



# annual report

2021 - 2022



# one step at a time

annual report | 2021 - 2022

# MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR & PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Each year, we make it a priority to highlight one theme we felt was vital to our agency throughout the past twelve months.

After a significant adjustment in how Step Forward served the community in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a long-awaited name change in 2021, we have spent the past few years 2021 and 2022 refocusing.

We spent a lot of time adapting to the new world around us, but also making sure we stayed true to the agency's purpose in helping people attain self-sufficiency.

Throughout the past few years, Step Forward has been presented with countless opportunities to connect with Cuyahoga County residents in need. Our staff responded to each individual and family, not as employees, but as humans first. The hills we have climbed together along with the optimism Step Forward has witnessed illustrates the strength of our agency during difficult times and it proves that this organization – and the clients we serve – are nothing short of resilient.

Hence, resiliency is what we have decided to emphasize throughout this year's annual report.

You'll see resiliency in Brittany McKown, a single, unemployed mother, who first turned to Step Forward for help when she was pregnant and then returned for additional assistance years later.

You'll see resiliency in Briana Cannada, who wanted to make sure she built a successful future for her children by enrolling each of them in Early Head Start and Head Start.

You'll recognize the resiliency in Nina Davis, who in her senior years, struggled to maintain basic necessities as inflation and prices for everything increased and her social security checks remained the same.

You'll see strength in Tracey Williams, who searched high and low for a job for eight years. He is now sharing his story, hoping to inspire someone else, after turning to our agency for assistance and finally securing a maintenance position within Step Forward.

This year, we are proud to report that Step Forward's resiliency has allowed our programming numbers to return nearly back to normal.

Fifty-seven years in the making, we are more confident now than ever that Step Forward has a clear brand and a consistent voice going forward. As we step into 2023, we are prepared to amplify the momentum of that ongoing mission: transform lives and strengthen communities; one person, one family, one step at a time. We hope you'll join us in doing so.

We hope you're as excited about the future as we are.

With gratitude,



*Kathryn M. Hall*

**Kathryn M. Hall**  
Board Chair



*Jacklyn A. Chisholm*

**Dr. Jacklyn Chisholm**  
CEO & President



# OUR OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

## Officers

Board Chairperson

**Kathryn M. Hall**

Vice Chairperson

**LaRese Purnell**

Treasurer

**Brian Gallagher**

Secretary

**Yomarie Gonzalez**

## Directors

Cassandra Brown-Collier

Eugenia Cash-Kirkland

Michelle Curry

Deidra Davis

Kira Hewko

Christopher Kelly

Cecil B. Lee

Michael Moore

Jerry Primm

Adam Roth,

Judge Michael J. Ryan

Qianna Tidmore

Sherelle L. Tucker

Joyce L. Walker

## GET INVOLVED

### Spread the Word

▶ Help us connect with residents in need and keep up to date with our services on social media.

### Donate

▶ Donations help us provide the best services to Cuyahoga County residents.

### Join Our Team

▶ Check out open and available positions

# LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Dr. Jacklyn Chisholm, PH.D.**  
President and Chief Executive Officer



**Derek Cluse, CPA**  
Chief of Staff



**Dr. Thea Wilson, Ed. D**  
Vice President of Children  
and Families



**Douglass Bennett**  
Vice President of Community  
Services and External Affairs



**Madeline Corchado**  
Vice President of  
Human Resources

## BY THE NUMBERS

25,000

People Served  
Per Year

1,672

Volunteers  
Per Year

59

Cities/Towns Served  
in Cuyahoga County

329

Employees serving  
residents in  
Cuyahoga County

15

Locations throughout  
Cuyahoga County



REAL PEOPLE



REAL STORIES



REAL IMPACT

WHERE WE SERVE





# BABY AND MOMMY SUPPORT

The pregnancy test is positive. You're excited. You're scared. But you turn to Step Forward.

