

# AWARE



EMPOWERING SURVIVORS

## 2021 Annual Report

# AWARE, Inc.

## Mission

AWARE, Inc. strives to eliminate domestic and sexual violence while promoting social change and empowering survivors by offering shelter and services.

## Goals

- Provide quality housing and services
- Empower survivors to achieve their goals
- Secure resources to carry out our mission
- Educate community and promote social change

## Values

### Collaboration

Our success requires collaborating with community partners, court systems, law enforcement, healthcare and other social service agencies to meet the needs of survivors.

### Impact

Our aim is to make a difference, effect change, and eliminate the root causes of domestic and sexual violence.

### Empowerment

We believe in the right of everyone to live violence-free and in everyone's right to self-determination.

### Commitment

We are committed to compassionate and quality services to survivors.



**Community Partner**

# 2021 in Review

## Board President

2021 was a great year due to your support! As we share our work for 2021, thank you, thank you for all you do to support our mission. We would not have been successful without your support.

Like most organizations, we were to be challenged with the delivery services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has of course, shifted our work for a second year. However, we prevailed. During the FY21 we were able to serve 852 adults and children, and provide education and training to 176 community members.

In meeting the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic posed, our staff shifted the way they worked. We continued to provide shelter services by following CDC guidelines and having a small number of residents in the shelter. We successfully worked with local hotels to provide additional housing to the families and individuals we served. I am thankful for the hard work of our staff and appreciate that they continued to provide the services even in the face of COVID-19.

While staff shifted their work, our partners provided significant support. Thank you to our local law enforcement, the court system and others who continued to support the women, men, and families we served. We are also appreciative of the many other community partners who supported our work. They included:

- Community Action Agency and Jackson County Continuum of Care
- Center for Family Health
- Henry Ford Health Systems
- Jackson County Sexual Assault Response Team
- Better Birth Jackson
- United Way of Jackson County

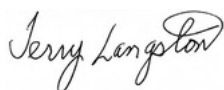
Thank you for your continued support. We could not continue our services at such a high level without your partnership.

As noted above, the Board, staff and I are so thankful of the support that you, our donors and community supporters, provided. Through your support we were able to meet our goals regarding fundraising and as a result, meet more needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We relaunched our Men Who Cook event in person, and that provided a wonderful way to see each other again. The smiles, the hugs, the handshakes, were all great things to be able to share. We are looking forward to 2022 in which we will debut a new event and continue with our Men Who Cook event.

Financially, AWARE, Inc. is doing well. We completed our annual audit and have continued to grow our endowments. We continue to look for ways to grow our services and to adapt to the changes in our environment. As we look to 2022, we hope for your continued support as it will be needed to meet the many needs of our community.

Again, thank you for all that you do. Our mission of eliminating domestic and sexual violence while promoting social change and empowering survivors by offering shelter and services is only realized through our continued partnership with the community. You are vital to our mission!



# 2021 in Review

## Executive Director

The pandemic challenged everyone. Yet, our shelter employees showed up every day, putting aside their personal fears and risks to their own health. Our greatest asset is our staff who without hesitation, changed course, adapted and responded to survivor needs with care and empathy.

The agency had to get back to its core roots of 'survivor-defined' advocacy and creatively use our resources to meet emergency needs, facilitate safety, housing, employment and assist with costs that further self-determination. We reduced barriers to justice by covering the cost for process service of Personal Protection Orders. We assisted survivors with the expenses necessary to start over, moving them from homes that were unsafe to homes free from violence. We covered the costs for title transfers, plates and fees for donated vehicles. We provided temporary shelter in local hotels to ensure safe distancing in the emergency shelter.

As we move to in-person services, we continue using any accommodations that reduced barriers to survivors. We will be nimble and respond accordingly as COVID positivity rates fluctuate to both keep survivors and employees safe.

