

# EAST END COOPERATIVE MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

2023 | SPRING

EECM.ORG

## A GROWING NEED

### INCREASING FOOD PRICES CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE EECM

#### GARDEN GROWS QUALITY



Dedicated EECM volunteers, with the help of Highmark Wholecare volunteers, have planted and are maintaining this season's raised-bed garden. At harvest time, the fresh garden produce will be distributed to food pantry clients and used in the EECM Community Kitchen to add quality to meals.

The EECM volunteers working non-stop in our food pantry will tell you that they've never seen anything like it. That goes for kitchen volunteers who serve the free community lunch in the EECM dining room as well. What they are witnessing is non-stop clients lining up for food or a daily meal.

In fact, our volunteers continue to see double the number of food-insecure people. Compared to this time last year, EECM is seeing a 110% increase in demand for our food pantry services. At our community lunch each week-day, nearly every seat is taken in the dining room. There are rarely any leftover takeout brown bag lunches.

EECM President and CEO Reverend Darnell Leonard says "...I visit with the volunteers every day to thank them for working harder than they've ever worked here at EECM changing the lives of people impacted by poverty."

Increasing food prices and other factors have prevented our improv-

erished neighbors from making ends meet with their monthly budgets. The Food Pantry now sees



a monthly average of nearly 1900 individual and family visits and that's the highest monthly numbers on record.

We can't thank our volunteers and staff enough for pushing forward during this unprecedented time of need.

*You can help EECM meet the challenge of food insecurity in our community. Visit [eecm.org/give](http://eecm.org/give)*

# EECM RECOGNIZED FOR ITS DEDICATION

## PENNSYLVANIA CABINET SECRETARY AND ALLEGHENY COUNTY EXECUTIVE HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE AT COMMUNITY HOUSE

East End Cooperative Ministry's CEO Rev. Darnell Leonard, and VP for Development and PR, Michael Bartley recently hosted state and local dignitaries for a major news conference in the EECM Great Room.

Pennsylvania Secretary of Human Services, Dr. Val Arkoosh announced Medicaid access for low-income Pennsylvanians while praising EECM's unyielding commitment in providing food and housing to vulnerable residents for more decades.

Arkoosh was joined by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, State Senator Lindsey Williams and many other political and social service leaders from throughout Pittsburgh.

Fitzgerald singled out EECM as an "always dependable" Pittsburgh organization that consis-



EECM President and CEO, Rev. Darnell Leonard addresses those gathered in the Great Room.



Secretary of Human Services Dr. Val Arkoosh stands in front of EECM's Great Room mural as she addresses the media.

tently meets the challenges of serving the poor.

Reverend Leonard and Michael Bartley highlighted the dramatic increase in demand at EECM's Food Pantry and Community Lunch, as well as for Housing and Employment Services.

We were truly proud that our dedicated staff and volunteers were credited by state and local leaders for always being here for both the food-insecure and the many others who depend on our services.

Arkoosh and her staff joined EECM directors at the daily Community Lunch to witness first-hand how crowded our dining room is at noon. Statewide media coverage of the event zeroed in on EECM's decades of service and volunteerism, and organizational success.

*YOU can help EECM continue to meet the challenge of helping those in need. Visit [EECM.ORG/GIVE](http://EECM.ORG/GIVE) to donate. THANK YOU!*



# APPRECIATION FOR EECM VOLUNTEERS

## EECM STAFF SHOWS THEIR GRATITUDE BY SERVING OUR VOLUNTEERS AND HONORING THEIR DEDICATION

Our dedicated volunteers were the ones relaxing and being served as they were honored by EECM staff at the annual EECM Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Staff from all of our departments volunteered, serving up a gourmet buffet, letting each volunteer know just how much they are appreciated. Again this year, outstanding volunteers were honored with an award by the department in which they serve.

The awardees this year were Earl Westerlund by our Food Pantry, Bart Rack by our Community Kitchen, Mary Alice Westerlund by our SewForward Department, Mike Good by the Children & Youth

Department, and the Volunteer Group Award went to the "Social Dinkers."

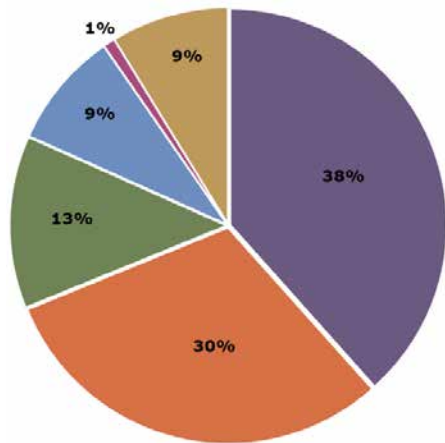
All awardees were called to the podium to accept an elegant etched glass award for helping us fulfill our mission each and every day. All who volunteer at EECM were invited to the lunch and every seat was filled for this fun and inspiring event.

Congratulations to all who were honored and every person who gives their time to help a neighbor. If you have an interest in volunteering at EECM, contact our Director of Volunteer Services, Reverend Tracy Hudson at [tracyh@eecm.org](mailto:tracyh@eecm.org).

