



Flickinger Learning Center

After School Programming for At-Risk Youth in our
Community for all Races, Beliefs & Abilities

Annual Report

Prepared for July 2022 Board Meeting

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MISSION STATEMENT

THE PURPOSE OF THE FLICKINGER LEARNING CENTER IS TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS OF ALL RACES, BELIEFS, AND ABILITIES TO BUILD STRONGER INDIVIDUALS AND A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY.

GOALS

Our goal is to dramatically increase children's engagement in the Muscatine Community School District. By acting now, we expect an immediate and long-lasting impact on these children's lives and futures.

- Maintain our current growth of approximately 10% faster in reading
- Increase family involvement and available educational opportunities
- Increase community awareness and involvement
- Increase attendance and engagement for students in the school environment
- Decrease behavioral referrals
- Create a safe environment conducive to personal and academic growth.

CURRENT ONGOING PROGRAMS

- We offered academic Afterschool Programs at three sites during the school year – Main Site, McKinley School, and Madison School.
- We partner with United Way of Muscatine and a private donor to provide healthy snacks for the children every day of programming.
- Musser Public Library, Hy-Vee Mainstreet, Life Connections, and Families, Inc. provided special programming at our after-school programs. These unique programs help to enrich our children by providing specialty classes and services to serve the whole child better.
- We received funding from the Muscatine Community School District from ESSER monies (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) to run McKinley and Madison Sites.
- The Main Site had a summer program from May 31st to June 25th and served twenty-one students.

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.” — Nelson Mandela

Parent Survey Results May 2022

Parent Surveys were initiated in 2015 and are repeated annually. We survey all parents at each site to gauge how parents view their children's progress.

- 1) Do you feel our after-school program is a safe place for your child?
100% of parents feel their child is safe in our program.
- 2) Have you seen an academic or behavioral growth since starting the after-school program?
86% of parents have seen academic or behavioral growth
- 3) Does your child complete their homework during the after-school program?
99% of parents said their child completed their homework at our program.
- 4) Is your child doing better in school since starting the after-school program?
94% of parents agree their child is doing better in school since starting the after-school program
- 5) Does your child qualify for free/reduced lunch/fees?
90% of the children we serve are eligible for free/reduced lunch and fees
- 6) If you utilize transportation, would your child be able to attend without it?
45% of the parents surveyed said their child wouldn't be able to participate without transportation. (Specific transportation survey yielded +90% rate of transportation need at the main site.)

Student Survey Results 2022

We also survey the kids yearly because their thoughts are important; they're the reason we're here! When asked what they liked about the program, here is what some of our kids had to say:

1) Do you feel like you are safe in the program?

100% feel safe

2) Have you gotten better at reading since starting the program?

Yes: 25% Somewhat: 70% no: 5%

3) What do you like about the program?

People (some of them)

Basement and homework room

Everything

The books

We have no Flickinger on Friday

Games, snacks, reading

It's cool

Everything

Playing games in the basement

I like how it makes me feel safer

The food

Computers

Trampolines

Reading

All the teachers who help me

4) What do you dislike about the program?

Nothing

Strikes (disciplinary 'strikes')

Reading/ I want a higher reading level/Math

Yelling and being mean

We have Flickinger almost all week

When kids do something bad, and they don't do anything (Sometimes)

Tech room/going to the activity room

Playing on the computers

A community Working Together



Flickinger Learning Center programming is provided free of charge to ensure that children who need our help will never face financial barriers regarding academic enrichment. We rely on support from the community to keep it that way.

We must be out in the community; letting people know what we do and where we are is vital to our success. We ensure we are involved in local events like the one pictured above. The community block party was a success!

This year we have been very fortunate to receive grants and donations from **The United Way, The Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine, Bayer, HNI Charitable Trust, Kent Corporation, Zachry, Zion Lutheran Church, Keystone AOK, Green State Credit Union, New Hope Foundation, and Hy-Vee Mainstreet**, in addition to many private donors.

