



# MANY MINDS ONE MISSION

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

**LEADING, COORDINATING, CREATING, AND DELIVERING**



President and CEO Sharon Harrup led a community housing discussion at the Moton Museum in Farmville July 25, 2022. STEPS, partnering with other community agencies and individuals, is working with Better Housing Coalition to reimagine Longwood Village to provide affordable housing options.

**We deliver quality opportunities to impact self-sufficiency and reduce poverty throughout the region:** It is not enough to identify the issues that mire people in poverty. We deliver—whether it is helping children break generational poverty cycles through education with Head Start or taking a “Whole Family” approach to tackle multiple strata of issues for family groups. STEPS digs deeper to attack the root cause of their issues to grow opportunities to succeed.

You will read stories in this annual report that will bring to life STEPS’ people and programs. The numbers are important, but we also want you to know about those we serve. The need runs deep for every program, but so does our resolve.

If you have not done so already, we invite you to join us. We are stronger with you and can be even more effective in the mission.

Think of STEPS like a roof of interlocking shingles of partners protecting the needy from snow, rain, and the beating sun. Separately, one shingle can do little; the more shingles that are connected, the better the shelter.

Individually, we can do a small part to improve our community. Together, with a single focus on a shared mission, we can touch more lives.

No one is guaranteed success, but everyone deserves a chance. It is STEPS’ mission to give the impoverished in our communities that chance.

We are thankful for those we have been able to help with the support of our many partners, but the roof needs to be stronger and better. Please consider joining the mission.

*Sharon Harrup*  
President & CEO

## MANY MINDS - ONE MISSION

Men, women, people of color, the young, the aged, and folks with disabilities form this multifaceted community jewel we call STEPS, Inc.

### **There is strength in diversity.**

Just like our nation is a great melting pot of the people from around the world, STEPS represents all the greatness of the localities we serve from our wonderfully supportive board of directors and community crusaders to our dedicated staff.

### **We are many minds—one mission.**

What is that mission? “STEPS leads, coordinates, creates, and delivers quality opportunities to impact self-sufficiency and reduce poverty throughout or region.” It is what drives us; it underpins every program and, really, everything we do as your non-profit, community action agency.

**We lead:** We are not passively waiting for others to show us the way. We know our communities, those who face barriers, and we are at the forefront of helping them solve problems.

**We coordinate:** We work in an interconnective way to find creative solutions to complex problems. We assist our clients with available STEPS resources. If someone needs a service from Social Services or another non-profit agency, we connect them with that resource.

**We create:** We are not set on doing something because it has “always been done this way.” We look for innovative solutions to solve new and recurring issues—such as helping this community explore affordable housing solutions to meet the need.

Individually, we can do a small part to improve our community. Together, with a single focus on a shared mission, we can touch more lives.

**2,096** Individuals touched by the services of STEPS

STEPS Employed individuals last year **184**

# WHAT WE DO

STEPS leads, coordinates, creates, and delivers quality opportunities to impact self-sufficiency and reduce poverty throughout our region. Our team takes a multifaceted approach on our mission to move lives forward.

**EnergyShare** assists those in crisis to assist in paying for heating and cooling needs. Qualifying individuals must face a crisis and a cut off notice or have already had their electrical service terminated. The program, funded through a partnership with Dominion Energy, serves qualifying individuals and families in Amelia, Buckingham, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.

**Individuals** **1,089**  
**who had their utility needs met**



Head Start students Dixie Yowell (left) and Raina Patel (right) enjoy their trip to the pumpkin patch.

**Head Start** provides early childhood education at no cost to eligible three- and four-year-old children in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward counties. Early Head Start provides infant and toddler care in Amelia, Charlotte, Lunenburg, and Prince Edward counties. STEPS also provides services to expectant mothers.

**STEPS Commercial Business Lines** employ adults with disabilities and provide transportation to work with the support of the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services. Our recycling center annually processes over 800 tons of materials and our Secure Documents Destruction shreds over 400 tons of paper each year for businesses and individuals.



Dedicated workers at STEPS recycling center sort through mounds of recyclables to better protect the environment. STEPS annually processes over 800 tons of materials.

**Virginia Homeless Solutions Program** provides case management services for families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless through providing shelter, rapid-rehousing, and prevention. The program is funded by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The program serves Amelia, Buckingham, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.

**Whole Family** offers an innovative approach to systematically improve the lives of all of those in a family unit trapped by generational struggles in poverty. The program provides adults and children in the family unit with the tools they need to set goals together, create plans, and achieve those goals. The program serves families in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.

**Workplace Supports** helps Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients gain skills to become self-sufficient. The STEPS case manager receives referrals from social services departments in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.