Our agency's Family Development Specialists are ready to help, guide, and make sure you're ready for this next chapter of your life. Through Baby and Mommy Support, our agency offers parents one-on-one consultations, nutritional counseling, and guidance on how to navigate health insurance, choose a hospital, and finding the right doctor.

Expectant mothers learn how to cope with stress, breastfeeding, postpartum depression, and more. Step Forward also connects expectant mothers with important resources to make sure they're equipped when the baby arrives.





"I loved the resources that Step Forward had to offer. Because I'm a first-time mom, it really helped me a lot!"

Brianna Preston Graduated from BAMS

The 2021 & 2022 annual BAMS showers connected **56** expectant mothers to support services and baby items in preparation for their newborns



# EARLY HEAD START

Step Forward connects parents and guardians to Early Head Start as soon as their baby is born. Our agency is equipped to offer early childhood education to babies as young as six weeks old, either at your home or at one of our ten sites located throughout Cuyahoga County.

Each center features colorful and inviting classrooms with caring and compassionate educators. Each child will have the opportunity to play with age-appropriate toys, equipment and learning materials. At each location, Step Forward provides necessary items like diapers and formula.



At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, at least **83%** of Early Head Start students met or exceeded the expected skill level when participating cooperatively and constructively in group situations

At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, at least **85%** of Early Head Start students met or exceeded the expected skill level for exploring and describing spatial relationships and shapes



# HEAD START

At the age of three, students transition to our Head Start program. Our passionate teachers combine classroom instruction and learning through play to prepare them for kindergarten.

Each child receives individualized observations, and health, dental and nutritional support.



At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, at least **91%** of Head Start students met or exceeded the expected skill level for balancing needs and rights of themselves and others



"I get to see my son get excited about coming to school each day! We feel confident that Head Start will be fundamental in his educational journey."

Briana Cannada Head Start Parent

913

Early Head Start & Head Start students received dental assistance\*

1,366

Early Head Start & Head Start students received medical check ups\*

1,302

Early Head Start & Head Start students caught up on immunizations\*

\*Between the 2021-2022 school year

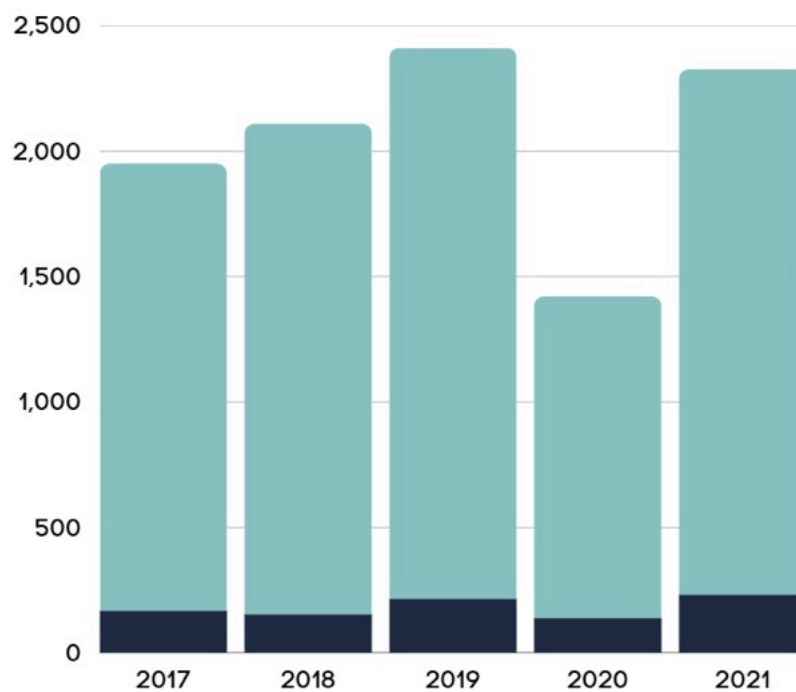
Head Start is offered at home, at one of Step Forward's ten centers, or through partnerships with school districts and childcare centers county-wide.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted classroom instruction in 2020, Step Forward's Head Start is proud to report students are back in the classroom and more eager to learn than ever.