Our annual Trivia Night made its triumphant return in February 2022. Trivia night was well attended, and our community supported our efforts. Sponsorship and prizes were donated by **Rivo Inc., Community Bank and Trust, Lifetime Dentistry, Salon Incognito, A&G Products, First National Bank of Muscatine, The Coffee Belt, Wal-Mart, The Black Pearl, Big Catz Café, Kenda Kist Jewelry, Scooters, Ardon Creek, Pancake & Waffle house, Muskie Energy Drinks, Family Style Restaurant, Geo Johns, J-Spa, Rose Bowl, Maid-Rite, Let's Eat, Snapshots By: Mindy, and CBI Bank and Trust.** It was a joy to be back.

Flickinger held its second BINGO Night in November, and we were once again overwhelmed with community support from local businesses who donated BINGO prizes for the event. We had a great turnout and raised \$905.00! The first-ever July Scratch cupcake fundraiser was also successful, boosting nearly four thousand dollars in sales. We also received an extraordinary donation from the Muscatine High School Senior Survivors. They completed the senior challenge and awarded us \$4906.76! We are thankful to Grace Kies and Logan Wolf for choosing FLC as their charity of choice.



Ethnicity Breakdown



Madison:

White 50%

Black or African American 15%

Hispanic/Latino 27%

Asian 8%

McKinley:

White 74%

Black or African American 9%

Hispanic/Latino 17%

Main Site:

White 39%

Black or African American 43%

Hispanic/Latino 18%

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

This year has indeed been a year of program expansion. As a non-profit, we have a unique outlook on life and, thus, a unique perspective on ways to help. This past year FLC has introduced two new programs. The Teen Crisis and Support Program and Jumpstart Pre-K.

The Flickinger Teen Crisis and Support Program was borne from a place of need. In the past year, we at FLC have come across many teens who either a) are living in unsafe living situations, b) are essentially homeless, or c) living with relatives or friends. As a result, we decided to start a program that would offer guidance and support to not only the teens but their families and caregivers. Since we are building this program from the ground up, I have asked caregivers for feedback. One thing that has come up often is how tough it is for caregivers as they face circumstances far beyond parenting.

Since this is a new program, we are still in the planning stages. Our first step was to offer immediate support to the teens that need our services. This can be as simple as helping them communicate their needs to adults or helping them get proper health care. Mindy and I have personally assisted teens with medical appointments, school services, housing services, internship placement, exploring college/trade school options, and obtaining employment.

The second part of the program is the support/feedback group, where caregivers can have a space to discuss the challenges and get support in a safe and confidential environment. This group will also serve as a guide in assisting the teenagers in their care. The goal of TCSP is to support families in this situation as there are many blind spots and dead ends. Since we are not affiliated with DHS or any other state/local social agencies and are a private non-profit, we are simply trying to get support and be a resource conduit.

The Jumpstart Pre-K program also came about from an unmet need. Both children who will enter preschool and children who are currently struggling in preschool were in quarantine during sensitive times in their development. This unique environment has affected their social, emotional, and academic abilities. The Jumpstart program aims to acclimate children to a controlled learning environment while working on basic social, emotional, and intellectual skills in preparation for preschool.

The Jumpstart program will start with ten children and be data-driven and heartfelt. All students will be monitored throughout the program and assessed via the Gold Standards of Education. The program will be managed by two FLC staff members working toward their early childhood education degrees with guidance from Jessi Freers, our beloved board member and Principal of the Muskie Early Learning Center.

Our Jumpstart Pre-K program will offer parent support via classes and interactive lesson plans. FLC and Iowa State Outreach will partner to provide our parents with two classes. One is for the parents and will take place simultaneously with the Jumpstart program. That class is called 'Our Bookshelf.' Our Bookshelf will teach the parents about a technique called dialogic reading and help them with ideas on how to make reading enjoyable for them and their child at home. The second program is called 'Raising School Ready Readers' and is based on Engaging Families in Children's Literacy Development. Classes are interactive and involve child and parent participation. Sessions focus on developing six core literacy areas to help support and nurture a love of reading.