Finally, we sadly said 'goodbye' to two long-time employees of AWARE, Inc. at the end of this fiscal year. Sue Griwatsch, legal advocate, departed after 30 years with the agency. Karis Tripp, nonresidential services manager, departed after 12 years. We wish you both the best and thank you for your service to our mission.

Sincerely,



Angelita Velasco Gunn, AWARE, Inc. Executive Director

# Program Services

## Residential Services

Emergency shelter services are the cornerstone of AWARE, Inc. In 2021, 3,275 nights of shelter were provided to 129 adults and 74 children. That is an average of 32 nights per family. 24-hour crisis line calls totaled 826.

## Flexible funding assistance

50 survivors received financial assistance to pay for delinquent utilities, rent, security deposits, transportation costs, relocation expenses, clothing, food, household items, home maintenance and repairs, and the cost for process service of civil protection orders.

## Nonresidential services

116 survivors of domestic and sexual violence received crisis support through individual counseling services, and 95 survivors through support groups.

204 adults and children seeking remedies through the courts received help with filing a Personal Protection Order, information about the legal process, victim notification, safety planning and referrals.

The sexual assault response team provided support and advocacy to 89 survivors, 30 of whom received advocacy and support during a medical forensic exam.

The Jackson County Family Visitation Center provided 212 monitored visits to 95 families (duplicated count).

AWARE, Inc. reached 176 individuals through community awareness and training on domestic violence, sexual assault, and its services.

- Kiwanis Club of Jackson
- Jackson Policy Department
- Spring Arbor University
- Rotary Club of Jackson
- Baker College
- Jackson Area Recovery Community
- Jackson Eye Opener's Lions Club
- Jackson County Youth Center

AWARE's executive director was also a featured panelist Women's Week hosted by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce.

# Program Services

## collaboration

Collaboration is a core value of AWARE, Inc. and helps us further our commitment to advocacy, education, and social change on behalf of survivors. To that end, leadership participated in the following meetings and initiatives:

- Michigan Sexual Assault Response Team Coordinators
- Jackson County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
- Jackson County McKinney-Vento Liaisons
- Jackson County Continuum of Care
- Region IV Sexual Assault Therapy Clinic
- Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence Executive Directors Network
- Jackson COVID-19 Action Network
- Human Services Coordinating Alliance
- Emergency Needs Coalition
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Agency Directors Network
- Better Birth Jackson--Professional Doulas Network

# Program Services

## collaboration

After 10 years of providing supervised visitation services through an agreement with Jackson County, the AWARE, Inc. Board of Directors made the difficult decision to cease operations of the supervised visitation center effective June 30, 2021, to coincide with the end of the contract period extended by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women.

Over the last five years, AWARE, Inc. has focused efforts on stabilizing its financial position and strengthening core services. Due to the unpredictable nature of the OVW grant and being that it is the sole source of funding for the visitation center, continuing these services places an undue financial burden on the agency.

AWARE, Inc. believe these services have been valuable to families struggling to co-parent post-separation and where domestic violence has been part of their histories. We also value our partnership with Jackson County and are willing to explore alternative options moving forward.

Thank you, to Jackson County, for the trust you have put into AWARE, Inc. to implement these services over the last ten years.

# Program Services

## volunteerism

37 individuals provided more than 2,500 hours of service helping us meet our crisis response, support our childcare needs, offering administrative support and assistance with event planning.

In addition to the volunteer hours contributed by our Board of Directors, we are grateful to the following individuals:

Sophia Bradley  
Rick Clement  
Brian Dumont  
Lisa Fairbanks  
Davan Gerding  
Bree-Anna Goodwin  
Cameron Hohman  
Jennie Hudson  
Chad Kennedy  
Kaylyn Lilly  
Kelsey Lindquist  
Kristy Marshall  
Teresa Merritt-Watkins  
Tom Mitchell  
Deborah Potter  
Ruben Pritchard  
Jazmine Reid  
Philicia Richmond  
Hanna Russo  
Megan Shown  
Adam Soper  
Candy Strouss  
Mia Tyler  
Jakya Watson  
Mile Willett  
Adam Williams

Special thanks to Cindy Silva and Life Outreach Church for preparing and serving dinner to families in the emergency shelter every 4th Thursday of the month.



