



CHARLOTTE AREA FUND INC.

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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MESSAGE FROM OUR ADMINISTRATION



Welcome Community Stakeholders and Friends to the review the 2017 Annual Report of the Charlotte Area Fund Incorporated. Today, more than ever our collective work to reduce poverty in Mecklenburg County has never been more crucial to the economic and social progress of the region. The recent Harvard Study indicating Charlotte as the least favorable city among fifty major metropolitan cities in the nation for upward economic mobility of poor people underscores the urgency of re-committing your support to our community action agency. The challenges facing the agency remain enormous but we see great opportunity in new ideas and solutions to re-energize and propel the Charlotte Area Fund's mission to new heights.

As the regions Anti-Poverty initiative, the Charlotte Area Fund was recognized on August 29, 1963 as the Community Action Agency(CAA) for Mecklenburg County by annual affirmation of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Commissioners. Community Action Agencies were a key feature of President Johnson's comprehensive War on Poverty legislation, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The Charlotte Area Fund's organizational model is uniquely governed by a tripartite board of directors representing local private, public, and low income community sector representatives to ensure that planning and implementation of community solutions to poverty will have direct impact on helping people achieve self sufficiency. To further leverage the scope and impact of Community Action Agency resources federal Community Service Block Grant(CSBC) funds provide a broader comprehensive response to community needs.

Strategically, Charlotte Area Fund has identified five primary goals: Employment, Job Skills Training and Education, Nutrition (food assistance and counseling), Housing, and Consumer Education in response to public hearings, community surveys, current economic studies and participation in several local, regional and state level organizations.

The 2016-17 program year was highlighted by the introduction and expansion of program opportunities designed to address significant barriers to breaking the cycle of poverty. These included:

- Childcare support during workforce training
- Apprenticeships with opportunity for job hire upon completion
- Healthy Choices Project to replace and address the health disparity gap
- Helping Home Project to replace and provide new energy star appliances (Duke Energy sponsored)

Additionally, the CAF expanded community engagement with stakeholders through:

- Agency website redesign- charlotteareafund.org
- Growing agency social media platform to include Twitter and Facebook
- Quarterly Business Breakfast held at various locations in Mecklenburg county to grow our community partnerships

We wish former Executive Director Karen Brackett-Browning best wishes in her new role as Executive Director who departed the agency after 21 years of dedicated service. We proudly acknowledge two CAF Board Members, Mr. Aaron McKeithan and Ms. Evelyn Newman, inducted into the North Carolina Community Action Association Hall of Fame in recognition of decades of their commitment to the movement.

Finally, over the coming months, the CAF will undergo a comprehensive strategic planning process to review and assess program objectives based on new program realities to determine future leadership imperatives. As key stakeholders, we welcome community participation into the strategic planning process. Stay tuned for more information coming soon or inquire about how you can be involved in the process to improve your Charlotte Area Fund. Special thanks to Chief Finance Officer, Pamela Henson and staff for their leadership during the transition.

As the Charlotte Area Fund honors the rich tradition of our origin, it informs and instructs us on the urgency of Changing Lives and Helping People.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Wharton
Interim Executive Director

CREATING OPPORTUNITY

ELIMINATING POVERTY

ABOUT CHARLOTTE AREA FUND

In operation since 1963, the Charlotte Area Fund (CAF) is a non-profit organization and the designated community action agency for Mecklenburg County whose:

Mission is to identify and address poverty causes by providing programs and services that assist economically disadvantaged citizens with gaining the skills and abilities necessary to achieve self-sufficiency.

Vision is to be Mecklenburg County's recognized community action agency, empowering residents while ensuring equal opportunity for all.



OUR PROJECTS

The focus of our projects are to assist low income individuals with achieving financial independence through a combination of certified skills training, job search, and the attainment of employment.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROJECT

Our **Self-Sufficiency Project** provides comprehensive case management services to low-income clients for the attainment of employment and ultimately, self-sufficiency. Some of the components of the Self-Sufficiency Project include employment, education, consumer education/money management, and nutrition activities

NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROJECT

Our **Nutrition Assistance Project** provides emergency food for residents of Mecklenbury County. Through nutrition counseling, clients are able to identify other low-cost food sources in the area and realize that health and nutrition are relevant to becoming self-sufficient, economically and physically.



