

CONNECTED BY OUR ROOTS COMMITTED TO OUR GROWTH



Kennett Area Community Service

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT:

OCTOBER 1, 2020 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

During times of unprecedented crisis and uncertainty, people harness a resilience they never knew they were capable of to unite with others and provide support. Boundaries disappear and communities rise through collective compassion and the belief that, together, we can overcome any challenge. That spirit of shared empathy and generosity has been evident yet again this year, not just in battling the COVID-19 crisis, but in the comprehensive shift we made together to navigate daily obstacles brought on by social and economic challenges.

Driven by your generosity during this 2020-2021 fiscal year, Kennett Area Community Service focused on our deep roots that support the community in Southern Chester County through food, housing, and crisis services. As we continue to see the sun emerging from the clouds of the past months, our roots are ready to branch out and continue to grow our reach with the hope of a new building on the horizon. A building that will strengthen how we help our neighbors and our connection with our agency partners.

As KACS continues to navigate through this new version of the world, I am gratefully aware that any progress in creating a community without poverty will be furthered by dedicated supporters like you. I value your steadfast commitment to ensuring our neighbors facing hunger, homelessness, and crisis have equitable access to food, shelter, and safety. We remain focused on ensuring the families we serve not only have housing and nourishment, but also stability, as the ripple effects of the pandemic persist. Thank you for your dedicated partnership in this mission. Together, we are emerging stronger and making a meaningful difference for hundreds of our most vulnerable neighbors in our community.

These pages are full of excitement and success stories which would not be possible without our amazing staff, volunteers, board members, supporters, and community partners. I want to personally thank every one of you for your time, commitment, dedication, and support over the past year. You are all AMAZING and I am so proud to be in the glorious whirlwind of awesomeness with each and every one of you.

Thanks for all you do to love your neighbor.

Warmly,

Leah

Leah M. Reynolds, M.S.P.L

Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynne D. Seligman, *President*

Leon Spencer, *Vice President*

Tom H. Musser, *Treasurer*

Christine Prisco, *Secretary*

Lenda Carrillo, *Diversity & Inclusion Officer*

Lynn B. Majarian

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Bob George

David L. Myers

Peter Soraruf, MD

Lisa Teixeira



STAFF

Leah M. Reynolds, *Executive Director*

Amy Scheuren, *Program Director*

Nancy Tapia, *Participant Advocate Administrator*

Britton Elwood, *Operations Coordinator*

Jess Peterson, *Community Coordinator*

Gonzalo Cano, *Emergency Assistance Advocate*

Elizabeth Flores, *Housing Stability Advocate*

Keila Hernandez-Sullivan, *Emergency Assistance Advocate*

Chrissy Wilcox, *Bridges Out of Poverty Coordinator*

Sheila Eames, *Bookkeeper*

Linda Johnson, *Administrative Assistant*

Sarah Golden, *Communication & Development Associate*

Lily Rodriguez, *Information Management Specialist*

Jamie Kleman, *Engagement Strategist*

Delaney Marin-Tapia, *Administrative Assistant*

Britney Bautista, *Inventory & Warehouse Associate*

Jasmin Castano, *Gift Processing Assistant*

Carina Villagomez, *Receptionist*

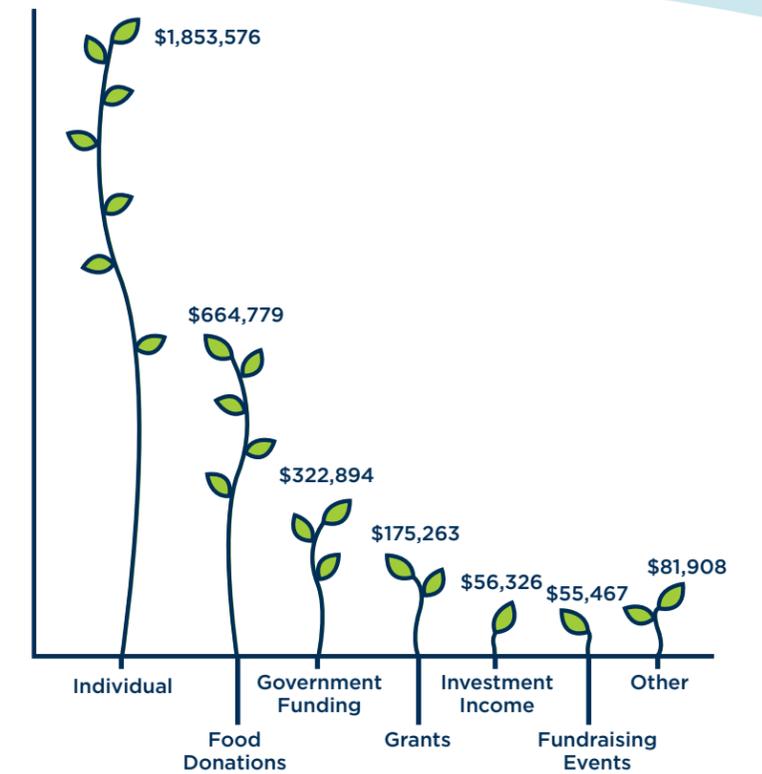
Lola Almanza, *Food Cupboard Data Assistant*