Since 2017, Step Forward's Head Start has helped to successfully transition 5,775 children and families to kindergarten.

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## Annual Early Head Start & Head Start Enrollment



**All of Step Forward's directly-operated Head Start centers are five-star rated through Ohio's Step Up to Quality Initiative.**

# Head Start Alumni are Doing Great Work



## Brianne Bryant

She is taking movement and music class to a new level! Meet Brianne Bryant, a Head Start alumna and vocal artist.



[Scan to read more](#)



## Zach Riggins

A head start earned Zach Riggins two degrees while in high school! Read what this Head Start alumnus is doing now.



[Scan to read more](#)



## Malik Mays

From Head Start to the operating room, meet Malik Mays, Head Start alumnus and soon-to-be M.D.



[Scan to read more](#)

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It doesn't matter how old you are, Step Forward wants to help you discover your passion and find your lifelong career. Through our professional development program, Family Development Specialists and licensed social workers will help determine your interests, assess your skills and establish a plan to achieve your goals. You will identify barriers to success, map out resources to overcome those challenges, and have the opportunity to attend free training, workshops, and job fairs.

Step Forward does more than just update your resume and connect you with hiring agencies. After successfully completing certain programs, the agency will equip you with a refurbished computer and new clothing for your interview!

Between 2021 and 2022, Step Forward is proud to report that The Digital Connection Program exceeded prior years' goals and provided more than 50 refurbished computers, at no cost, to Cuyahoga County residents.



Between September 2021 and August 2022, **74%** of Step Forward Global Support Services Training graduates continued to follow an educational pathway to obtaining their 'dream job'

Between September 2021 and August 2022, Step Forward's monthly job fairs connected more than **600** job seekers with actively hiring agencies



# 100%

of clients that attended Step Forward's One Day Job Placement Service secured employment



"If you're looking to further polish your professional, adult career, Step Forward is the best place for that. I have more structure and a better path for what I want to do going forward. I want to travel the world and eventually, own my own business"

Terrell Chambers



"Enrolling in Step Forward's adult-learning classes has helped set me up for a better future and for a better paying job. The teachers are great! They are very informative and make sure everyone has a good understanding of the lessons. "

Natasha Mitchell

# HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Amid the pandemic, especially, times have been tough. That is why Step Forward's Home Energy Assistance Program offers six different programs, including the Low-Income Water Assistance Program, the Summer Cooling Program, Winter Crisis Program and Percentage of Income Payment Plan.

Between September 2021 and August 2022, more Cuyahoga County residents applied for assistance than ever before in order to keep their water, air conditioning, heat, and lights on.

2,355

Households received help through our Winter Crisis Program

203

Households applied for help through our Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program

2,719

Households received help through our Summer Cooling Program

11,172

Households applied for the Percentage of Income Payment Plan

HEAP Distributed

\$13,311,161

in Utility Assistance

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

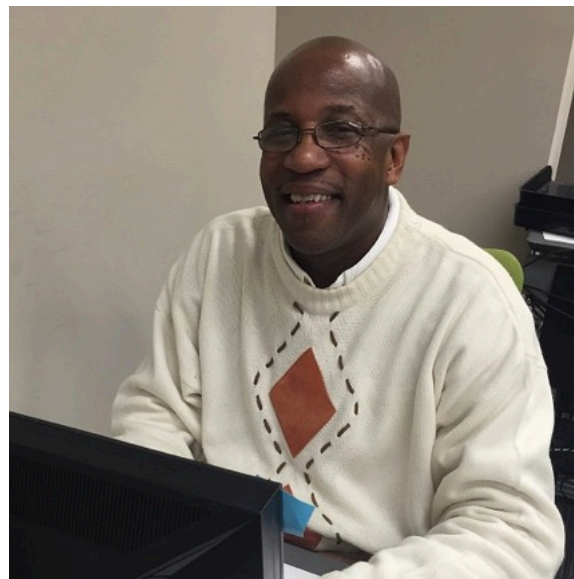
You're juggling bills, finding a job, childcare, and more. You are an inspiration! But don't forget, your mental health and well-being matter just as much as your physical health! Step Forward's personal development courses continue to offer individual and family counseling, parenting classes, anger management workshops, a domestic violence program and tax preparation.

