



2020-21 Our Year in Review

Creating a better community by helping families and individuals in need



Celebrating



of Making Life Better

Our History

In 1976 two Portage teenagers Scott Allen and Scott Mahoney had a vision. They identified a need in the community to provide counseling for alcoholism and drugs, juvenile delinquency, crime, juvenile pregnancies and personal or family problems. After working with the Portage City Council they decided to incorporate already existing services in Kalamazoo and create a centralized location for these services in Portage. Thus Portage Community Outreach Center (PCOC) was born.

Growth & Opportunity

Over the years PCOC or "Peacock" expanded the types of services we offered. After-school programs were offered for middle school youth then high school youth. A summer youth program was added for middle school youth. Portage Community Center (PCC) also expanded more into human services. A food pantry was added as well as personal care items. PCC started to offer free clothing. Emergency financial assistance for utility shutoffs and evictions. Other services such as bus tokens, tutoring, holiday programs, back-to-school supplies and senior commodities also began during this time.

A New Beginning

With the help and support of the Portage community, in 2007 PCC moved into its current location at the corner of E. Centre Ave. and Currier Drive. Services continued to expand and our building also housed two Head Start classrooms for KRESA as well as the Portage location for the Family Health Center.

Looking Towards the Future

In February 2018 the Family Health Center closed their location at PCC. Through a new strategic plan, the PCC Board of Directors took on a campaign to provide capital improvements to our facility that will position PCC in continuing to provide current services as well as possible expansion of programs as community needs change.





An Unexpected Year

2020 brought the compounding crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, placing Portage Community Center at an epicenter of struggle and adaption. As the pandemic continued, PCC looked for safe and efficient ways to provide services. When COVID halted our ability to provide after-school programs, PCC youth staff quickly shifted to a virtual model. PCC youth staff began rethinking how to best serve the kids amid the circumstances. Care packages were sent to each student in the program on a monthly basis. Flexible innovation like this helped bring us some unexpected highlights to one of our most challenging years.

Snapshots of a Pandemic

- With the help of our partner Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes, we shifted to a drive-up model for our food pantry. Clients could still request what items they wanted and they would be delivered to their vehicle all while maintaining safe social distancing.
- We were able to recreate our application process to make it digital. Clients can now complete the entire application process using their computer
- Our holiday food basket distribution moved to a mobile drive-thru.

Pandemic Response

877

individuals served in our food pantry

51

households prevented from a utility shutoff



247

holiday food baskets distributed

681.5

hours of youth programs provided



1,049

volunteer hours provided to PCC





What's Next?

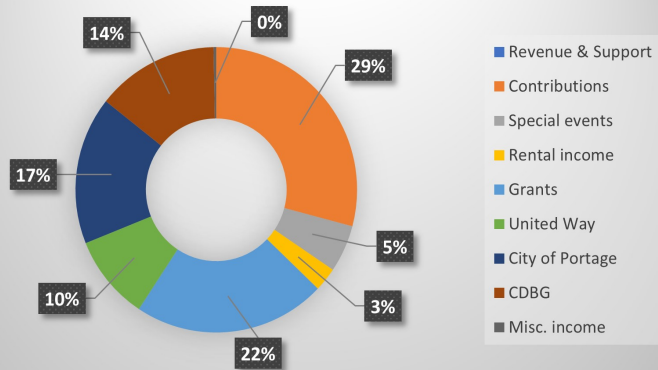
As we continue to emerge from the COVID pandemic we await new challenges. More and more families are feeling the impact of the pandemic and need help. Due to many schools having to move to a virtual setting youth are not having their social-emotional needs adequately met. With the rising costs of groceries, household items and gasoline families are struggling to meet their basic needs. As a community we need to be proactive in meeting these new challenges head on. Portage Community Center is looking for new ways to raise the funds needed to meet this increased demand. We are actively searching for new grants that will provide us the ability to continue to adapt to these changing times. With our capital improvements complete, we are looking for a new tenant. (One that fits our mission and will possibly help us expand our reach.) We will look to expand our partnerships in the community to provide more efficient services to our clients.

This past year was a stark reminder of two important truths. First, our community continues to desperately need organizations like Portage Community Center that work to *Make Life Better* for its citizens. Second, the work we do would be impossible if it wasn't for the support of people like you. You helped us feed the hungry, cloth the needy and provide high-quality after-school programs. Your help enabled us to share hope, encouragement and support.

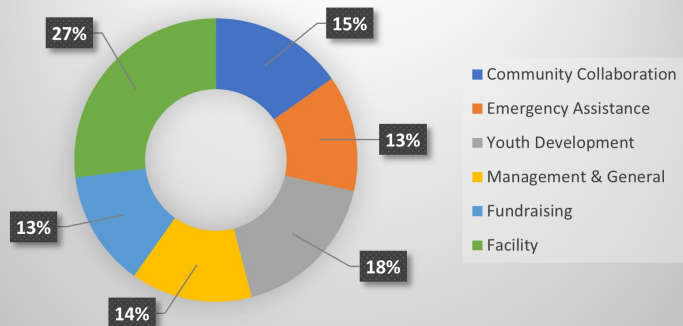
You have helped us do so much but this year highlighted how much more there is to do. We are thankful for the generosity we are experiencing, and we are asking you to increase your investment in your neighbors. We need you now more than ever. Please continue to help us.

Financials

Revenue & Support



Expenditures





Board Members

Alison Thomas- <i>President</i>	Dave Jewell
Ben Cohen- <i>President-Elect</i>	Jeff Kalmbach
Kate Hemingway- <i>Secretary</i>	Joel Kushner
Justin Horn- <i>Treasurer</i>	Kurt Lentner
Lissa Adams	Kirk Mason
Jennifer Alfieri	Scott McQueen
Chad Alvord	Nick O' Hare
Theresa Bray	Collin Rosenbaum
Steve Clark	Chris Stys
Brigid Hansen	Mahsa Teachman
Jud Hoff	Lori Knapp- <i>City Council Liaison</i>

PCC Staff

Chris Buckley	Executive Director
Michelle Swyrtek	Emergency Assistance Coordinator
Kirk Lowis	Youth Program Manager
Connor Macklin	Youth Program Coordinator
Liz Gunnett	Bookkeeper
Gloria Perkins	Receptionist
James Vallar	Custodian
Larry Lowis	Custodian