



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

*Annual Report
June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015*

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September 24, 2015

Dear Friends of Community Assistance Council—

In reviewing where we were vs. where we are, I am struck by the number of changes our agency has implemented in the past year. So much good has been accomplished, and yet we still have challenges looming ahead of us.

We are extremely happy to work with LINCWorks, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Full Employment Council, providing space for them to offer client services to area residents. These resources have no other locations in the area, and residents without transportation find it difficult to use their services if faced with going to mid-town or downtown offices. We believe that these resources are essential for those trying to improve their lives and are pleased that we can help in this way.

We continue to see more families in need of our services for the first time. Many of these are new to the area—having moved from another KC neighborhood. 44% of the households receiving assistance from us last year received help from us for the first time.

There is good news to report. Partnering with the Kansas City's Medicine Cabinet, we were able to expand staff to include a part time caseworker dedicated to assisting residents with KCMC services. This shift of job duties has enabled other caseworkers to focus on reducing our "wait list" for utility and rental assistance from 8-10 months, to a turn-around time of 48 hours. The need is still there—we receive over 250 calls each month for utility assistance alone.

We have been able to double the number of families participating in our Strengths Based Case Management program, due to more specific assessment tools. This has resulted in more success stories as families and individuals learn to set goals, overcome obstacles and create better daily life skills. This is not a quick process. It takes time and commitment of, not only our staff, but each family member.

Our food pantry has been re-vamped to a "client choice" pantry. This provides greater input from the client regarding the type of foods they receive, promotes better nutrition and offers ways to prepare food they are unfamiliar with through distribution of recipes and cooking demonstrations every Friday. These changes speak to our mission of helping residents achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency.

CAC continues to forge strong relationships with area businesses through the South Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and the South Kansas City Alliance, as we all work to make a stronger community. The Chamber specifically is supporting us by allowing us to partner with them for their first annual 5K Run/Walk in November, for which we will receive part of the proceeds. This community support continues to grow, not only financially, but with volunteer support encouraged by business owners. We are so grateful for their commitment to our organization.

We are looking forward to celebrating our fortieth anniversary with you and the community next year. As we continue to share our story, we are increasing our social media footprint. We have recently updated our website, www.cackc.org. If you use Facebook, Instagram or Twitter—follow us. The links are listed on the back of the annual report. We communicate our successes, our needs, our wish lists, and share smiles at the same time.

We are so appreciative of your dedication, today and throughout the year, whether volunteering your time, offering your financial support or in sharing our story. You are the reason we are able to provide these services in our community.

Thank you for joining with us.

With Sincere Gratitude,

Carol Bird Owsley
Executive Director

Groundwork

Agency Organization

Board of Directors

Sue Love, *President*

Ursula Copeland, *Vice President*

Joyce Peters, *Secretary*

Doug Smith, *Treasurer*

Katie Bromley, *Member-at-Large*

James Carlile, *Member-at-Large*

Bryan Love, *Member-at-Large*

Michelle McConnell, *Member-at-Large*

Sandy Sexton, *Member-at-Large*

John Utz, *Member-at-Large*

Executive Director

Carol Bird Owsley

Staff

Pam Meek, Programs Coordinator

Sheria Howard, Strengths Based Case Manager

Ann McKelvy, Economic Stability Caseworker

Ashley Plowden, KCMC Caseworker

Bonnie Smith, Receptionist

Carol LaMora, Bookkeeper



Planting Seeds

Our Motivation, Our Vision, Our History

Why We Do What We Do

Community Assistance Council (CAC) was founded on the basic principle of “neighbors helping neighbors.” Board members, staff and volunteers all have strong ties to the area and a commitment to improving the community.

Although we have made an impact on individuals’ lives in the past 40 years, the area has become more economically challenged. The needs have become greater and more varied. We continually work to adapt our services to the changing needs of the community.

As the only social service agency physically located in south Kansas City, we focus on helping our neighbors, day by day. CAC continues to enjoy strong community support from area businesses and organizations, as well as individuals with ties to the community. Costs for continuing our services continue to rise, and the community’s need has become greater than ever.