A GROWTH MINDSET – READING GROWTH, THAT IS

During this program year, we operated sites at our main site on Mulberry, Madison School, and McKinley School. We got to work with STAR testing, Sumdog placement, sight word practice, and number recognition. Remember that many of our children are still at a deficit due to the COVID school closures of 200/21, well over half a year of traditional schooling in the most crucial times. Having a baseline and range is vital to the success of our students.

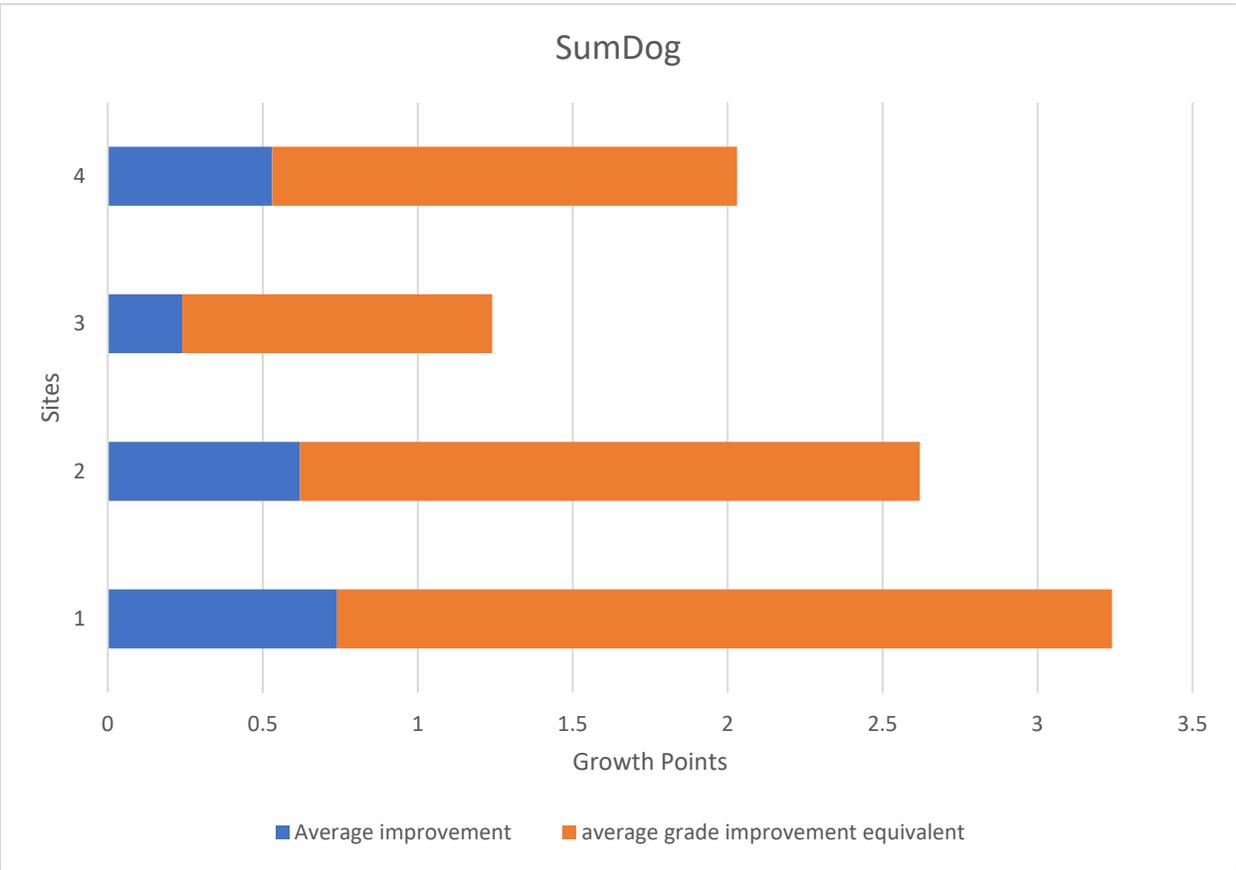
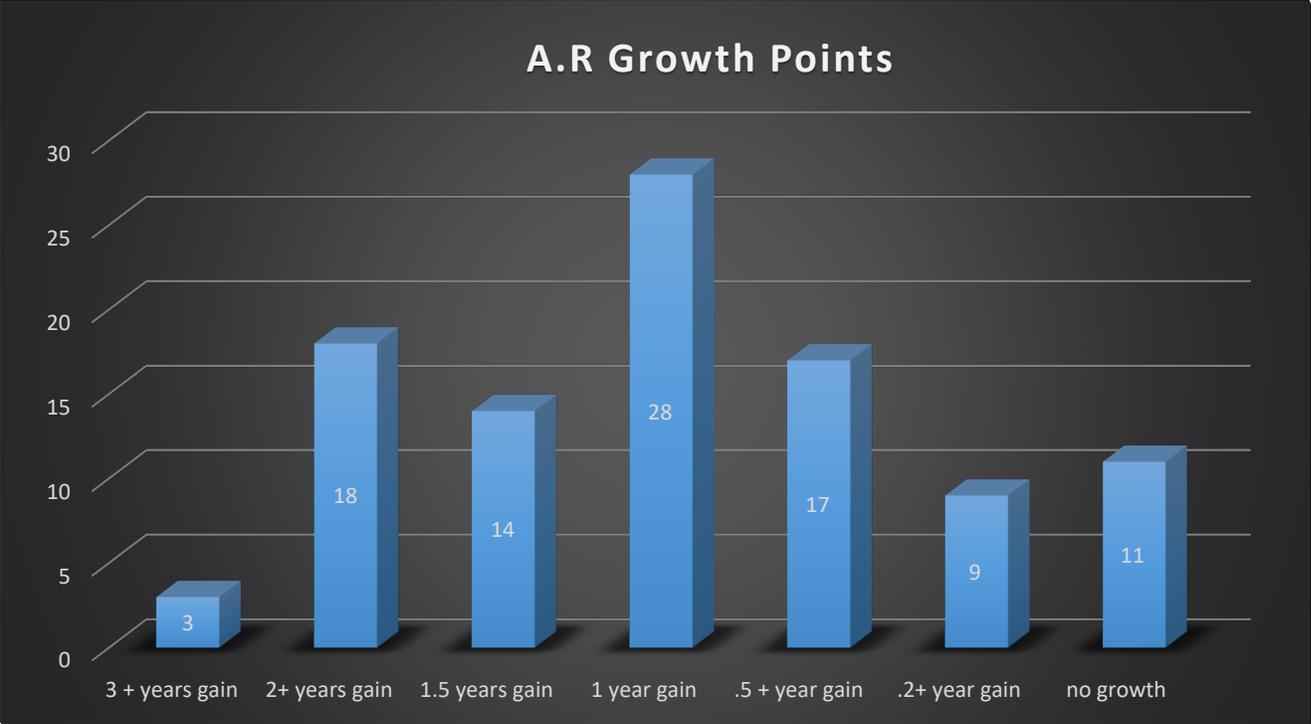
Part of our metrics come from Accelerated Reader, an online program that tests reading comprehension and determines the level at which the kids are reading. An example of ZPD in action is: a level would be 1.2, which signifies the child is reading at the level of a first-grader in the second month. Therefore, that child can read from 1.1-1.5 level books.

The year starts with a myriad of placement tests, starting with our STAR test, an intensive diagnostic test to assess reading and comprehension. This test gives us the child's ZPD or Zone of Proximal Development. The ZPD will provide us with a range, and we can then observe the child's reading habits to evaluate the level of intervention we must provide to ensure academic success.