**22,070**  
**Transportation trips**  
**provided in the community**

**Supported Employment** assists individuals with disabilities obtain meaningful, fairly compensated community-based work. Employment Specialists assist individuals referred through the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services to receive support in finding, acquiring and retaining a job.

**The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** provides job training opportunities for qualifying seniors in a nine-county region. Individuals must fall within 125 percent of federal poverty guidelines or have a documented disability. The service area includes Amelia, Brunswick, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.



# BUILDING HOPE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING



STEPS engaged in community discussions to reimagine the former Longwood Village in the summer of 2022. Community members attended input meetings (above and right) and met with project designers and STEPS staff (including STEPS Vice President of Housing Shawn Rozier, center top photo) to share their vision of the property. Preliminary designs (below) incorporated community wishes.

## Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. -The Golden Rule

The “Golden Rule” is **gold** at STEPS.

“We at STEPS are many minds dedicated to one mission,” explained STEPS President and CEO Sharon Harrup. “The ‘Golden Rule’ is the heartbeat of our dedicated team. We understand that all people have value and deserve a chance at success. It is how we treat people because it is how we would like to be treated.”

When the opportunity arose in 2018 to cut to the heart of a community problem—that there simply are not enough affordable housing options—STEPS worked with local officials, community service groups and individuals to study the problem and seek a viable solution.

None of them could do it alone, but a community is stronger when a diverse group comes together to make a change.

“It was obvious that there needed to be an entity that had the passion and the bandwidth to really make sure that this need for housing did not fall off the radar—that it would be something on which our region could continue to focus on,” Harrup explained. “STEPS being the community action agency for our six-county region, it was a natural fit for us to volunteer for us to become that facilitator.”

The group, formed the Prince Edward County-Town of Farmville Housing Coalition (PECTFHC), is partnering with the Richmond-based non-profit Better Housing Coalition (BHC) to reimagine what once was known as Longwood Village.

BHC hopes to complete the purchase of the property from Longwood University in 2023 and start a transformation that will provide single parents, young professionals, families, and seniors affordable housing opportunities in the heart of Farmville.

Now tentatively called **South Main Neighborhood**, the existing development includes housing units in eight brick buildings at the end of Clark Street in Farmville (behind Sheetz).



BHC plans to invest \$80 million to reconfigure the 20-year-old buildings and hopefully add single family homes, a separate building with approximately eighty units for seniors and townhouses plus amenities that include a childcare center.

“Our vision, as with all of our developments, is to create a safe, quality, service-enriched community that is affordable and inspiring so that families and individuals can be their best selves,” said Greta J. Harris, President and CEO of BHC.

The numbers reflect there are not enough affordable housing units in the Farmville area at all levels—supply is simply not able to keep up with a growing demand.



And when demand outpaces supply, it drives up the cost, further limiting access to those in need.

A 2019 housing study by HDAdvisors projects the area’s population to grow by **14.3 percent by 2040**. The study also found there will be new demand for forty-eight households per year on average over the next two decades; affordable rental options are the primary housing gap; higher-end apartments are in demand; senior housing needs are acute and growing; and employment trends will influence future housing demand.

*Continue on page 3*

Continued from page 2

According to a news release posted on the University's website, the Longwood Village site no longer fits with their Master Plan.

"We certainly could have tried to sell this property to the highest bidder," said Louise Waller, Longwood's Vice President for Administration and Finance, "but from the beginning, we wanted to work with community partners to determine how it could fit into a larger picture of meeting real need in the region."

South Main Neighborhood will help individuals and families, which will help the community overall.



"Home is so fundamental for everyone," Harris said. "Home is a launching point for all of the things that we hope to accomplish in life. By helping individuals and families with their housing needs, we help them become their best selves and thereby position them to participate and contribute to our community."

As proposed, the two phases of a renovated Longwood Village development would add approximately 300 housing units when complete. The first phase (renovating the existing buildings on site) could start as early as the spring of 2024.

"A community action agency identifies a problem and works towards solutions," Harrup said. "Caring enough to help is the gold standard for STEPS."

## UPDATE: TINY HOME PLANS ARE PROGRESSING STEPS FOCUSES ON SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Plans to build a series of tiny homes are on track, but the proposal is taking an alternate route.

STEPS—with the support of the Homeless Housing Task Force—had originally planned to construct a series of tiny homes near Farmville for emergency shelters but will now focus on longer-term supportive housing.

"This would help the homeless faced with minimal financial footing," explained STEPS Vice President for Housing Shawn Rozier. "This is a momentum builder for folks who need help to get on their financial feet and address underlying issues. It is an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services, such as counseling, case management, employment assistance and community connections."

STEPS, he explained, will continue to provide emergency shelter assistance through Virginia Homeless Solutions Program funding with temporary hotel/motel accommodations. The tiny home project, however, will feature approximately 30 units with an office/meeting space to help build independent living and tenancy skills and connect the homeless with services that will target their barriers to success.