Through federal funding and grants, Step Forward continues to distribute **emergency assistance** to help with rental, utility and internet payments.



Between September 2021 and August 2022, **93%** of clients who turned to Step Forward for personal income tax help qualified for an income tax refund

Between September 2021 and August 2022, **91%** of clients in counseling services completed individual service plans





"Step Forward has a great group of people who truly care about you. They are there to put you back on your feet again. They will help make you whole again."

Jennifer Span - Received Counseling



"I got behind and as prices for everything started going up, my paychecks didn't change. I needed help. (Step Forward) can lead you in the right direction."

Nina Davis - Received Rental Assistance

Between September 2021 and August 2022, Step Forward distributed

**\$25,406,936.71**

in emergency rental and mortgage assistance

Step Forward helps low-income individuals and families address immediate needs, but the ultimate goal is self-sufficiency. With the help of Cuyahoga County businesses and community partners, Step Forward helps you build long-term skills to transform your life for generations to come.



## Professional Development

**Global Support Services Training I & II:** This customer service / computer-based training course is a blend of instructor-driven curriculum and online courses that provides a foundational understanding of Microsoft software. The program is designed to prepare individuals for an office/computer-based work environment that revolves around a customer service-centered workplace.

**Microsoft Office Software Training:** This hybrid training is designed to provide enrichment for clients with a basic grasp of Microsoft Office software applications, hardware components, the Windows operating system, and more while working alongside certified IT professionals.

**How to Think Like a CEO:** Designed for entrepreneurial spirits, this workshop provides skills and resources for clients to pursue their business goals. Throughout the virtual workshop, clients will have the opportunity to create a business plan, and develop their mission statement, marketing strategy, and more.

**Digital Connection:** This workshop is open to students who have successfully completed the, Global Support Services Training I and MOS/IC3 Digital Literacy Certification course. Clients receive a refurbished computer and work alongside the Digital Connection Personal Computer Technician in learning skills designed to assist them in installation, set-up and troubleshooting (minor issues) related to their personal computers.

**Job Readiness:** This workshop is designed to assist clients who have been unemployed for more than 100 days in acquiring employment while updating their job search toolkit. Clients work with Employment Specialists to learn how to best utilize soft skills in the workplace, practice mock interviews and learn best practices when using virtual platforms for interviewing and presentations.

**Adult Basic Literacy Skills Workshop:** This workshop is designed to promote and improve a client's reading, writing, and mathematics skills. This workshop is intended to improve educational and employment opportunities by reconnecting clients with the technical skills necessary to function in a workplace culture. Individuals who complete this workshop may be referred to other training to further enhance their career goals and training opportunities.

**Job Placement Assistance:** The One Day Job Placement Workshop offers opportunities for clients with fewer than 100 days of unemployment to work an Employment Specialist. This workshop is designed to best match experience and education with employment opportunities. The goal is to eliminate obstacles to acquiring your 'dream job' and promote employment opportunities that best build a career pathway that will lead to a 'living wage'.

## Family Development

**Emergency Assistance:** The emergency assistance program helps residents with rent payments, utility assistance, internet services and additional emergency support including, food, child care, car repair assistance and more.

**Personal Income Tax:** Personal Income Tax services are offered by Family Development Specialists that are certified by the Internal Revenue Service. Tax preparers will help participants identify if they are eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and enable them to retain all of their tax refund while avoiding preparation costs.

**Family Development:** Family Development Specialists provide one-on-one assistance to address immediate needs by identifying barriers to success and creating goals with clients as they walk beside them to achieve their goals.

