



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

one vision
mission
heart



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Dear Friends:

Nearly 30 years ago, a group of volunteers shared a vision. They recognized a growing need in the community for people who were struggling financially and needed a helping hand. Together, they built the foundation for an agency that has seen countless residents of Avon and Avon Lake through difficult times.

Their vision has helped CRS thrive in an ever changing economy and allowed us to grow, diversify and embrace the future. Today we remain committed to that vision, with a more defined mission to guide us and a greater capacity to meet the needs of our community.

One vision. One mission. One heart. We've joined together to be part of something bigger than ourselves.

Our vision is a community where every resident is free from poverty. Our mission is to diminish the effects of poverty in Avon and Avon Lake. Known as **"The Heart of the Community,"** CRS is committed to meeting the individual needs of the people we serve.

The work we do could not be accomplished without each and every one of our supporters. From our larger funding sources, like private foundations, municipalities, churches and corporations, to the individual donors who make gifts in different ways and varying sizes, this unique collaboration is deeply rooted in compassion and long-standing generosity. Together, we've had a significant impact on our community.

The statistics we share with you on the following pages only tell part of the story. We can tally the number of times we've distributed groceries or kept someone's heat on in the winter. These numbers are important to note. But equally important are the hands we've held, the hope we've provided and the hearts we've lifted.

We're all familiar with the phrase, "Charity begins at home." Having a community come together to support an organization like CRS is proof positive that people care about their neighbors. You should all be extremely proud of how you've enabled CRS to help families who are struggling to make ends meet. Your support will help ease the financial worries of local residents, as well as lift their spirits during times of need.

With sincere gratitude,

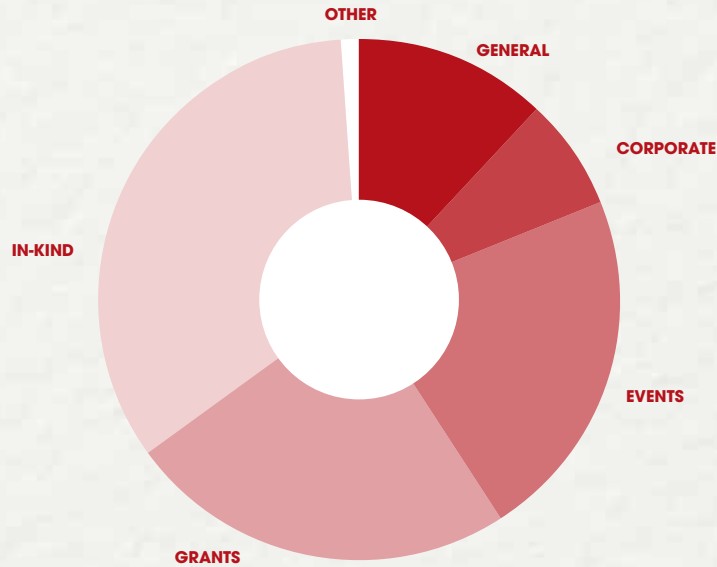
Susan H. Poole
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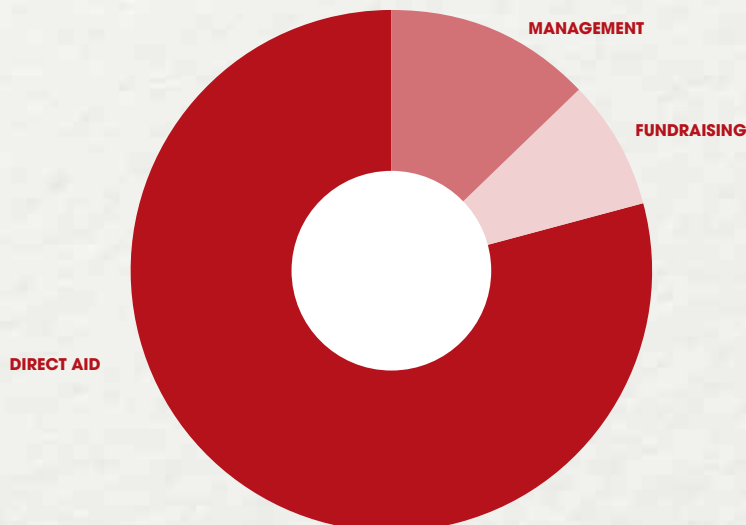
revenue

| | | |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| General Donations | \$55,790 | 12% |
| Corporate/Organization/Church Donations | \$35,005 | 7% |
| Fundraising Events | \$107,206 | 22% |
| Grants | \$116,765 | 24% |
| In-Kind Donations | \$163,847 | 34% |
| Other | \$6,246 | 1% |
| Total Revenue | \$484,859 | 100% |



expenses

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Management and General | \$53,438 | 13% |
| Fundraising | \$35,107 | 8% |
| Direct Aid | \$338,841 | 79% |
| Total Expenses | \$427,386 | 100% |



*Based on Management Prepared Financials

Corporate Citizenship



Our accomplishments at CRS are due to the support of many. We appreciate the generosity of all our funders and donors, and are grateful to everyone that has shown confidence in our ability to serve the income-eligible residents of this community.