FINANCIALS

REVENUE

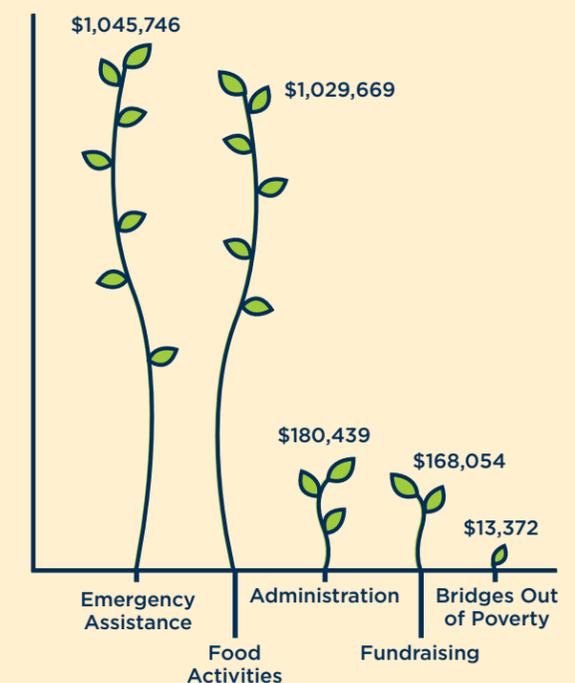
TOTAL REVENUE:
\$3,210,214



EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$2,437,281

OPERATING INCOME:
\$772,932





EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

“ ”

A true community is not just about being geographically close to someone or part of the same social web network. It's about feeling connected and responsible for what happens. Humanity is our ultimate community, and everyone plays a crucial role.

-Yehuda Berg

The KACS Emergency Assistance (EMA) Program faced a year filled with the continuing repercussions of the pandemic and adverse weather. Our EMA team averaged nearly three hours of case management per case, with **households experiencing homelessness requiring up to 30.5 hours**. KACS worked side by side with families in need to help them navigate the effects of everything from testing positive for COVID, whole-household quarantines, job loss without illness, to loss of income due to an adult staying home with children that were not in school or daycare.

Weather conditions also had a massive impact on our neighbors in need. One of our most vulnerable households consisting of a young mother and her two school-age children, found themselves **displaced from their home for the second time in thirteen months due to flooding**.

In August of 2020, Tropical Storm Isaias flooded the Avondale Apartments in Chester County and the family of three was forced to evacuate and lost food, clothing, furniture, and personal belongings. After months of searching for safer, affordable housing, the single mother and her children were left with no option but to return to their apartment.

A little over a year later, Hurricane Ida swept through the area and the units flooded yet again. This time the small family sought shelter with friends and relatives until **KACS was able to stably rehouse them and assist with their first month's rent and propane in a new rental in the Avon Grove School District**.



We are proud of this beautiful success story, but the hard work continues as many at-risk families affected by the 2021 flood are **planning to return to the apartments despite the continuous threat of flooding**, and the lack of alternative housing is an ongoing issue throughout the area.