# Program Services

## men who cook

AWARE, Inc. held its 10th annual Men Who Cook in-person on October 7, 2021.

The event took place at the Commonwealth Commerce Center, Grand Ballroom. Bart Hawley of JTV was again Master of Ceremonies and 82 guests shared in the festivities! Together we raised \$7,500 in operating support for crisis services in Jackson County.

Thank you to participating celebrity chefs:

- Taylor & Freddie Dancy, Ward 2 Jackson City Councilmember
- Brian Dumont, Family Life Radio
- Ryan Felty, Dawn Foods
- Davan Gerding, CCC Catering and this year's winner for Best Taste
- Chad Kennedy, Walton Insurance Group
- William Payne, community member
- James Seagraves, MEGGAXP and this year's winner for Most Creative Workstation
- Adam Soper, Bond & Company and winner for Most Tips Raised
- Adam Williams, Kellogg's

Thank you to the following event sponsors, individuals, and business who donated to the auction:

- CCC and Mr. Donald Finelli
- JTV, The Bart Hawley Show
- Gerdau Special Steel North America
- Consumers Energy Foundation
- Center for Family Health
- True Community Bank
- Edward Jones
- GLG Print
- South Central Credit Union
- DJ Mike Holiday
- Violet Gamez Garland
- Angelita V. Gunn
- The Blue Julep, LLC
- Chase Sports Bar
- Chilango's Burrito Bar
- Crazy Cowboy
- FiveOneSeven Salon
- Greystone Tavern
- Jackson Coffee Company
- Super Liquor
- Town Bar

# Financial Position

## Government Grants

\$869,425

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women Justice for Families Grant Program (Jackson County sub recipient)

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Victim Services

- Victims of Crime Act Crime Victim Services
- Victims of Crime Act Sexual Assault Victim Services
- Domestic Violence Comprehensive Services
- Domestic Violence Emergency Services