**Baby and Mommy Support Program (BAMS):** Baby and Mommy Support Program services include one-on-one consultation and training and life skills including how to care for your baby, nutrition and wellness, self-care, how to cope with stress, breastfeeding, postpartum depression and more.

### Personal Development

**Individual Counseling:** Counseling services are offered by licensed social workers who assess clients and work with them one-on-one to create an Individual service plan that will guide their treatment. Varies of therapeutic techniques and interventions will be used that are evidenced based and/or promote mental and emotional well-being that facilitate and empower clients to live their life at an optimal functional level.

**Parenting Program:** Step Forward's Parenting program teaches participants about child development and building healthy relationships. Participants receive peer support while gaining skills needed to reduce stress and support healthy interactions.

**Anger Management:** This curriculum-based workshop is run by our licensed social workers who teach participants how to effectively manage their anger. Participants will monitor their own emotions, work on communication skills and learn how to respond instead of reacting.

**Domestic Violence:** This program is a batterer's intervention multimodal evidenced-based practice for male participants to learn and implement alternatives to abusive and controlling behaviors in their intimate partner relationships. In addition to the workshop, staff can assist the entire family by providing resources to treat all who are involved. Successful participants receive a certificate at the conclusion of the workshop.

### Home Energy Assistance

**Energy Assistance:** These programs assist income-eligible Cuyahoga County residents with heating and cooling bills. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) office is open year-round to assist residents with long-term solutions and/or short-term needs.

**Ambassadors** | Champion Step Forward's Mission

Champion Step Forward's Mission  
 CAPLAW  
 The Center for Community Solutions  
 Citizen's Coalition  
 Cleveland City Council  
 Community Action Partnership  
 Cuyahoga County Council  
 Family and Children First Council  
 National Community Action Foundation  
 National Head Start Foundation  
 Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies  
 Ohio Head Start Association  
 Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy  
 Ohio Urban Resources System (OURS)  
 PRE4CLE - Cleveland Metropolitan Schools  
 State of Ohio Department of Development  
 State Representative Phillip M. Robinson  
 State Representative Thomas F. Patton  
 State Representative Kent Smith  
 State Representative Bishara W. Addison  
 State Representative Terrance Upchurch  
 State Representative Shayla L. Davis

State Representative Juanita O. Brent  
 State Representative Bride Rose Sweeney  
 State Representative Jeffrey A. Crossman  
 State Senator Robert Portman  
 State Senator Sherrod Brown  
 U.S. Representative Steve Chabot  
 U.S. Representative Brad Wenstrup  
 U.S. Representative Joyce Beatty  
 U.S. Representative Jim Jordan  
 U.S. Representative Robert Latta  
 U.S. Representative Bill Johnson  
 U.S. Representative Bob Gibbs  
 U.S. Representative Warren Davidson  
 U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur  
 U.S. Representative Michael Turner  
 U.S. Representative Shontel Brown  
 U.S. Representative Troy Balderson  
 U.S. Representative Tim Ryan  
 U.S. Representative David Joyce  
 U.S. Representative Mike Carey  
 U.S. Representative Anthony Gonzalez  
 open year-round to assist residents with long-term solutions and/or short-term needs.

**Funders** | Provide Funding from Private or Public Sources

Provide funding from private or public sources  
 Arby's Foundation  
 The Cleveland Clinic\*  
 Cleveland Foundation  
 Cuyahoga County  
 Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative  
 Cuyahoga County - Invest in Children  
 DigitalC  
 Early Childhood Education  
 First Energy  
 Key Bank  
 Ohio Department of Development  
 Step Up to Quality  
 PNC Bank - Grow Up Great Initiative  
 United Way of Greater Cleveland  
 USDA  
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## In-Kind Supporters

Give time, donate services or provide funding to Step Forward's Head Start Program\*\*

Case Western Reserve University School of Dental  
Medicine  
CareSource\*  
ChildPlus  
Children's Museum of Cleveland  
City of Cleveland Police Department  
Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
Cleveland Metropolitan School District\*  
Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority  
East Cleveland City Schools - Pre-Kindergarten  
Program\*  
Euclid City Schools - Pre-Kindergarten Program\*  
Friends and Family of Step Forward Head Start  
Ideastream\*  
Meyer Design

