



Annual Report 2013

An Economic Investment

How do we enhance the economic vitality of our city? How do we ensure that our city will grow and thrive in the future? One clear answer is that we invest in our children now to make sure they are ready for college, work, and life! Over the past fifteen years, Our Community's Children has provided our young people many opportunities to explore exciting careers in business, to better prepare for college, and to become civically engaged in our city. Responding to the Mayor's call, we have worked with key business and community leaders to help develop responsible, informed, and involved young citizens.

Our city's youth are engaged in creative thinking and innovation. Through our programs, teens are expected to read daily about local and global events – in fact, a longitudinal study completed by the University of Michigan showed that in later years our program participants were more informed and engaged at the neighborhood level, as compared to their peers! If youth have more ownership in community solutions, they are more apt to invest in their city and give back of their talents.

To all our community partners, our Mayor's 50 businesses, the City Commission, and the Board of Education, and city and school colleagues, thank you for your continued involvement and support in creating these incredible opportunities for our city's youth!

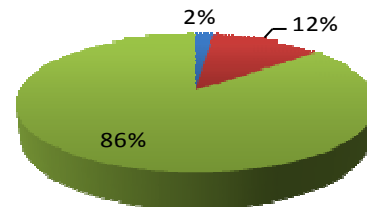
Lynn Heemstra, Executive Director
Our Community's Children

2014 - 2015 Goals

1. Generate new investments for afterschool activities and youth employment
2. Convene community partners to increase college degree attainment in the city
3. Promote city and school partnerships to address the needs of youth
4. Align community efforts for reliable data and quality practices for children

OCC Financial Total Budget - \$559,200*

■ Donors ■ City/Schools In-Kind ■ Grants



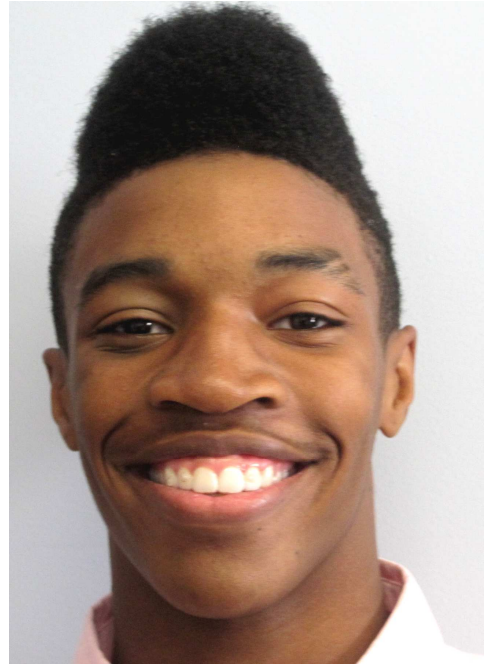
*\$247,746 (44%) of total budget is allocated to community partners to support system-wide change for children.

Our Community's Children is celebrating 15 years of service to children. You can make a one-time gift or pledge over a period of time to express your commitment to the children of Grand Rapids. Checks can be made to Our Community's Children at 300 Monroe Ave., NW; Suite 921, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503.

Youth Active & Engaged

We want our youth ready for college, work and life. To achieve this, we must expose them to hands-on learning experiences and real-life work situations in which they can be creative and make a difference. Afterschool programs provide a safe place where youth can grow and succeed. Our local data shows that children involved in afterschool programs attend school at higher rates and are far less likely to be involved in juvenile crimes. These programs pay huge dividends now and in the future. Just consider this!

- Over 21,000 students are involved in afterschool programs in the greater Grand Rapids area.
- 2,441 students were involved in City projects including environmental and flood disaster clean-up
- The Mayor's Youth Council were involved with gun control policies and sat on the Mayor's Task Force
- Over 20 youth gave testimony about education to legislators at KidSpeak® 2013, and over 100 others attended
- 2,725 students learned about municipal careers at City Hall



Youth Employed

The LEAD and Mayor's 50 program received national attention when President Barack Obama invited Mayor George Heartwell to the White House to talk about youth employment. We're getting good results! 175 teens have enrolled since 2010. This year, we had:

- 96% completion rate
- 98% attendance rate
- 100% have a resume and cover letter
- 100% engage in community service

"I have learned so much and met so many incredible people. The Mayor's Youth Council has helped me become more organized and a better leader."

Robert Arrington
Innovation Central High School

Thanks to our investors, the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, the Wallace Foundation, National League of Cities, the U.S. Department of Labor, Give Me 5 contributors, Mayor's 50 businesses, the City and the Grand Rapids Public Schools.