## Contributions & Fundraising

\$247,089

United Way of Jackson County

- Community Solutions Fund and contributions
- FEMA

Fundraising Events

Contributions

## Private Grants

\$134,418

Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

Speckhard-Knight Foundation

DTE Foundation

Steven R. Hoekman & Nancy J. Bauer Charitable Fund

The Hurst Foundation

Bill & Vi Sigmund Foundation

Anonymous

Jackson Community Foundation COVID-19 Fund

Kiwanis Foundation

Mabel Harris Charitable Trust

Phil & Pat Willis Foundation

Gaynell Fausell Charitable Trust

Louis Glick Memorial & Charitable Trust

Allan B. Copley Charitable Trust

Bob Olson-Kulka Foundation

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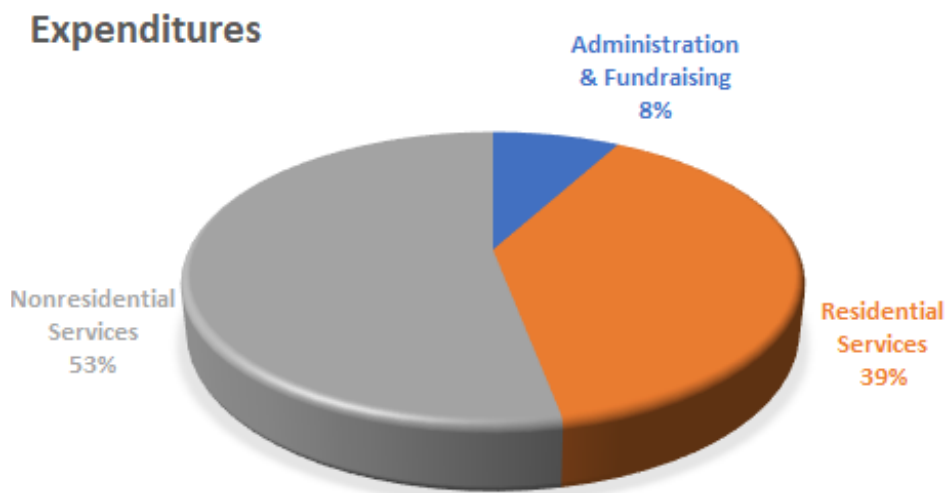
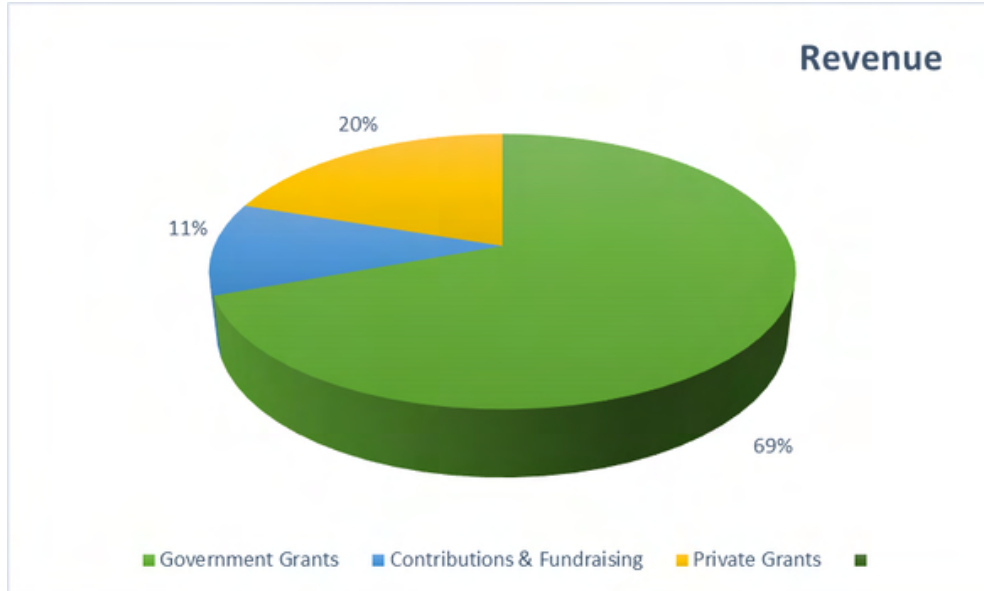
Allan B. Copley Charitable Trust

Bob Olson-Kulka Foundation

## Board Investment Fund- change in net assets

\$137,305

# Financial Position



# AWARE, Inc.

## Board of directors

Terry Langston, President

Lindsey Erb, Vice-President

Traci Spring, Secretary

Kathy Davis, Treasurer

Ryan Felty, Member-at-Large

Kristin Maxson, Member-at-Large

## Employees

Angelita Velasco Gunn, Executive Director

Lee Knapp, Operations Manager

Emilee Heise, Marketing & Events Manager

Nina Thomas, Administrative Assistant

SeQuita Brown, Director of Shelter Operations

Joanne Marr, Senior Client Advocate

LaShawn Caldwell, Client Advocate

Haley Campbell, Client Advocate

Alma Morgan, Client Advocate

Kennedy Sours, Client Advocate

Catherine Williams, Client Advocate

Fawn Rowe, Child Advocate

Larry Daft, Maintenance Technician

Karis Tripp, Legal Advocacy & Outreach Services Manager

Heather Hunter, Legal Advocate

Sue Griwatsch, Legal Advocate

Valerie Daft, Counseling Supervisor

Candy Strouss, Counselor

Samantha Mosher, Sexual Assault Services Coordinator

Gina Kramer, Sexual Assault Advocate

Kelsey Lindquist, Sexual Assault Advocate