Once they have completed the diagnostic, the child will take a three to five-question test on each book they read, and they will move to a higher level as test scores reflect mastery. We monitor their scores and provide targeted intervention based on the child's needs.

We also get data from Sumdog, our math-based program. Sumdog assesses time spent on the app and provides us with a baseline via placement testing at the beginning and end of the program year. Additionally, they enjoy playing Sumdog and will ask to play on their celebration days! By the end of this program year, 100% of our children had made growth.

It has been an excellent year for FLC, and we look forward to whatever the next year will bring!



MOTHERS MENTORING AND SUPPORT PROGRAM (MMSP)

Program Report January 2021 through June 2022:

Written by: Beth Meredith Program Director MMSP

Families assisted: 9

Supplies provided:

- starter kits (cleaning products, towels, paper products, personal hygiene)
- Pillows, sheets, blankets, comforters
- Window coverings – blinds, shades, curtains, rods
- Furniture – couches, beds, side tables, dressers
- Kitchen – cookware, dishes, glasses, eating, and cooking utensils
**transport of the more oversized items is through the Pearl City outreach and assistance of my grandson and the use of his truck to pick up donations as well as deliver to clients

The mother's program was officially launched in January of 2021. Initially, I thought my services would be helpful to struggling moms who already have a place but had difficulty maintaining their home with basic things such as cleaning, organizing, etc—in essence, making their place a better living environment where the children felt a safe, comfortable atmosphere and wanted to be home instead of hanging out on the streets. Many of those moms were never taught the basics of “home economics” because they didn't have it in their own lives. However, what I thought I was supposed to do, seemingly took a different course.

Danni connected me with the Adult Impact Muscatine group (AIM), who meet via zoom bi-weekly. Through that group, I met people from other programs who assisted families in various ways. I gave them my info, and several reached out to see if I could help moms who initially lived at the shelter and were recently placed into their housing. They were able to get them into a place and offered a few items, but the families had nothing; they were starting over. They needed everything: kitchen items, cookware, eating utensils, bedding, curtains, and furniture. That is when I felt this program was geared more toward that need.

The first person I helped was a mom (Melisa) walking in the rain with her three-month-old son at 3 in the morning because she left a domestically violent home. The police found her and took her to the Jesus Mission. Sharon Phillips contacted me to see if I could help Melisa in any way. Sharon also contacted MCSA, who immediately got her into emergency housing. I drove her there with the few things she was carrying and was able to help her get settled. We helped her get diapers, formula, etc., a few baby clothes, and clothes for Melisa.

Melisa was initially from Moline but did not have her full citizenship since her parents brought her to the states from Mexico as an infant. We had several obstacles and hurdles, but eventually, we got her into an apartment in Moline through the assistance of child care services in Illinois and other resources. I contacted the Outreach to get furniture and help me to transport those items to her new place. We gave Melisa kitchen items and window coverings that had been previously donated and also purchased some new things such as towels, bedding, etc.; for her, Melisa is now working part-time and returning to school for her GED. She hopes to study dentistry as soon as she obtains her legal citizenship. Her goal is to return to Mexico to assist impoverished families with free dental assistance.

The second family I assisted was a mom with four children who left an abusive marriage after 17 years and moved in with her grandmother. MCSA was able to help her with finding low-rent housing, but again, this mom had nothing. A group member from AIM referred her to me, and we were able to supply her with furniture, curtains, bedding, plus eating and cooking utensils.

Amber is a hard-working mom who was trying to take on extra shifts at the nursing home where she worked. She could barely afford gas for the car or money to cover her utilities, let alone basic household or personal hygiene needs. The Salvation Army and I helped her with some gifts for her children that she was able to place around it. At Christmas time, her 8-year-old daughter was concerned that Santa would not be able to come to their house because they had no fireplace. Amber found some boxes, covered them with the brick look contact paper, then stayed up all night to put that together and make a fireplace for Santa. Amber said the look on her daughter's face that morning was priceless. Her 14-year-old son said, "mom, this finally feels like home" after moving so many times. It is comments such as his that are rewarding to me and make this endeavor all worthwhile.