## Referral Partners

Refer individuals or families to Step Forward for programs and services

BEST Community Resource Center	Lisette Quinones Ministries
Breakthrough Schools	Manufacturers Advocacy
Brenda Glass Trauma Center	Growth Network (MAGNET)
The Centers for Families and Children	May Dugan Center
Cleveland Department of Aging	MedCerts
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress	The MetroHealth System
Cleveland Municipal Court	Ministerio Dorcas
Cleveland State University	Molina Health Care
Community of Faith Collaborative	Moms First
Cuyahoga Community College	<u>Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services, Inc.</u>
Cuyahoga County Children and Family Services	(NEON)*
Cuyahoga County Department of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS)	Nueva Luz
Cuyahoga County Library	Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District*
Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry	Seeds of Literacy
Cuyahoga Jobs and Family Services	Shaw High School - Early Childhood Program
Donna Smallwood Senior Center	Slavic Village Development Corporation*
Friendly Inn Settlement Corp.	Smart Development Inc.
Help Me Grow	Stella Maris
Hilton Hotels	Spanish American Committee
JACK Casino	Starting Point
Julia De Burgos Cultural Arts Center	United Pastors in Mission
Kussette Quinones Ministries	University Hospitals Case Medical Center
Langston Hughes Community Center*	Union Miles Development Corporation
	Urban League of Greater Cleveland*
	Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
	Women's Recovery Center
	Workforce Investment Board - Youth Council

**Service Partners**

Provide integral/complementary services to the people Step Forward serves

- Achievement Centers for Children
- Applewood Centers
- Asian Services in Action, Inc.
- Beech Brook
- Burlington Coat Factory
- Case Western Reserve University Francis Payne Bolton School of Nursing
- Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences
- CHN Housing Partners
- Cleveland Furniture Bank
- Cleveland Job Corps
- Cleveland Public Library
- Community Housing Solutions
- Daily Dose of Reading
- Dave's Supermarkets
- Discount Drug Mart
- Dress for Success
- East End Neighborhood House
- The Free Clinic
- Gesher Cleveland Benefit and Resource Center
- Goodwill
- Greater Cleveland Food Bank
- Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
- Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland
- Ibn Sina Free Clinic
- The Literacy Cooperative
- Music Settlement
- Nature Explore
- NEO Skills Corps (AmeriCorps Volunteers)
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)
- OhioMeansJobs - Cleveland-Cuyahoga County
- Playhouse Square
- Rainey Institute
- The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- Shaker Lakes Nature Center
- Towards Employment
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited

\*Denotes partner meets criteria to fit into more than one category

\*\*As a Head Start agency, Step Forward is required to fund 20 percent of its Head Start program