# FISCAL YEAR 2022

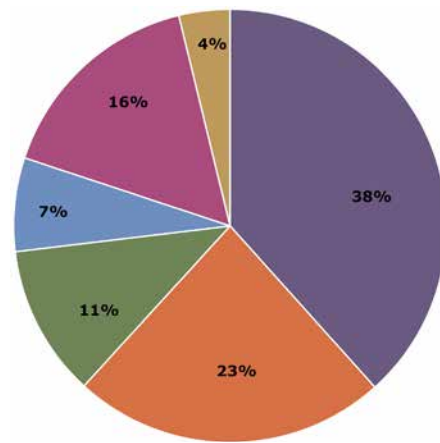
REVENUE & EXPENSES JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022

REVENUE \$5,335,087



- GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- FOUNDATION & CORPORATE GRANTS
- IN-KIND DONATIONS
- INDIVIDUAL & CONGREGATIONAL DONATIONS
- PROGRAM SERVICE FEES
- OTHER REVENUE

EXPENSES \$5,250,264



- HOUSING
- HUNGER
- CHILDREN AND YOUTH
- EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
- ADMINISTRATION
- FUNDRAISING

## MEETING THE NEED FOR SHELTER

This past winter, EECM officially became an “overflow shelter” for new shelter clients to get safely indoors from bitterly cold nights. Our housing services set up new mattresses and bedding. The clients were also fed in our dining room and had access to our many EECM services, including our food pantry, education, employment and more.

It went so well that recently the Allegheny County Department of Human Services contacted our Director of Housing, Nicole Harrington to inquire whether we could expand our housing services now, given the sharp increase in Pittsburgh’s homeless population. In downtown Pittsburgh, homeless residents are being displaced with the closing of a shelter on Smithfield Street. Additionally, the new low barrier shelter on Second Avenue is overcrowded and without vacancies on most nights.

Harrington and EECM CEO, Rev. Darnell Leonard met with county officials who expressed

hope that EECM, given our decades of service with homelessness, would be able to expand to accommodate the need. Currently, EECM has 51 overnight beds, 31 for our Recovery Center and 20 for our Shelter.

“After inspecting the many rooms in our building, we found several rooms we could use,” said Harrington. So, in the coming weeks, EECM will be expanding shelter services to include 15 more overnight beds now, and perhaps another 10 in the coming months. EECM Housing Services is busy buying new beds, mattresses, and related materials to make sure the newly offered services are consistent with our existing top-notch homeless shelter services.

EECM thanks our devoted staff and volunteers and of course our generous donors for getting us to a place where we can respond quickly to assist homeless clients with housing and food.

# MEET OUR STAFF



## DAN HAWKINS

As a quiet force, Mr. Dan Hawkins is an inspiration to our staff, our volunteers, and our clients every single day as he dedicates himself with humility and gratitude.

Mr. Hawkins, who has been clean and sober for 29 years, is in the perfect job. He's a Peer Support Specialist in the Housing and Employment Services Department. Among other duties, Dan works one on one and in groups with our residential clients in alcohol and drug addiction recovery.

"It is an honor and pleasure to work alongside Mr. Hawkins," says Nicole Harrington, EECM Director of Housing and Employment Services.

"Our recovery center is second to none," Hawkins says and "I'm proud to be a small part of it. We see successes every day but it's not easy." Hawkins says newer, more addictive drugs are challenging these days, but working the program and following the rules here at EECM produces consistent success for clients.

Hawkins is grateful for the 17 years he has worked in EECM's recovery programs saying, "It gives me a purpose in life and eliminates my addiction past from being worthless; meaning, what I continue to learn here helps me not to make the same mistakes I've made in the past."

Hawkins says, "It's a one-day-at-a-time program and you're never getting sober or clean by yourself and that's why we're all in this together here at EECM." We, too, are grateful every single day that Dan Hawkins is here to inspire us.

Thank you, Dan!

## NEW UPMC NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

EECM Directors and CEO Rev. Darnell Leonard were welcomed by UPMC for an open house and tour of the new UPMC Neighborhood Center in East Liberty.

UPMC sought EECM's help regarding best practices in partnership to maximize impact in neighborhood services to residents. UPMC and EECM will be collaborating on a number of future endeavors as well.

Pictured in the second row center is UPMC's Joan Eichner, who just joined the EECM Board of Directors. Joan is Senior Director of Operations and Evaluation, UPMC Center for Social Impact.





EAST END  
COOPERATIVE  
MINISTRY

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## WORKING TOGETHER

East End Cooperative Ministries continues to establish lasting and successful collaborative partnerships that advance our mission to reach out and help those in need.

Recently, EECM joined Highmark Wholecare and *11 Cares* (WPXI Channel 11) to collect hygiene items for distribution at local women's shelter. Our partner agencies approached us to help get the word out.

This coming fall, Highmark Wholecare and *11 Cares* will hold a food drive to benefit EECM. The date has yet to be determined, but we will keep you informed about that exciting event.

## CRITICAL NEEDS

On Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2023, The Pittsburgh Foundation will hold its annual [pittsburghgives.org](http://pittsburghgives.org) to benefit local non-profits and EECM is always included. We thank you for your support always!

## SAVE THE DATES

2023 Coat Drive | October 16–October 21

2023 Toy Drive | December 4–December 8

EECM CEO Rev. Darnell Leonard; Michael Bartley, VP of Development & PR; and Rev. Tracy Hudson, Director of Volunteer Engagement, joined the network of neighbor businesses at the recent East Liberty Chamber Breakfast. Above, Rev. Leonard with Duolingo's Dr. Kendra Ross.