As we work to continue to plant seeds of self-sufficiency, our dream is to see clients blossom into members of a thriving community.

Vision Statement

We will be the premier provider in our community of services and programs for individuals facing economic challenges, guided by the belief that becoming self-sufficient will lead to higher quality of life.

Mission Statement

We empower individuals and families to achieve self sufficiency through the delivery of direct emergency assistance, education and advocacy.



Our Roots

During the Christmas season of 1972, two churches joined in an effort to make the season happier for less fortunate neighbors. They began a food pantry supported by donations from their congregations. It soon became apparent that there was an ongoing need for not just a food pantry, but also other forms of assistance.

To better serve these families, and have the ability to offer additional services, other churches were invited to join in a more comprehensive service system in the Hickman Mills area. In 1974, CAC was formed by this coalition of churches in the belief that by working together, they could better serve their community.

Agency Milestones

1976 - Incorporated as a private, not-for-profit emergency assistance agency, entirely supported by volunteers

1983 - First paid staff position created

1991 - Headquarters established at one location at 10901 Blue Ridge Boulevard

1998 - Services expanded to assist families through case management

2008 - New programs implemented:

- CAC-Red Bridge Food Pantry opened at St. Peter's United Church of Christ
- Computer access for online job search made available

2009 - Recognition from community:

- Circle of Hope Award from Harvesters' Food Bank for Network Partnership Pantry
- Capacity building grant through the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership (UMKC)

2010 - Additional programs started:

- *Seeds of Hope* – a structured transitional housing program
- *Carol's Garden* – a garden provides fresh produce for the food pantry

2011 - Inaugural fundraising event, *Daybreak with CAC: Cultivating Hope*, laying the groundwork for future fund development activities

2013 - Received the Excellence in Nonprofit Leadership Award from Support Kansas City

2015 – Staff position created, in partnership with Kansas City's Medicine Cabinet, dedicated to providing KCMC services to area residents

Nurturing Growth

Our Services

Direct Assistance Programs

Food Pantry

- One week's worth of groceries once a month
- USDA TEFAP food distributed through pantry
- Food from *Carol's Garden* available through food pantry
- Two locations
 - 10901 Blue Ridge Boulevard (Main Office)
 - 700 E. 110th Street (CAC-Red Bridge Food Pantry)

Utility/Housing Assistance

Arrange payments with landlords, mortgage and utility companies on an emergency basis

Clothes Closet

- Good clean, second-hand clothing and shoes
- Coats are offered when available
- Small household items and appliances
- Supported solely through in-kind donations and volunteer efforts

Kansas City's Medicine Cabinet Services

Offers emergency assistance for medical, dental, and optical needs once a year

Meals on Wheels

- A hot noonday meal delivered five days a week
- Helps meet daily nutritional requirements
- Provides a well-being check for homebound neighbors

Seeds of Hope

Provides a structured program to help families break the cycle of chronic life crises

Seasonal Programs

BackSnack Program

Weekend meals are provided food insecure elementary school children of the Hickman Mills C-1 School District

Thanksgiving Food

Food for a holiday meal is available to families

Fans

Electric fans distributed to eligible families during summer months

Holiday Store

Families have the opportunity to shop for gifts and receive food for a holiday meal

School Supplies

School supplies and uniforms are distributed to area students to start the school year, and available throughout the year to supplement school needs

Self Sufficiency and Advocacy Programs

Strengths Based Case Management

Aids neighbors facing major housing issues and provides assistance with setting goals for long-term stability

Technology Center

Computers available for job searches, resume writing and completing job applications

Educational Programs

- Classes offered as needed
- Variety of life skills training provided
- Networking, information and referrals offered

All families served must be residents of the south Kansas City area and must meet other criteria to receive assistance.