Looking to the Future

We remain committed to helping our neighbors secure safe and affordable housing, while keeping those homes warm and filled with light. **The plans for a new building** will allow our EMA Team to move from the trailers KACS is currently renting and create a "safe space", and conduct case management with families in **private and welcoming offices**. The new space will also be invaluable in providing room for us to **strengthen our relationships and reconnect with partner agencies and community organizations**.

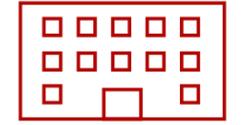
COLLECTIVE IMPACT



Total Payment for This Year:
\$576,554



Rent, Mortgage, & Security Deposits:
\$397,210



Total Spent on Motels (due to no shelters in Southern Chester County):
\$88,641



Heating & Oil Assistance:
\$8,060



Total Spent on Electric:
\$48,899



Total Water Bill Assistance:
\$6,679



Other Emergency Payment:
\$27,064



Families/Individuals Stably Rehoused:
39



Total Households That Received EMA Service:
548





FOOD CUPBOARD



I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for the minds and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

This year found us continuing to navigate the COVID pandemic and economic crisis, which the Food Cupboard responded to with strong leadership and a focus on pivoting to meet the needs of our community. While the demand for food remained high, the supply chain and inventory issues resulted in a **decrease from ten to three retail stores that were able to commit to consistent food donations**. KACS handled this challenge by establishing new partnerships, securing monetary donations for use at grocery stores, organizing food drives and deliveries, and rallying volunteers to safely help our neighbors in need.

Our call to action was met with an answer of determined compassion. Through donations and direct purchases, **KACS brought in and distributed almost half a million pounds of food**, which sustained an average of **464 households per month**. We offered shoppers a “food you choose” platform in a sanitized environment, creating choice and empowering people to help uplift them out of poverty with dignity. A significant new addition has been consistently providing milk, eggs, dairy, and a protein option during each visit, something we were not always able to offer in past years due to our reliance solely on food donations.

KACS welcomed back our volunteers in May, and in a year that continued to be difficult and uncertain, they showed up and gave **4,500 hours** of their time to help feed our neighbors. From receiving, sorting, and distribution, to driving trucks and picking up food, our volunteers rose to the occasion once again.

Our ROOTS

Those volunteer hours reached outside the walls of 136 W. Cedar Street, with helping hands keeping our **KACS on Wheels program serving 30 families per month, and bringing meals to 100 seniors at Luther House in West Grove.**



Looking to the Future

We know that supporting our community’s food needs will continue to require a collaborative and dynamic approach. **The plans for a new building** will allow us to expand our reach and initiatives, and the foundation is already being set for exciting partnerships. KACS is working with the Chester County Food Bank to become a **Food Distribution Hub for all pantries and cupboards in Southern Chester County**. We are also thrilled with the collaboration of Kennett Township, the Emerging Abundant Farming Collective, and The Land Conservancy to cultivate a portion of Spar Hill Farm and **donate produce to KACS**. In addition, we are working with community members to launch the Little Free Pantry initiative in Southern Chester County and provide yet another resource for our neighbors.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT



Years Serving the Community:
67



Average Families Served Monthly:
464



Pounds of Food Distributed:
457,012



Pounds of Food Donated:
382,057



Average Number of Volunteers Per Month:
45



Volunteer Hours in 5-Month Time Period:
4,544



Families Who Received Thanksgiving Dinner in 2020:
411



Families Who Received Food & Gift Cards From Holiday Event in 2020:
533





GETTING AHEAD WORKSHOPS

“ ”

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and the world better than you found it.

-Marian Wright Edelman

Although the pandemic put a hold on Getting Ahead workshops this fiscal year, **KACS is now poised to reintroduce this powerful curriculum** to the community. With a **Bridges Out of Poverty Coordinator and a team of six trained facilitators**, KACS will begin to offer two workshops (one in English and one in Spanish), two times per year. These in-person workshops will take place at Church of the Advent in Kennett Square, and hot meals and babysitting will be provided. KACS was proud of the eighteen graduates from our 2019-2020 cohort, and looks forward to the continued growth and success of this initiative.

Our ROOTS

The Getting Ahead workshop is a 16-session curriculum based on the Bridges Out of Poverty model that focuses on **reducing poverty in a comprehensive way** by developing a continuum of strategies for building prosperous and healthy communities.