OUR 2016-2017 ACHIEVEMENTS

71

OBTAINED
EMPLOYMENT

145

CLIENTS
COMPLETED
EDUCATION
& TRAINING

635

FAMILIES
SERVED

199

FOOD BOXES
PROVIDED

1006

VOLUNTEER
HOURS

367

APPLICANTS

\$276

AVERAGE
VALUE OF
NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE
PROVIDED

189

COMMUNITY
PARTNERS

HELPING PEOPLE.
CHANGING LIVES.

MAKING AN IMPACT

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS



Pathways to Success

Mejih came to Charlotte from West Africa with nothing but his luggage and a desire to fulfill his dreams of being a successful businessman and homeowner. He learned about Charlotte Area Fund at a community resource fair held at the local Men's Shelter. Eager to secure employment and move out of the shelter, he took the first step on his journey and enrolled in the CAF CSBG Funded Self-Sufficiency Project and began Work Readiness Classes in January 2017. With the guidance and support from his success coach/case manager, he developed an Individual Development Plan (IDP). In less than a year he secured not one but two jobs, purchased a car, and moved into his own apartment. Mejih was hired at his first job in May at FedEx. Determined to save enough money to move out of the shelter and into his own home, he started his second job as a welder at Watson in June. Mejih saved enough to purchase a car to get back and forth to work. He regularly attends budgeting and credit counseling sessions in an effort to work towards his goal of owning a home. Mejih latest accomplishment is completing the Heavy Equipment training course.



Addressing Health Disparities Among African Americans

In 2017, Charlotte Area Fund was awarded a \$3,000 grant from the African American Community Foundation (AACF). We were one of five out of approximately 60 applicants selected. This grant allowed us to expand our services to assist low-income citizens, who have chronic illnesses/conditions, with a variety of health and nutrition activities/services to manage their condition and improve their wellbeing. The Healthy Choices Project addressed the health disparities gap relevant to the chronic conditions of diabetes and hypertension, which leads to cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. This project provided guided and professional services that focused on nutrition education for better health management. Participants received one-on-one personal training sessions, health aids, food demonstrations and a monthly food box packed with fresh and nutritional food.