I am helping another mom who was referred to me via AIM. She needed some household items, but she was also trying to get her temporary driver's work permit (restricted license) to drive to her office when needed. She currently works from home but is required to go to the office in Cedar Rapids for meetings etc. (but is limited because of transportation). I contacted the driver's license bureau on her behalf to determine what she needed to get the permit and am working with her and MCC to get her registered for the required courses to complete the requirement. She is limited financially, so I am checking into resources that may be able to cover this cost.

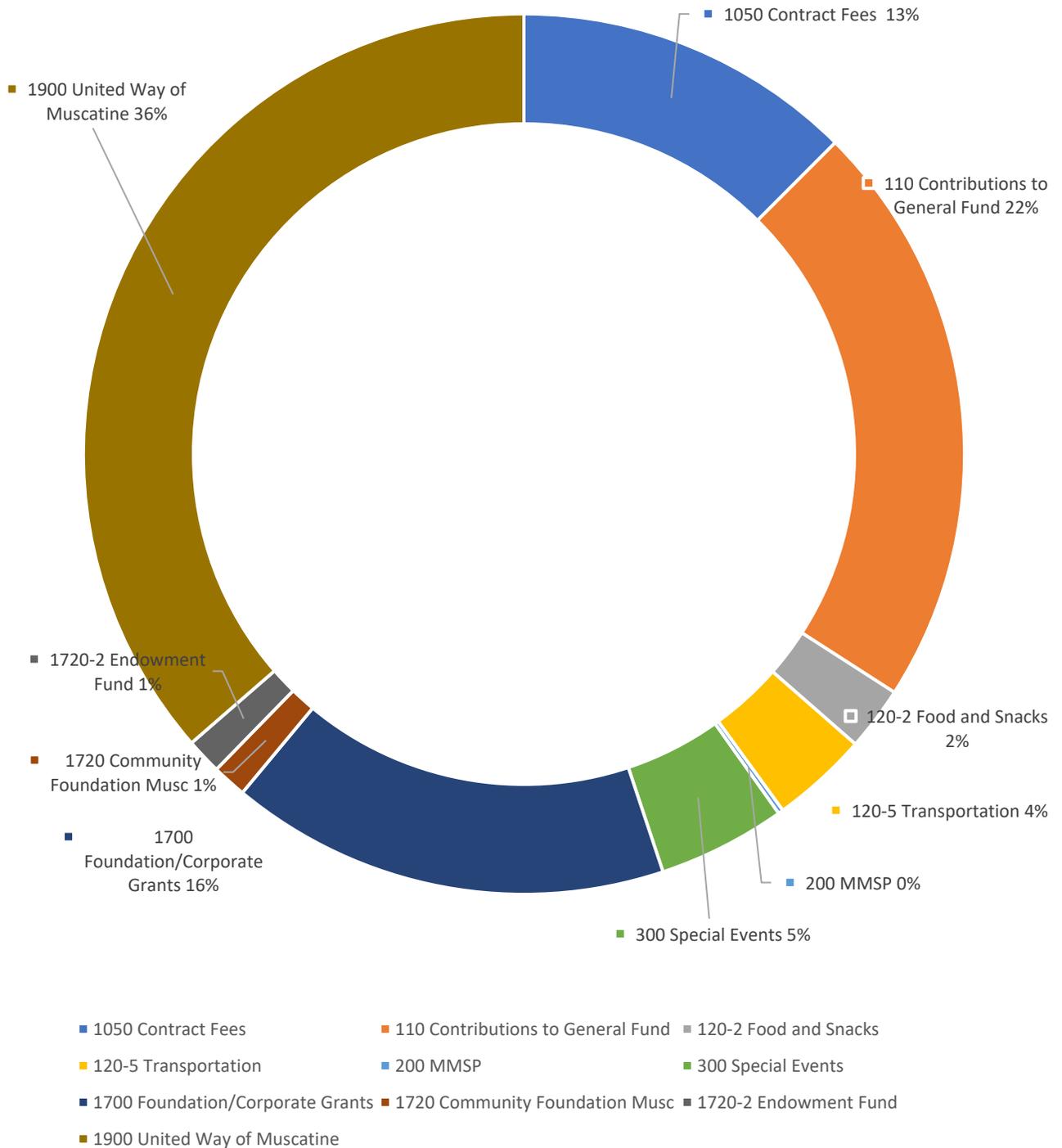
Another client I am working with is a family with six children. They were living at MCSA because their home in Keokuk (that they were buying on contract) was tagged as condemned due to the severe foundational and structure issues. Again, someone from the shelter and family resources contacted me, and we were able to assist them with most of their household needs. This mother works as a traveling CNA while the father cares for the children since he is currently unemployed. The mother is going to college online through the Ashworth College in Georgia to obtain her degree in Criminal Justice. The Trades Program in Muscatine has offered him the opportunity to enroll in the welding program.

