



# ANNUAL REPORT

**2023-2024**





## LETTER FROM BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Shaker Heights Youth Center,

As another successful year has concluded for the Shaker Heights Youth Center, we reflect on the many accomplishments we have achieved and most importantly, the youth we serve. The youth in our community have faced unprecedented challenges, a global pandemic, ongoing violence in our communities and worldwide, and increasing mental health challenges. While much uncertainty can be felt, one thing that is guaranteed, The Shaker Heights Youth Center is positioned to continue to be an incredible asset to support youth in our community.

Childhood can be a time of joy and delight. It also comes with its challenges. Social media, peer pressure, and rising rates of anxiety are just a few of the challenges youth are facing. Some youth face greater struggles than others. This is where the Shaker Heights Youth Center programs are vital to help youth successfully navigate challenges and reach their goals.

We could not do this important work without the incredible support and funding from our partners listed in this report. Thank you for allowing us to continue our award-winning work throughout Shaker Heights. We have been helping for 54 years, and still find great fulfillment in being a resource for the youth, their families, and the community.

Sincerely,

Donald Gries



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THE SHAKER HEIGHTS YOUTH CENTER'S MISSION  
IS TO FOSTER THE EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND  
DEVELOPMENTAL WELL-BEING OF A DIVERSE YOUTH  
COMMUNITY IN SHAKER.



## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is with incredible gratitude that I write this first letter as the Executive Director of the Shaker Heights Youth Center. I am grateful to John Lisy for his 27 years of service to the Shaker Heights Youth Center that ensured a strong foundation for me to step into.

The Youth Center navigated the transition of 3 longtime staff members as they all retired this year. The transition was smooth thanks to the support of The Cleveland Foundation and the dedication of Sharon Bell, Harriot Lyons, and John Lisy to the work of the Center.

As a long time, Shaker resident and parent of 3 children, I am thrilled to carry on the profoundly important work that the Shaker Heights Youth Center provides to ensure that all children in our community have the support they need and opportunities to succeed. The Youth Center is blessed to have a highly qualified team of direct service staff who currently serve in 6 schools. In addition, our staff leads after school and summer leadership programming that is helping our youth have positive outlets and opportunities to share their voice.

I was incredibly impressed with our PEERS youth, 6 high school students, who spent their summer using Youth Participatory Action Research to understand how cell phones and learning loss are affecting Shaker Hts. High School students. They presented their findings to school administrators, school board members, city officials, and parents.

I am grateful to our partners that make programs like PEERS possible. Thank you to the Shaker Heights City Schools, The City of Shaker Heights, The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County, MyCom, The Cleveland Foundation, and many other significant groups too numerous to list. Your commitment to bettering the lives of young people in Shaker is what makes our work possible.

Sincerely,

Karen Carter, LISW-S







## 83% OF YOUTH

who participated in summer youth prevention programs improved their ability to develop healthy interpersonal skills through activities that promoted social and emotional development

## 269 YOUTH RECEIVED

vital support, life skills, and coping strategies through our Student Assistance Program

## 71 YOUTH AGES 14+

participated in our summer jobs program



# MAJOR PROGRAMS

## THE STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Youth Center staff are located in Shaker Heights High School, the Innovative Learning Center, Middle School and three elementary school. Students are referred for a variety of barriers related to their academic and social performance in the school, or within their family and the community. The program builds resiliency in youth using asset building, social-emotional learning and life skills development while engaging and guide the student toward emotional and educational growth. The goal is to build individual and environmental assets in the youths' lives. A variety of supports may be used to connect with students including individual engagement, small group discussions, collaboration with teachers and administrators, and connecting families to community resources.

## THE IMPACT PROGRAM

The Shaker Heights Youth Center in collaboration with the Unitarian Church provides the IMPACT Youth Enrichment Program which provides after-school programming for Shaker Heights Middle School students in need of a positive after-school experience. The program focuses on increasing social skills, life skills, and academic competence which are significant protective factors that increase resiliency in youth.

## THE SUMMER IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Summer extension of IMPACT Program for Middle School students focuses on building self-esteem, resiliency, personal leadership qualities, and the principles needed to reach one's full potential through creative expression, journaling, physical activity, education, and service-learning projects in the Moreland neighborhood, the Van Aken District, the Dealership and the Nature Center of Shaker Lakes.

## THE SUMMER STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Youth Center staff are located in Shaker Heights High School and Fernway Elementary School. The staff support students who are experiencing challenges in their lives. The students are referred for a variety of issues related to their academic and social performance in the school community.