# FINANCIALS

## U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Federal Head Start  
02/01/21 - 01/31/22  
\$25,023,069

Federal Head Start In-Kind Contribution  
02/01/21 - 01/31/22  
\$6,906,594

American Rescue Plan (ARP)  
04/01/21 - 03/31/23  
\$500,000

COVID-19 Pandemic Support Payment 3 (PSP - 3)  
02/01/21 - 01/31/22  
\$193,080

## First Energy Company

Fuel Fund IX  
01/01/21 - 12/31/21  
\$67,437

Fuel Fund X  
01/01/22 - 12/31/22  
\$2,930

First Energy Service Grant 2021  
01/01/21 - 12/31/21  
\$460,255

First Energy Service Grant 2022  
01/01/20 - 12/31/20  
\$125,000

# FINANCIALS

## Early Childhood

Early Childhood Education - IX  
07/01/21 - 06/30/22  
\$112,618

Early Childhood Education - VIII  
07/01/20 - 06/30/21  
\$18,841

## U.S. Department of Treasury

Home Relief Grant (CAA-HRG)  
03/31/21 - 09/30/22  
\$18,105,635

## USDA

USDA-USDA 0921  
10/01/20 - 09/30/21  
\$102,971

USDA-USDA 0922  
10/01/21 - 09/30/22  
\$249,477

USDA-COVID  
10/01/20 - 09/30/21  
\$130,375

# FINANCIALS

## Cuyahoga County

Universal Pre-Kindergarten - 3.0-1  
08/01/21 - 10/31/22  
\$575,000

Universal Pre-Kindergarten - 2.0-4  
08/01/20-07/31/21  
\$155,310

STEPUPIX  
02/01/21-01/31/22  
\$36,071

## Ohio Department of Development

HEAP Administrative Program  
22-HA-115  
09/01/21 - 08/31/22  
\$1,317,705

21-HA-115  
09/01/19 - 08/31/20  
\$1,302,252

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)  
10/01/21 - 09/30/23  
\$503,196

Heap Energy Assistance Program  
22-HE-215  
11/01/21 - 03/31/22  
\$212,107

# FINANCIALS

## Ohio Department of Development cont.

### Heap Energy Assistance Program cont.

21-HE-215  
11/01/20 - 03/31/21  
\$680,000

### HEAP Summer Cooling

20-HC-215  
07/01/21 - 08/31/21  
\$643,668

### Percentage of Income Payment Plan

21-PA-115  
01/01/21 - 12/31/21  
\$151,568

22-PA-115  
01/01/22 - 12/31/22  
\$17,213

### Community Services Block Grant

COVID-19 Community Service Block Grant (CSBG - CARES)

03/27/20 - 09/30/22  
\$4,348,146

CSBG20-2116  
01/01/20 - 12/31/21  
\$4,541,818

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV)

04/01/20 - 07/31/22  
\$1,439,210

# FINANCIALS

## Ohio Department of Development cont.

Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF-ESP)