Blossoming Together

Stories and Achievements

Shandell R. -

Shandell moved to the south KC area in 1989. She is a single mother with two (now grown) sons and one grandchild. She worked at Wendy's before her cerebral palsy forced her to quit. When she first found CAC in 2009, she had a cane for walking assistance and was still able to drive. She began using our food pantry services when she discovered that her social security and disability checks paid her bills but didn't stretch to cover food expenses. "Finding your office was a godsend for me and my boys," Shandell said. "We were going days without meals, eating crackers and cheese to get by until my next check came."



Shandell works hard to remain independent. "Both my boys are grown now, but I still need help getting enough food to last me for the month. Plus, I have a grandson now. It's hard for me to buy gifts for him. I can come to your clothes closet, find a nice toy or clothes and feel like I am more a part of his life, especially since I can't physically play with him."

Without CAC, Shandell believes that she would have to move to an assisted living home earlier than she wants. She now drives a motorized wheelchair to CAC from her house, as she has lost the ability to walk or drive a car. "I want to stay in my home as long as I can. I do not want to burden people if I can still take care of myself. CAC helps me to do that. And I love them for that."

Yvonne H. -

Yvonne has been receiving food and clothing assistance from CAC since 2012. After talking with CAC staff, she was referred to the Strengths Based Case Management program. The case manager meets with Yvonne weekly and helped her set goals to stabilize her life situation. Goals include 1) parenting skills, 2) setting and maintaining a budget, and 3) increase her education to obtain employment.

Yvonne and the case manager continue to meet and have currently reviewed three life skills: assertiveness, parenting and budgeting. Yvonne is proud to have completed these sessions to receive her Certificate of Completion.

"I feel more confident every day. By planning each day's activities, creating shopping lists and menus, I believe I am providing more stability for myself and my family," Yvonne says.

"I am really excited that I am enrolled at Vatterott College and classes start this fall! I didn't know I could do all these things. With CAC's help, I wake up every morning looking forward to the day!"



Part of the Cycle

How You Can Help

Our Volunteers

Working with its small staff, CAC could not do all it does without the dedication and commitment of its volunteer and donor base. Over 70 volunteers offer their time and talents every week in a variety of tasks. Whether sorting clothes, filling food baskets, delivering meals to homebound residents or stuffing backpacks for students, their work is vital to the success of our mission.

Many opportunities to help are available:

- Meals on Wheels Driver
- Drivers for donation pick ups
- Holiday Store (guiding families through store, stocking shelves, inventory)
- Clothes Closet (sorting, hanging clothes, inventory)
- Garden Workers
- Food Pantry (inventory, shelving, filling food requests)
- Teaching life-skills classes
- Serving on the Board of Directors or Board committees
- Financial donations are always appreciated

If you or someone you know would like to offer time or talents, please contact our Programs Coordinator, at 816-763-3277, ext. 108, or email info@cackc.org.