## SHAKER MYCOM

The MyCom Coordinator for Shaker is located at the Youth Center. MyCom works to assess youth needs and build capacity and collaboration among youth service programming in the community to meet those needs. Shaker MyCom programs include:

- **YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**  
program consists of nine to fifteen High School students who meet monthly to participate in an array of leadership-building activities that include: planning and organizational development, community service projects, and county-wide MyCom leadership programs.
- **POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT ENCOURAGING RESILIENCY IN SHAKER STUDENTS (PEERS)**  
A six-week summer program helps students use Youth Participatory Action Research to engage in policies and programs that impact youths' lives. Youth engage in systemic research, develop solutions based on their findings and learn leadership skills utilizing a social justice framework.
- **MAKING OUR OWN SPACE (MOOS)**  
Summer urban design program for youth ages 14-18 in partnership with Kent State University's College of Architecture & Environmental Design.
- **MYCOM NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNER MINI-GRANT**  
for organizations, businesses, faith-based, and residents, that provide programming for youth in Shaker.

# thank you

## \$25,000 & ABOVE

ADAMHS Board of  
Cuyahoga County  
City of Shaker Heights  
Cleveland Foundation  
MyCom  
Shaker Heights City Schools

## \$2,500 TO \$4,999

Barbara Sheffler  
Donald & Lynn-Ann Gries  
Starting Point

## \$1,000 TO \$2,499

David & Inez Myers Foundation  
Christine Williams & Ken Frisof

## \$500 TO \$999

Michael & Jan Devereaux  
Doug & Lisa Schattinger  
Donald & Toni Scherzer

## \$100 TO \$499

John & Pamela Addison  
Jeremy & Jennifer Bordeaux  
Maureen Brodar  
Michael & Susan Cristal  
Charlie & Mary Crowley  
James & Karen Dakin  
Charles & Nancy Davis  
R. Jeffrey & Tina Fast  
Brian & Pamela Gleisser  
Norm & Toni Graham  
Richard & Wendy Halle  
David & Loraine Hammack

## \$100 TO \$499

Brett & Annette Himes  
Andrew Hurst & Linda Rae  
Bruce Jackson  
Howard & Marilyn Karfeld  
Stuart & Terri Kline  
John Lemay  
John Lisy  
Gilbert Lowenthal  
Joseph & Eleni Matts  
Kurt Miller & Leslie Greenhalgh  
Tim & Leslie Moore  
John and Nancy Moore  
Marc & Amy Morgenstern  
Alexandria Nichols  
Geoffrey & Molly Ritts  
Bart & Sheryl Simon  
Ian & Catherine Stuart  
Mark & Annette Sutherland  
Mikki Wolfberg &  
Howard Weisbrot

## \$50 TO \$99

Tom Abelson & Abby Goulder  
Gail Arnoff  
Elaine Bolasny  
Gilda Cohen  
George Gelehrter  
Carol Gobel  
Lawrence & Linda Hatch  
Gail Long & Zachary Schiller  
Harry & Helen Mercer  
Peter & Kelly Nagusky  
Bill & Shirley Nook  
Richard Rakos  
William & Barbara Thomas  
Daniel & Nancy Zavelson

## INCOME

### Board of Trustees

Contributions/Gifts/Special Events.....	\$ 15,930
Grants .....	\$ 40,000
City of Shaker Heights Grant .....	\$ 55,600
Prevention and Education.....	\$ 13,900
Shaker Heights City Schools .....	\$100,000
Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health .....	\$338,718
Services Board of Cuyahoga County	
MyCom .....	\$ 75,325
Starting Point .....	\$ 4,433
Released from Restriction .....	\$ 50,551
Interest/ Miscellaneous .....	\$ 26,770

**TOTAL.....\$721,227**

## EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits.....	\$ 662,263
Program Cost.....	\$ 17,689
Professional and Contract Services.....	\$ 12,553
Insurance .....	\$ 10,514
Occupancy .....	\$ 6,873
Office Expenses .....	\$ 8,703
Staff Development .....	\$ 2,505
Fundraising & Marketing .....	\$ 2,440
Advocacy .....	\$ 1,000
Other .....	\$ 991

**TOTAL.....\$725,531**



## STAFF

### Executive Director

Karen Carter, LISW-S

### Retiring Executive Director

John Lisy, OCPC, LICDC-LS,

LISW-S, LPCC-S

Sharon Bell (Retiring), LSW, OCPC

Kimberly Brothers, LSW

Laura Chapman, LSW, OCPSA

Elizabeth Dreyfuss, LPC

Danielle Frizzell, LSW

Emily Geier, LISW-S

Amy Jones

Harriet Lyons (Retiring)

Melissa Morrissey, OCPSA

Norman Graham

Sandy Troupe, OCPSA

Lydia Ward, RA

Briana Young, LSW



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[shakerheightsyouthcenter.org](http://shakerheightsyouthcenter.org)

An Equal Opportunity Employer and  
Equal Provider of Services

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Marlies Schweitzer-Schutte,

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Ed Long

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Mikki Wolfberg

Mozella Colon

Christal Crosby

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Jessica Smith

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## ADVISORY BOARD

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Candace Sheffler

Bart Simon