Once an individual graduates from Getting Ahead, they will **receive continued support with the Staying Ahead initiative**, which offers key resources to obtain and maintain self sufficiency. Staying Ahead will be able to once again **provide workshops, online resources, networking opportunities, and mentorship**.



Looking to the Future

The plans of a new building will provide the space and tools to continue the **growth of our Getting Ahead workshops and offer the long-anticipated Financial Literacy Program**. In-house classrooms will allow us to bring in guest speakers to help participants **navigate banking, purchase their first home, and explore retirement options**. With the added benefits of classroom learning to further promote collaboration, enhanced critical thinking aptitude, and important career building skills. This will be an inclusive program offered to **English and Spanish speaking community members of all ages**, from elementary school students to adults.

HELP US HELP OTHERS

Committed to Our GROWTH

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A difference:



Visit www.kacsonline.net and hit the donate button from the comfort of your own home - nothing like being comfortable and doing good at the same time!



Encourage people to donate to KACS in honor of your birthday, anniversary, or any special occasion. Giving never felt so good!



Choose KACS as your charity of choice on www.smile.amazon.com



Checkout **KACS Around Town** on the homepage of www.kacsonline.com to see businesses who are getting involved and giving back - KACS gets around!



Volunteer - visit www.kacsonline.net to get started today!



Donate food to our Food Cupboard - visit www.kacsonline.net to learn what items are needed and what days and times we accept deliveries. Sharing food is sharing love!



Start a Food Drive in your neighborhood, school, or office - share the thrill of giving!

“ ”

It's easier to take than to give. It's nobler to give than to take. The thrill of taking lasts a day. The thrill of giving lasts a lifetime.

-Joan Marques



DONOR STATISTICS

Location

Our **ROOTS** ▶
CHESTER COUNTY



OVERALL

City	Donors	%
Kennett Square	1,138	37.5%
Anonymous	417	13.8%
West Chester	288	9.5%
Chadds Ford Historic District	248	8.2%
Landenberg	203	6.7%
West Grove	137	4.5%
Avondale	132	4.4%
Wilmington	46	1.5%
Coatesville	31	1.0%
Glen Mills	20	0.7%
Cochranville	18	0.6%
Other	353	11.6%

Total: 3,031

NEW DONORS

City	Donors	%
Kennett Square	381	29.0%
Anonymous	152	11.6%
West Chester	154	11.7%
Chadds Ford Historic District	118	9.0%
Landenberg	83	6.3%
West Grove	64	4.9%
Avondale	58	4.4%
Wilmington	30	2.3%
Coatesville	18	1.4%
Other	255	19.4%

Total: 1,313

New Donors
OVER THE
LAST 3
YEARS



Total Donors in 2020-2021: 3031

Donor Giving History	# of Donors
5 or more years	151
4 years	290
3 years	201
2 years	450
1 year	319
< than 1 year	1,619

2020-2021 DONATIONS

Donor Type	Total # of Donors	% of Donors
Organizations	245	8.1%
Individuals	2786	91.9%

Total: 3,031

Donors exclude Gift in Kind donations, only monetary, Gift Cards or Stock

To see the full list of donors please visit our website www.kacsonline.net

2020-2021 DONATIONS

Donor Type	Total Amount Recorded	% of Donations by Type
Organizations	1,049,087	50.2%
Individuals	1,042,399	49.8%

Total: 2,091,486

Total amount recorded reflects the total amount since database inception. Donations that were received from Investment firms are included in this number even though they were directed to KACS by Individuals.

PHOTO DESCRIPTIONS

COVER

(Left to right)

Photo 1: KACS Emergency Assistance Team- Emergency Assistance (EMA) Team led by Program Director Amy Scheuren worked with the victims of Hurricane Ida in Avondale and assisted them with their immediate needs. KACS Emergency Assistance Program provides financial assistance for basic living expenses, housing assistance to those who are experiencing homelessness, and connecting those in need with a partner agency. Scheuren described the scene upon arrival, "Families were tirelessly working to salvage anything they could from their units, most families losing all their furniture and many personal belongings due to the flooding. Some tenants in the building were rushing to do laundry in hopes of saving clothing, sheets, and towels. Our team went door to door knocking on every first-floor unit to assess what was needed most and how we could help find the families a place to stay. Some were able to stay with friends and family, but many were still left without options." Relief efforts continued to be buoyed by KACS and other organizations in the community. Restaurants throughout Southern Chester County donated hot meals every night and continued to do so through the months of September and October to ensure these families were cared for. Leah Reynolds Executive Director shared, "The collective generosity of this community helps create remarkable change and hope. Feed a child, and you save not only that child, but their family, their community, their country, our world. You never know what little action you make might have a ripple effect."