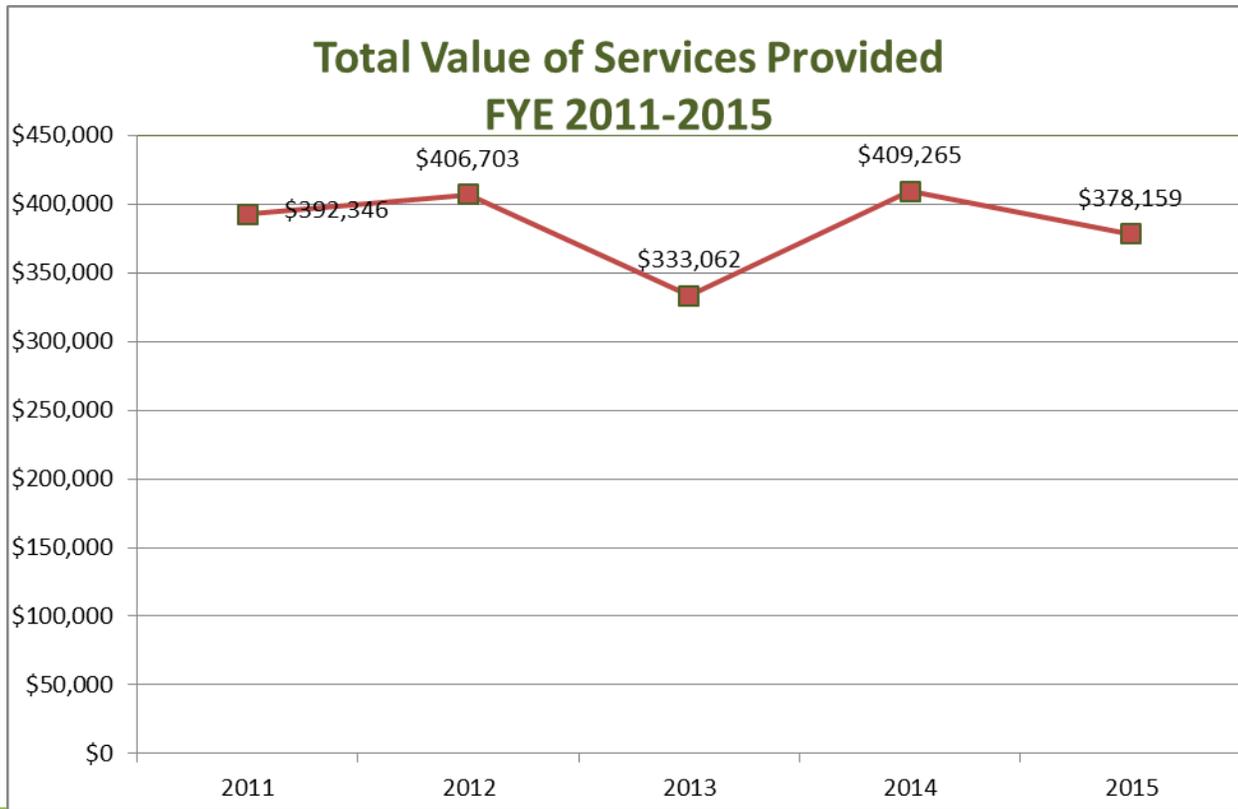
Our Partners

We are extremely proud of the partnerships that have developed between these organizations and CAC over the years. Without them, our work would not encompass all that it does. With our partners, we are able to reach more families, offer resources and programs, and provide the “bridge of assistance” that so many south Kansas City residents need.

- Area homes associations
- Area churches
- City of Kansas City, Missouri
- Harvesters
- Hickman Mills C-1 School District
- Kansas City Community Gardens
- Kansas City’s Medicine Cabinet
- KCP&L
- LINCWorks
- Mid America Assistance Coalition
- Mid-America Regional Council
- Salvation Army
- South Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

We welcome the opportunity to partner with your organization! For more information, please contact the Executive Director, 816-763-3277, ext. 103.

CAC Growth Over the Years



Please note that services provided depend directly on donations and grants received.

In 2006, we partnered 2 churches with 3 schools to pack 100 backpacks each week during the school year.



During the 2013-14 school year, we partnered 5 churches with 8 elementary schools to pack 1,200 packages of food for distribution to students each week.