Others have had great success as well. For example, I worked with a mom struggling with a meth addiction which had been in and out of rehab. The sister contacted me, and I went to her home. She knew she was at the end of her rope and that her children would probably be removed from her care if things didn't change. She agreed to sign into an extended program in Sioux City that went beyond traditional rehab. I contacted the facility, and they decided to take her if I would drive her, which I did. She was there for several months and is now back home and doing well. She works full-time and is determined to stay focused and drug-free. She now has an apartment, and we were able to help with basic needs.

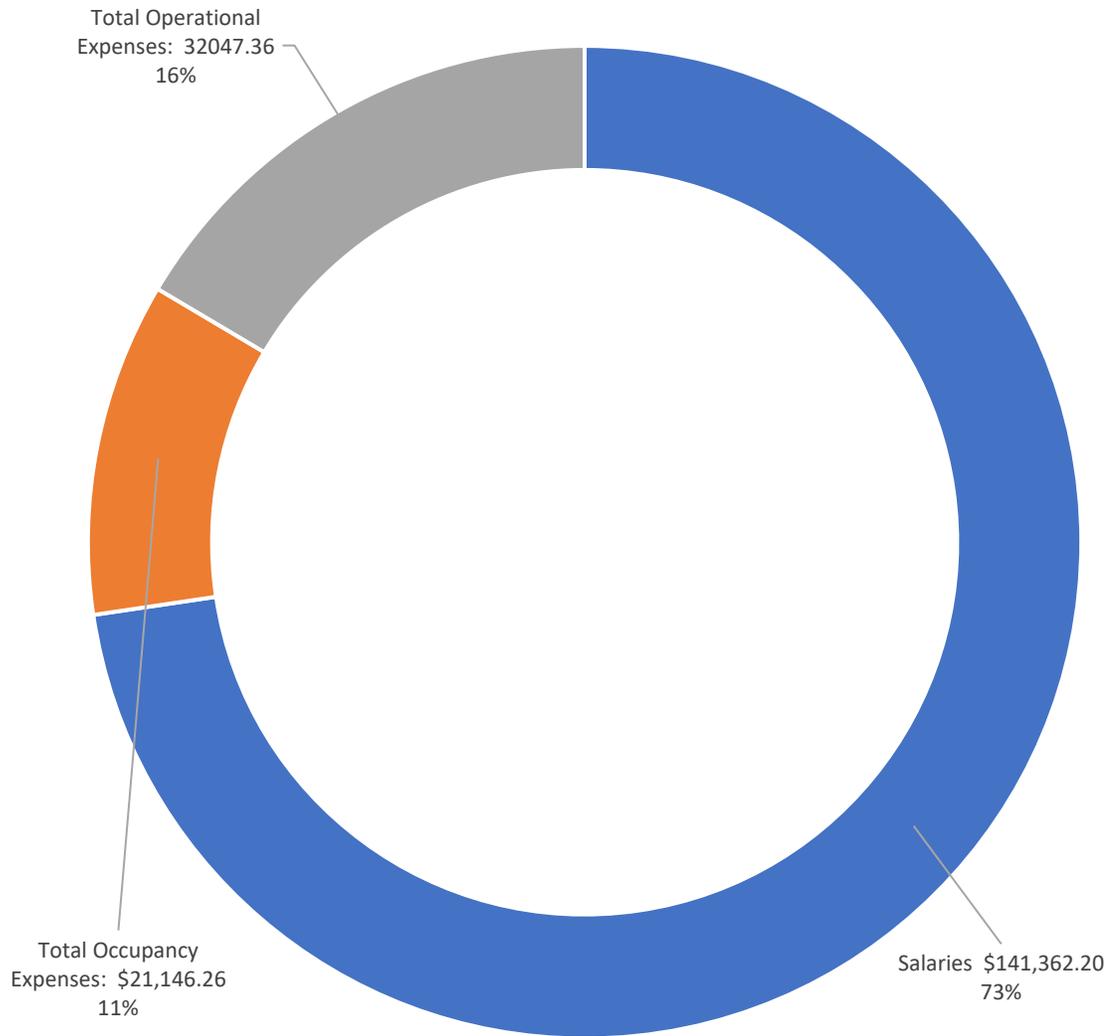
I have had success stories and some that didn't turn out as I had hoped. I realize that people cannot be forced into allowing someone to help them. I receive calls where people want items but don't want to do something to change their lifestyle. I explain that this program is not intended to provide 'free stuff'; it is about true mother mentoring and doing what I can to help them become self-sustaining.