One such benefactor that has shown continued dedication to and support of our mission is NRG Energy, headquartered in Princeton, New Jersey. NRG operates a 753 megawatt (MW) power plant on the shores of Lake Erie, right here in Avon Lake, and always strives to be a good neighbor, showing tremendous respect for local residents in need.

A committed community partner, NRG supports CRS in many ways. Since the year 2010, they've served as a corporate sponsor of our largest fundraiser, the CRS Charity Ball. In fact, in the last five years, they've occupied one of the 'top spots' on our sponsorship board, donating a total of \$26,000 in sponsorship dollars as a Diamond and Presenting sponsor of the event.



According to Dan Rogatto, NRG's Plant Manager, "We first reached out to CRS in 2008. I had been talking to the Avon Lake Mayor and telling him how we wanted to get more involved in the community." He was referred to CRS and found it very easy to support our

mission from the beginning. "I have always been sensitive to the needs of people who are struggling," Dan said. "I used to help out in similar ways through my church, so I was already familiar with people who had fallen on hard times and needed some temporary assistance."

Through its core values, NRG has created a culture of giving back to the communities it serves. Dan emphasized this, and added, "We want to be an important part of wherever we work." In addition to its support of CRS, NRG is also known for its initiatives in keeping our community clean, including working with Scout troops and other groups to pick up litter on local parks and beaches.

In 2012, NRG made an unexpected and generous gift to CRS in the amount of \$10,000. In the aftermath of "Superstorm Sandy," the management of NRG (then GenOn) offered its employees gift cards to a local grocer to be used to replenish food lost as a result of the many local power outages. One employee stepped forward and expressed an interest in donating his family's gift card to CRS. This act of kindness was shared with the management, and eventually reached the CEO's office, who as a result decided to share in the spirit of giving in

making this sizeable corporate donation. Thanks to NRG's generosity, CRS was not only able to manage an increase in requests for food and other services during that time, but it also allowed for some added flexibility in the agency's annual budget.

Additional monetary donations to CRS include gifts made in honor of their company's Global Giving Day, "Souper Bowl of Caring" event and Volunteer Match program. Overall, NRG has donated a grand total of \$37,600 to CRS to date, an amount that has truly made a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Equally significant are the number of volunteer hours that NRG has donated to CRS. It is always one of the first companies to answer the call for service when we are looking for a hand in our pantry. It's not uncommon to find NRG employees helping check expiration dates, sort cans and stock shelves. In addition, they traditionally place a giving tree in the lobby of their plant to collect toys and miscellaneous gifts for our kids at Christmas time.

"The Christmas program is something our employees look forward to each year," Dan said. "This past year in particular, those giving tags we put on the tree went very quickly."

NRG shares our vision, plays an integral role in our ability to fulfill our mission, and helps make up the Heart of the Avon/Avon Lake community. We are thankful for their on-going commitment to the people we serve.

Senior Assistance



“You are my lifeline for everything that seems to fall through the cracks.”

CRS exists to ensure that people who are struggling to make ends meet have a place to go for information, food, and financial assistance when appropriate. But a single mom trying to raise three kids on a minimum wage job wouldn't necessarily have the same needs as a family of five who was suddenly struck with a job loss and needed short-term help until they could get back on their feet.

In the last few years, we've begun looking at the various populations we serve, and evaluating the different needs of each group. CRS has always valued the senior population in Avon and Avon Lake, but it wasn't until the year 2013 when we received our first grant from the Community Foundation of Lorain County, that we began adapting our services to better provide for this often frail and vulnerable part of our clientele.

Thanks to the Community Foundation, we established the Senior Assistance Program to designate a separate fund for seniors in our community. Sometimes our help is as easy as providing food from our food pantry, or something more specific to the senior population like eye exams and glasses or help with a prescription or co-pay. We're also able to help in other ways, depending on each senior's individual set of circumstances.

We know from individual meetings with our seniors that they don't always feel comfortable asking family or friends for help. It's not uncommon for seniors to feel that if they share too much information with family, that they'd be jeopardizing their independence. CRS offers a safe place to share their needs and concerns, and sometimes requires us to simply be an advocate or special friend.

Take "Mary." She's 85 years old and has diminished eyesight. Mary is very religious and has certain prayers she reads each day. Her

prayer cards had very small print and had become tattered over time. She asked us for help with this, and we were not only able to find someone to re-type some of those prayers in a larger font, but we also obtained a new copy of a daily prayer book with larger print. In addition, we ordered her a stationary magnifying glass that did not require steady hands so she could continue reading a variety of things. Mary also had a free Safe Link cell phone that was no use to her because the numbers were so small she couldn't see them. We replaced the phone with one specifically designed for a senior that offered a large tactile keypad with visual separation for easier use. Mary has expressed her gratitude to CRS on several occasions, letting us know that she is able to write her own checks again with the use of the magnifying glass, and she no longer needs help dialing her cell phone to call her family.

