safe & Sound, Discovery World, and more!



## COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS & SAFE PLACES

COA partners with Milwaukee Public Schools to operate six Community Learning Centers (CLCs) and Safe Places citywide. CLCs and Safe Places provide hundreds of Milwaukee youth a safe and fun place to learn and play after school and throughout the summer. Last December, The Milwaukee Kitchen Cabinet supported COA during their "3 Days of Christmas" initiative with a holiday party at the Doerfler CLC (pictured left).

To best support Milwaukee youth through the COVID-19 crisis, COA was authorized to continue safely serving youth citywide at each of its locations. Programming is focused on supporting youth and families in distance learning.



# 2019 Milwaukee Film Festival

## COA MEDIA STUDENTS PRODUCE FILM



Teens in COA's Music & Video Production program wrote, performed, and produced an original short film, *Exposure*, which was selected as a finalist and screened at the 2019 Milwaukee Film Festival in October to a packed house at the Oriental Theatre. *Exposure* was the only youth-produced film selected by The Milwaukee Film Festival.

## CAMP HELEN BRACHMAN

Family Camps at COA's Camp Helen Brachman in Almond, WI, offer Milwaukee families a weekend departure from city life and daily stressors to share in new adventures, explore the outdoors, bond, and make memories that last a lifetime. Activities include hiking, swimming, canoeing, campfires, arts & crafts, games, storytelling, family meals, and more.

**In 2019, 53 families (216 individuals) attended year-round family camps at Camp Helen Brachman. Here's what they had to say about their experience:**

*"Camp Helen Brachman is our family's favorite 'get out' spot! We love it here!"*

*"This was truly a relaxing retreat for my family. Much needed."*

*"Thank you so much for these wonderful memories. Our family will cherish them forever."*



Family Camps offer so much more than just a fun time. They're a therapeutic retreat into nature to help families restore, recharge, and develop greater resiliency for coping with life's challenges. **Family Camps will take on a greater significance in the coming months and years as we heal from the collective trauma of COVID-19 and national crises of racial and social injustice.**

**Note:** Because of COVID-19, for the first time in 114 years, COA was unable to host summer sessions for youth at Camp Helen Brachman. We look forward to youth sessions as soon as possible.



# AMANI

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COA's award-winning Community Development initiatives enhance Milwaukee neighborhoods through events, programs, and services that empower residents, strengthen families, and build community.

### COA's community development efforts in the Amani neighborhood have seen a year full of successes:

- Responding to COVID-19-related food insecurity, COA launched a meal program in partnership with Hunger Task Force and Milwaukee Center for Independence. Over 102 days COA provided 30,954 free, nutritious meals to children and families.
- COA and the Children's Hospital operated its family and pediatric clinic at the Goldin Center, improving access to healthcare.
- COA continued to work with residents and community partners to engage residents, build neighborhood assets, and increase safety and well-being.
- COA's summer programming in Moody Park included a Juneteenth Celebration, gardening with Teens Grow Greens, and COA's *Beyond the Book Bag* back to school event in August.
- Cue the Sun, COA youth artists, and the *Hip Hop Lead Project* brought awareness to Milwaukee's lead poisoning problem by using hip hop, poetry, and music videos.
- Thanks to the work of COA, residents, and neighborhood partners, the child poverty rate in Amani decreased by 21% from 2016-2019.

At COA's *Community Family Night* more than 800 residents gathered for fun and food, and to honor long-time community leader Dr. Lester Carter for his years of community service.



Children and youth from COA's programs program created a mural.







# JUNETEENTH

## & SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

This summer, COA held a Juneteenth celebration at Moody Park in Amani. 100 people gathered for a fun and uplifting day of community activities. Staff and volunteers barbecued and participated in family programming with the theme, *Social Justice through a Child's Eyes*.



The celebration kicked off with a community clean-up. Volunteers from Outreach Community Health Centers joined COA staff and children to assist in neighborhood beautification while getting to know neighbors around the area. Children and families enjoyed an outdoor picnic and decorated posters. Cue the Sun set up a mobile recording studio, giving youth a safe space to share and archive their thoughts on racial and social justice.

The day wrapped up with a *Community March for Social Justice*, a peaceful march through Amani led by COA children, families, and staff. COA's Juneteenth celebration gave children a platform to "let everyone know that Black Lives Matter!"



# GOLDIN FOOD PANTRY

Communities across Milwaukee are feeling the impact of COVID-19. COA responded by expanding its food pantry in partnership with the Hunger Task Force. **In response to COVID-19, in 69 days COA's food pantry provided more than 62,000 pounds of food to 12,348 people**

COA and Hunger Task Force also partnered with Milwaukee Center for Independence to launch a daily free meal program. **Between April and August, 30,954 free, nutritious meals were served to children and families.**

COA continues to collaborate with residents and community partners to advance food security and food justice in Amani. COA's work and collaboration with community partners and residents demonstrates just how essential community ties are in times of crisis.



## RIVERWEST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

For over 40 years, COA has worked to enhance the Riverwest neighborhood by providing programs and resources that support neighborhood families. Our nationally accredited Early Education Center, Family Resource Center, and Youth Development programs holistically serve children, families, and whole communities. COA worked with the City to create Kilbourn-Kadish Park, a welcoming community destination and home to Milwaukee's most iconic skyline view. Kilbourn-Kadish Park was a finalist for the 2020 MANDI awards for its impact as a welcoming public space that builds community.

This summer, Kilbourn-Kadish Park was a vital site for safe, outdoor programming. Children and families social distanced and enjoyed Stories in the Park, arts & crafts, and small group playtime. COA's Read Everywhere citywide book distribution program distributed thousands of free, brand new books to children and families.



# NEW @ COA

COA enhanced how we serve families by improving facilities and expanding programming!



## Camp Helen Brachman Renovations

This summer COA began extensive renovations at Camp Helen Brachman (CHB), COA's 206-acre rural camp facility in Almond, WI. The projects included a new dock and waterfront shed, general cabin maintenance and painting, bathroom and shower upgrades, and restoration of trails and wildlife habitats. COA is also restoring CHB's Pickerel Lake waterfront, that was damaged by flooding.

## New HIPPY Summer Programming

This year, HIPPY expanded to include summer programming for the first time ever by engaging children and families year round! Families participated in safe and fun learning activities in Kilbourn-Kadish Park, and staff distributed extended learning packets full of exciting summer lessons for the whole family to enjoy.



## THE HOLLYWOOD GALA

Each year, COA rolls out the red carpet on Hollywood's biggest night for its annual Hollywood Gala. This glamorous event, presented by the Marcus Corporation and National Association of Theater Owners of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, raises funds to support COA's life changing programs and features a formal dinner, silent auction, and a live screening of the Academy Awards. At this year's 22nd Annual Hollywood Gala, **COA raised over \$230,000 to benefit Milwaukee children and families!** Special thanks to our 2020 Hollywood Gala Chair Nancy Farino, our Rising Star honoree Lailaa Crockerhan, and to all of the committee members and community sponsors who made this event a success.



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*The generous support of our wonderful donors enables us to change the lives of children and families throughout our community.*

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COA volunteers play an important role in our commitment to serving children, strengthening families, and building community. To become a volunteer **visit** [coa-yfc.org/volunteer](http://coa-yfc.org/volunteer).







Employees from GE Healthcare held a build-a-bike event and donated 20 bikes to COA kids.

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## CONTACT US:

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