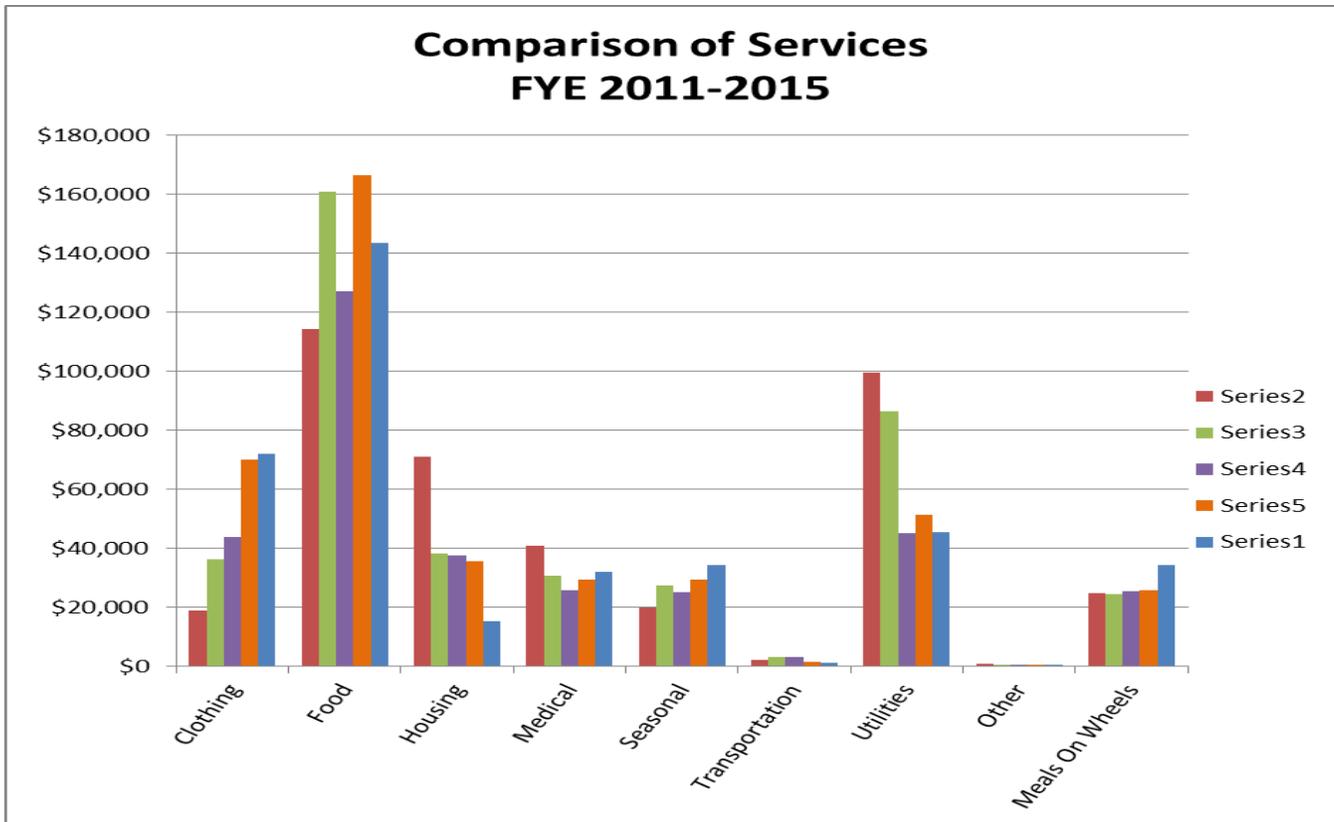
When the Meals on Wheels program started September 1978, three meals were delivered Monday through Friday, costing \$1 each.

In 2015, 8,238 meals were delivered to 41 households (worth \$34,122).



Where We Are Now

In FYE 2014, CAC assisted 1,028 households (2,850 individuals) with food, clothing, housing, utilities, medical, seasonal, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and other needed expenses.



Carol's Garden

Carol's Garden is CAC's "front yard" garden. Manned by volunteers and the scene for many gardening classes, produce harvested from the six raised beds and fruit trees is distributed through our food pantry. This is one way we are working to provide fresh, nutritious food and help area families become more self-sufficient.



“Like” and “follow” us on these social media sites for current news and information.

Facebook www.facebook.com/cackc 

Instagram [@CAC_KC](https://www.instagram.com/CAC_KC) 

Twitter [@CACouncilKCMO](https://twitter.com/CACouncilKCMO) 

Community Assistance Council is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization and is listed on the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation website, www.gkccf.org

In-kind and financial donations are tax-deductible.
Financial donations can be made by check or credit card.

Federal employees can contribute through the Combined Federal Campaign
CFC #79163
Kansas City, Missouri employees can contribute through the KC Charity Campaign
#1017