Photo 2: Lynn B. Majarian, current Board President

Photo 3: Britney Bautista Inventory and Warehouse Associate, with Volunteers Effie Barnes, Faye Pember, and Ann Lofting happy to be back in the building volunteering and helping families in need

Photo 4: Nancy Tapia, Participant Advocate Administrator left, Lynne Seligman Board President for fiscal year 2020-2021 right

Photo 5: Longwood Rotary Book Bag Project; Lily Rodriguez Information Management Specialist, Delaney Marin-Tapia Administrative Assistance for EMA, Nancy Tapia Participant Advocate Administrator, Leah Reynolds Executive Director

Photo 6: Dennis Babcock, Volunteer and Trusted Advisor to KACS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS/STAFF

Photo 1: Lisa Teixeira Board Member sorting donations

Photo 2: KACS New Welcome Mural- Armed with the supplies donated by Kennett Copy & More, a colorful mural was created by Julissa Gama, a freshman at Kennett High School with future ambition to be an artist. Julissa and her family are participants of KACS, and her father Hector is a graduate of KACS Getting Ahead, and he often is found volunteering at KACS events. The mural is a warm welcome to shoppers at the KACS Food Cupboard. The young artist carefully sketched the word "Welcome" in multiple languages and dialects, and mixed paints to color the letters in a vibrant display. The effect is a vibrant reminder that KACS is here to welcome and serve our neighbors, which average to 464 families every month.

PHOTO DESCRIPTIONS

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Photo 1: One of the many health clinics held at KACS. KACS partnered with the Chester County Health Department to distribute 50+ vaccines in the community this spring. In this photo Executive Director Leah Reynolds receives her flu shot at our flu shot clinic in partnership with Jennersville Hospital. KACS continues our relationships with many community partners to always offer care to our families in need.

Photo 2: A family sought assistance to move into a 3-bedroom home in West Grove in February 2021. They paid for the grandmother, their two small children, a cousin and a cousin's child to fly to the U.S. Due to plane tickets and several other unexpected expenses, they had a very short time frame to come up with first month's rent and security deposit before their family arrived from Venezuela. The couple fled to the U.S. for political amnesty and had not seen their two small children in almost two years. During that time, the children stayed with their grandmother. KACS assisted with both the deposit, first month's rent, and furniture. Due to some immigration issues in Venezuela, all their flights were delayed, and the trip was in jeopardy. However, around mid-April the immigration issues were resolved, and the family was reunited. The picture we took was shortly after the children arrived to the United States for the first time. The Family brought them in person so that they could thank KACS for assisting them with their home.

FOOD CUPBOARD

Photo 1: KACS shopper with his groceries of choice during the Food Cupboard re-opening May 13, 2021.

Photo 2: From left Leah Reynolds Executive Director, Lynn Engle Volunteer, Nancy Tapia Participant Advocate Administrator, Tom Engle Volunteer, Lola Alamanza Food Cupboard Data Assistant, Jess Peterson Community Coordinator, Jamie Phillips Volunteer

GETTING AHEAD WORKSHOPS

Photo 1: We are thrilled with the return of KACS Garden Project. KACS successfully grew a variety of vegetables including eggplant, a variety of tomatoes both big and small, tomatillos, bell peppers, hot red chili peppers, jalapeños, cilantro, basil, and cucumbers with the help of our Inventory and Warehouse Associate Britney Bautista along with some of the KACS community.

Photo 2: Ross, a 10-year-old student at Hillendale Elementary School with his grandmother and mother, visited KACS with the Lightstream video crew to spotlight the amazing work he has done setting up his own online business. Ross worked on this site during the pandemic & has been donating some of the proceeds of his sales to help KACS help others. We are inspired and grateful for Ross and his incredible generosity. He has donated over \$300.00 to KACS.



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