"Virginia" is another one of our seniors that has had some special circumstances over the years. She has a fragile mental condition and is a long-time client of CRS. Virginia lost her husband a year ago and has no other family, except her two cats. She has lived in the same one bedroom apartment since 2009 and her rent is more than half of her social security income. Her only other significant expense has been paying off a car loan. Overall, Virginia has managed alright for many years, typically only coming to CRS for groceries and occasional help paying for a prescription or medical co-pay. Late in 2014, she began asking for increased assistance with things like rent and utility bills. When asked what prompted these requests and whether there had been a change in her financial situation, we learned that Virginia had taken out a "payday loan" to cover an unexpected veterinary bill for one of her cats. She had been convinced that this was her only option at the time. To compound the situation, when she could no longer cover the payment

that was being drafted from her Social Security check, she took out another payday loan. Soon Virginia's bank account was depleted and being overdrawn every month due to the automatic drafts she had authorized. Virginia was never going to get out from under these high interest rate loans. When she turned to us for help, we first referred her on for some legal advice to determine if and how she could stop the payments. We worked with her on a budget, made sure she had food on her table, and provided financial assistance when she was faced with eviction so that she could stay in her home. We continue to keep an eye on Virginia and are happy to share that she finally made her last car payment.

This last senior story began with a referral from a local school district. They contacted us about a grandmother (age 62) who had taken emergency custody of four grandchildren, ranging in age from 13 years to 11 months old. "Grandma" wasn't equipped or prepared financially to take on this responsibility. Her needs were varied and significant, and we were able to provide her with school supplies for all the kids, a car seat, appropriate seasonal clothing and emergency food until she had the opportunity to seek out more long-term government assistance. We have now developed an on-going relationship with Grandma and continue providing assistance as needed. She recently thanked us for our help and said, "You are my lifeline for everything that seems to fall through the cracks."

With the establishment of the Senior Assistance Program, CRS is able to best serve our senior population, giving them practical solutions to meet the varied challenges they may face. Our deepest gratitude goes out to the Community Foundation of Lorain County for presenting us with this opportunity, and for their on-going trust and support.



CRS Special Events Sponsors and Donors

Thank you to the following businesses, organizations and individuals who supported one or more of our 2015 special events through sponsorships or monetary donations.

Gifts in Honor/Memory of:

In Memory of Ann & Howard Brollier
James & Susan Marsh

In Honor of Joey Carson
David & Julie Pincura

In Memory of Edith Gach
William & Judy Gach

In Honor of the Heyslinger Family
Paul & Mary Bernadette Heyslinger

In Honor of the Mannion Family
Paul & Mary Bernadette Heyslinger

In Memory of Larry Hezcko
Avon Lake Fire Prevention Bureau

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J. William Kauffman, Jr.

In Honor of Tony & Irene Matlak
Kristen Manes

In Memory of Rose Mary McCoy
Mike & Sue Cleary
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Mike & Kris Kral
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Debbie Britton Boerstler & Family
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Cross Country
Avon Lake High School
Student Council
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Donald & Eileen Wozniak
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Mayor Greg & Patti Zilka

Legacy Society \$5,000+

The Alyce J. and Ann J. Metka Foundation
City of Avon
City of Avon Lake
The Community Foundation of Lorain County
Community West Foundation
Ford Motor Company
Hooks For Hunger
The Salvation Army
Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio

Foundation Society \$2,500 - \$4,999

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BJ's Charitable Foundation
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Guardian Angels Society \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Avon Lake Regional Water
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The Mifsud Family Foundation
NRG Energy
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Heart of the Community Circle \$500 - \$999

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Helping Hands Circle \$250 - \$499

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Thomas & Bonnie Butts
Marilyn Davis
Eastview Elementary School
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Mr. & Mrs. David Joyce
William & Nancy Keis
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Jerry & Lucille Leak
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Caring Circle \$100 - \$249

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Avon Middle School Student Council
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People Helping People \$1 - \$49

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We appreciate all gifts at all levels and also thank the following individuals who support us by designating all or part of their United Way pledge to CRS.

Anonymous (2)
John M. Alten
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David Kitchen
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Joseph J. McAleese
Cory McManamon
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Matching Gift Companies

KeyBank Foundation
HP Company Foundation
PNC Foundation
Salesforce.com Foundation

The following made gifts to the Avon/Avon Lake Community Resource Services Endowment Fund, held at the Community Foundation of Lorain County:

Karen Lanigan

Please let us know if your name is missing or listed improperly. We have made every attempt to create an accurate list, and want to correct any errors. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Community Resource Services
33501-L Lake Road
Avon Lake, Ohio 44012
440.933.5639
aalcrs.org
aalcrs@aalcrs.org



8,545x

we helped the residents of
our community

SERVICES PROVIDED BY

**1 full-time and
4 part-time staff
250 volunteers**

276 kids
received gifts,
coats & boots
for Christmas

188x
we helped prevent
utility disconnection

329x
we helped with
auto repairs and
fuel cards

103,000 lbs
of food
distributed

232 kids
were given
school supplies

119
senior citizens
utilized our
services