11/01/20 - 12/31/21

\$1,133,232

## Cleveland Foundation Grant

COVID-19 Rapid Response

02/01/20 - 01/31/21

\$23,056

## United Way of Greater Cleveland

United Way Services 3.0 - EHS

07/01/20 - 09/30/21

\$42,696

## Local Programs

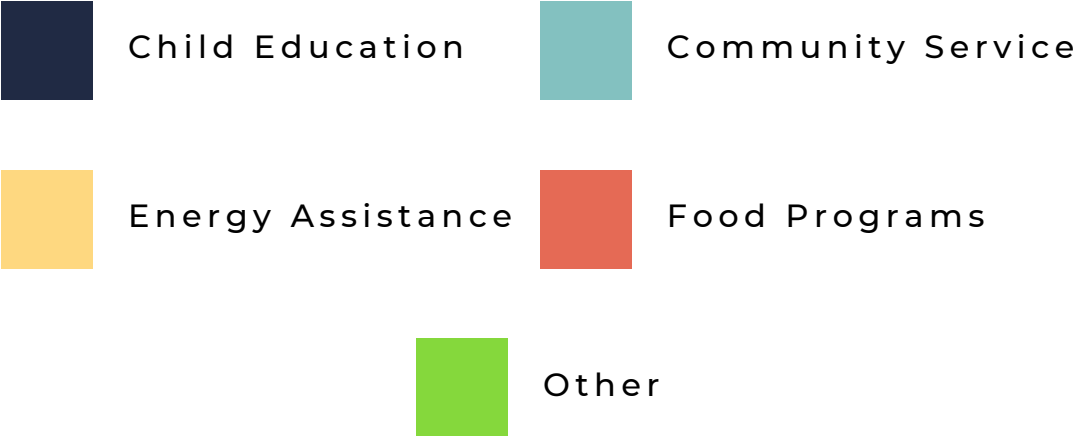
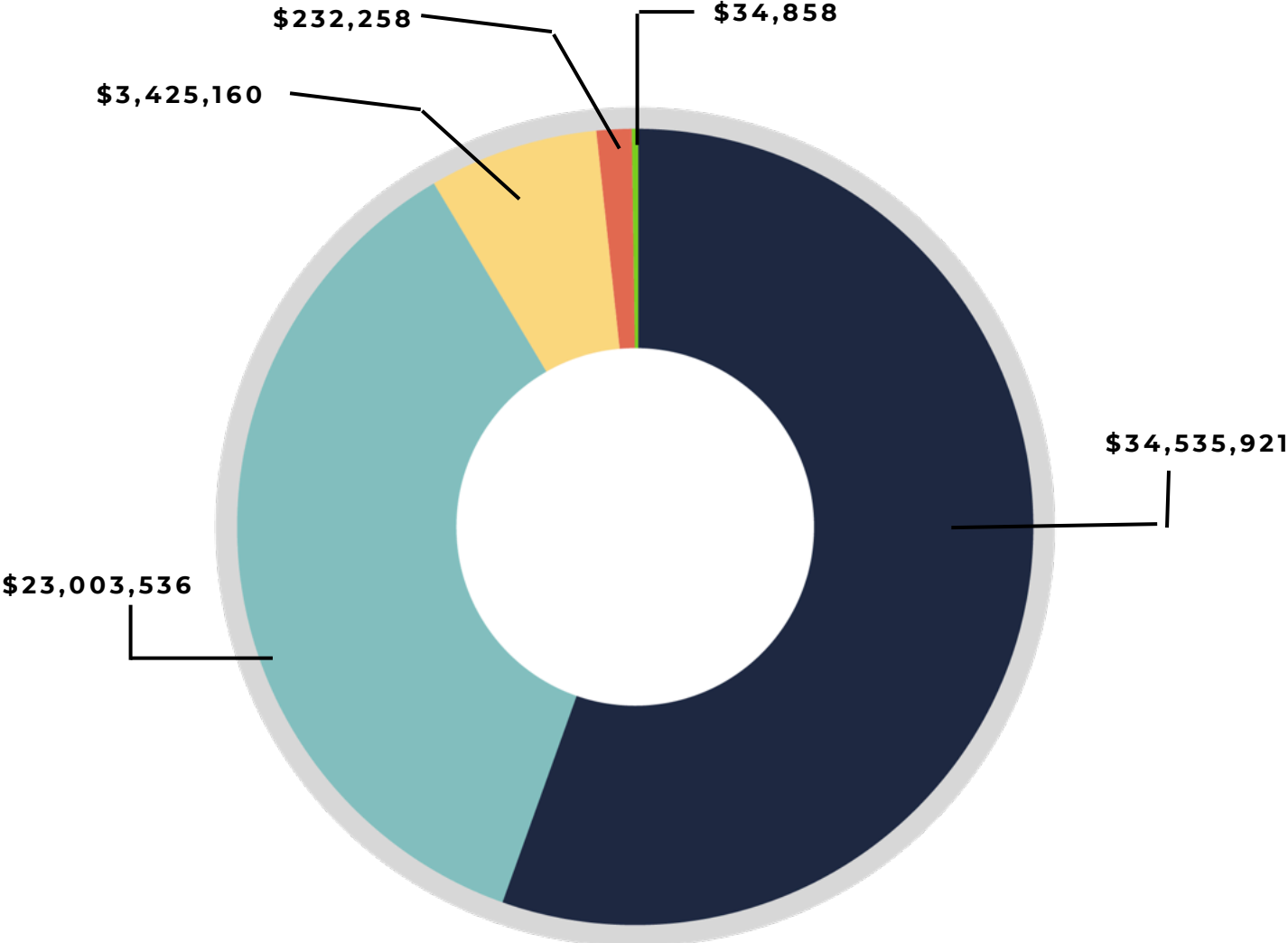
Global Support Services Training I Key Bank (GSST I)

01/01/22 - 12/31/22

\$40,000

# FINANCIALS

## FY '22 EXPENDITURES



# FINANCIALS

## FY '22 REVENUE