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN: 2021-2022

Revenue Breakdown 2021-22



Total Expenses 2021-22



■ Salaries ■ Total Occupancy Expenses: ■ Total Operational Expenses:

Board Member Memories

The board of directors of a non-profit serves a particular purpose. To guide, govern, support, and manage the Executive Director. Every year I am grateful to the fantastic people who choose to be on our board as our mission is essential because our organization's goal is to change lives. We are known at FLC to have long-haulers. People who believe in the vision and mission of the program so much that they decide to stay well beyond the end of their term. This year, two of our long haulers have decided to finally step off the board and back into the light of the real world.

When I started in 2013, I met a great many people. Volunteers and co-workers who believed in the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child." One volunteer stood out, though. She was kind and consistent, never losing her cool with the most challenging behaviors, and saw the value in creating relationships with the children we served while celebrating their accomplishments and feeling the sadness of their stories. She believed in our vision and wanted to be a part of the solution. So every week, she showed up. Once, twice, sometimes three times a week.

Eventually, she was persuaded to take a step up and join the board of directors. She graciously gave in to our unwavering pleas, and in 2015, it became official. For many reasons, Karen Mills is a fantastic board member, but the most important is her belief in the organization. She knew how hard we worked to ensure the program was successful. Karen bore witness to us on the ground floor, dealing with the trials and tribulations of pushing the system forward into the future while maneuvering through the space of uncertainty that comes with non-profit work. And for eight years, she persisted.

Another fantastic board member is a man of few words, although those few could pack a punch! Dale Sweere joined the board in 2017. As a Human Resources Specialist at Stanley, his experience was vital when assessing and updating policies and procedures. He spent many nights, knee-deep in emails or phone calls, guiding me through a spiderweb of foreign processes and legalities. He was around during some of our organization's most tumultuous times and handled them with grace and unnerving support. Dale believed in the organization and knew its potential. His support has helped us continue pushing forward to create a safe and secure learning environment. I have learned a great deal from him, and I am thankful for the experience.

Dale and Karen's guidance and support have made me better leader and have created a better organization on their journey. Please know how grateful I am to have shared space with you all these years.

May our paths continue to cross, and may opportunity continue to allow space for such great people to congregate in an attempt to change the world.

Sincerely,
Danni L. Zumwalt
Executive Director