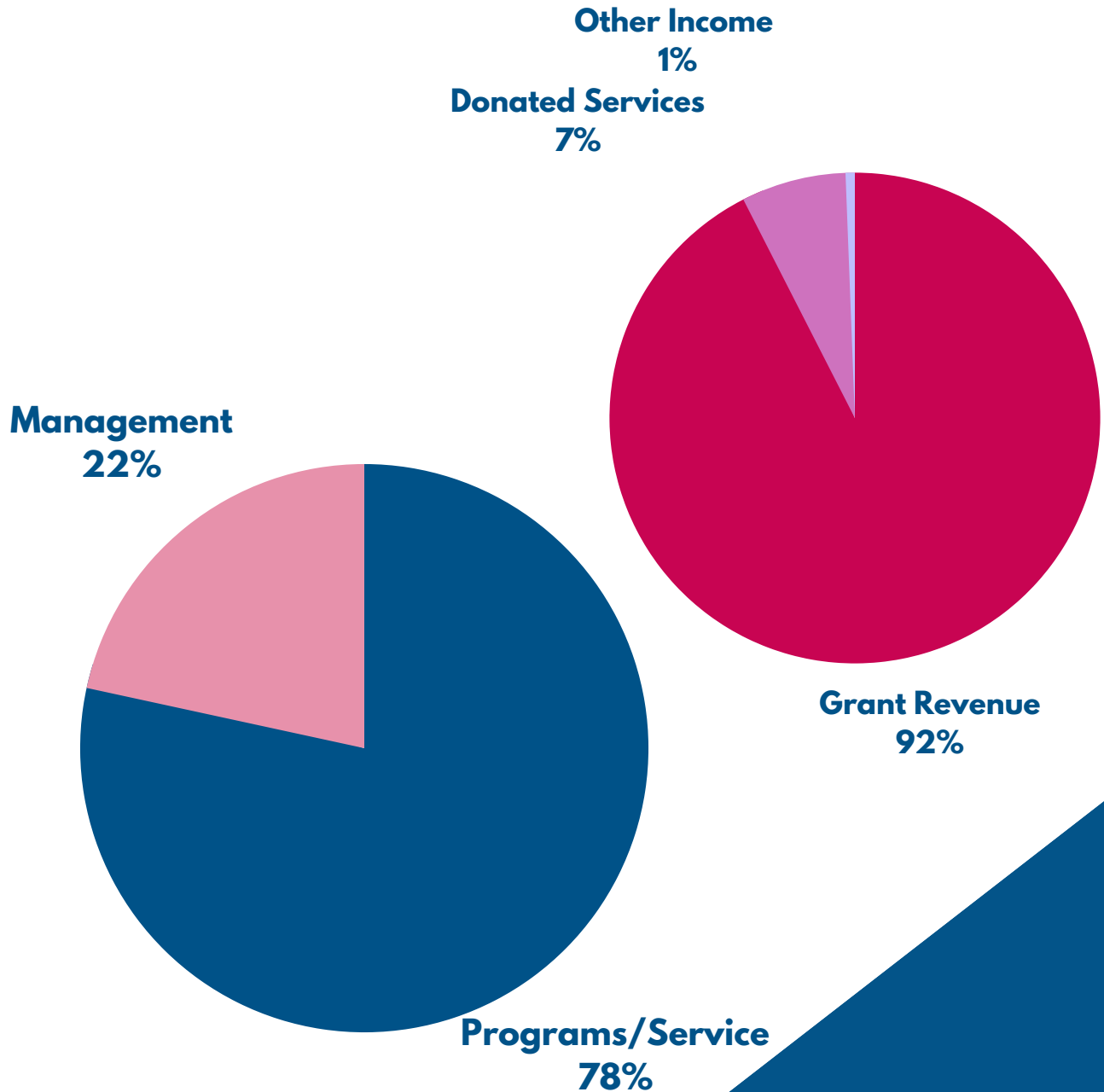
STAY CONNECTED



**CONNECT
COLLABORATE
COORDINATE**

OUR FINANCIALS

Charlotte Area Fund, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is funded by the Community Services Block Grants. CSBG is administered by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families. The funds received for Program Year 2016-2017 (July 1st - June 30th) was \$1,459,248. The expenditures were \$1,461,602. The majority of funds that CAF received were expended on program services, which exemplifies our stewardship of the entrusted funds as exhibited in the charts below. An independent audit that authenticates this financial information has been conducted and IRS Form 990 filed, as is the requirement.



2016-2017 Board of Directors

Board Officers & Members

Reginald Johnson, Chair

NC General Assembly Member Kelly Alexander, Jr.

Mike Waite, Vice Chair

NARI of Greater Charlotte

Dorothy Counts-Scoggins, Secretary

Biddleville-Smallwood Community

Reginald Godette, Treasurer

Mecklenburg Co. Commissioner Vilma Leake

Board Members

Annie Pearl Anderson

Greater Enderly Park Neighborhood Association

Abbie Butler

Mecklenburg Co. Commissioner Dumont Clarke

Darrell Cunningham

Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services

Angela Edwards

Reid Park Neighborhood Association

Deborah Hopkins-Ferguson

Cavalier Management

Perlinda Gabriel

Beechwood Acres II Community

Hattie Griffin

Lakewood Neighborhood Alliance

Stephen W. Kearney

Charlotte City Council Member James Howard

Evelyn Newman

Charlotte City Mayor Office

Shauna Smith

Bethlehem Center

Sonia Smith

Charlotte City Council

William (Bill) Sparks

Disability Rights & Resources

Alvin Gene Winchester

Local Barber's Association



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Follow us on:



Our annual report presents the highlights of our program year. For details about all our accomplishments, visit our website www.charlotteareafund.org.