To date, \$468,833 has been pledged or received in grants and gifts to make the tiny homes a reality (including a \$168,833 grant from Centra Health). Still, more funds are needed. Each 12x12 unit is an estimated \$13,657 and 14x20 units \$19,343, plus there's property acquisition and eventual operational costs.

"There are more funding opportunities available for supportive housing than for emergency shelters," explained STEPS President and CEO Sharon Harrup. "This is a needed pivot that brings us not only sheltering services, but also long-term life-altering solutions."

Funded **11,571**   
shelter nights  
Invested **\$1,081,487**  
to keep citizens safely housed

# OUR MISSION & VISION



**"I try to listen to the client, empathize and do my best to assist them if they qualify. I feel blessed with the opportunity to speak a word of encouragement into their lives. Sometimes, the client just needs someone to listen to them along with assistance of course. If at all possible, there are many times that I try to go that extra mile in helping to solve the situation that they are facing" - Brenda Payne, EnergyShare Case Manager, STEPS Family Since 2022**

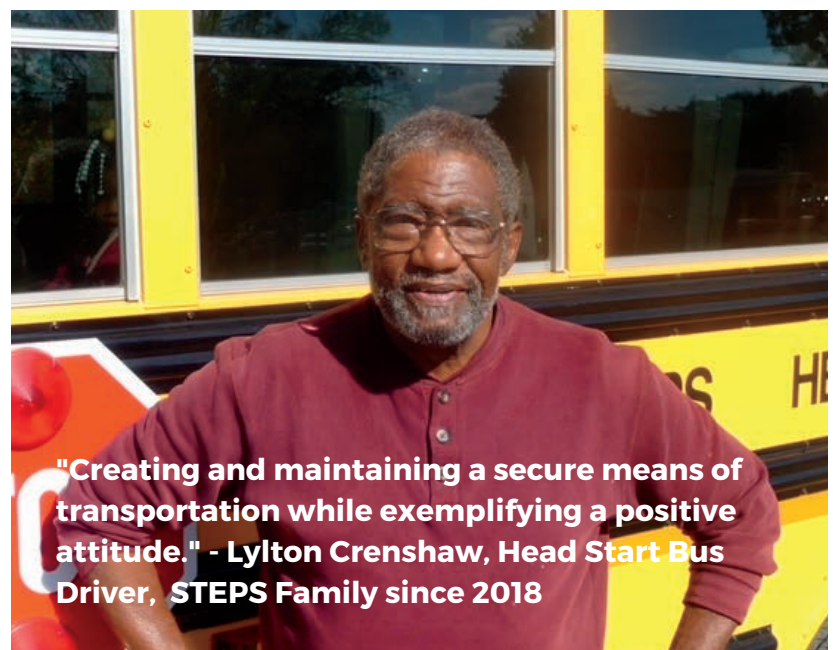
**"My role as a Head Start Teacher is to build a successful partnership for my students and families. As an employee of STEPS, I am a resource for families that need or want support not only with their child, but with home life situations as well. My objectives are providing my students and families with the knowledge and experiences that will improve their quality of life." - Contina Oliver, Head Start Teacher, STEPS Family since 2016**



**"I believe that I am not only here to help provide a solution to the immediate need of shelter, but to help aid my fellow citizens in building a solid foundation for a better, brighter future. It may be food vulnerability, a job search, or countless other needs, including much needed encouragement and a kind word. I remind them that the situation they find themselves in is temporary, not a life sentence for them to endure—that there is a way forward to a brighter tomorrow, it belongs to them, and it is my honor to be in a position to help them get there." - Gail Dean, Housing Specialist, STEPS Family since 2020**



**"In my role here at STEPS, I make sure that the Whole Family families are being put first. Their accomplishments are our successes, and their vision is our mission." - Verlesha Holman, Senior Family Navigator, STEPS Family since 2020**



**"Creating and maintaining a secure means of transportation while exemplifying a positive attitude." - Lylton Crenshaw, Head Start Bus Driver, STEPS Family since 2018**

# MEET OUR MANY MINDS



**"I am your first point of contact. I will provide you with assistance and direct you to the proper case manager or specialist so that your inquiries are addressed, and we can help you in one of our many programs. I am thankful that STEPS has become part of my life as I enjoy helping people." - Cindy Minetree, Administrative Support Specialist, STEPS Family since 2022**

**"In my role at STEPS, I am helping to accomplish this mission and vision by working directly with our employees with disabilities. I work with each of them to set goals for work and life to help them become more self-sufficient. They learn how to work effectively at a job and earn a paycheck for that work." - Nancy Conner, Employment Services Case Manager, STEPS Family since 1998**



**I have served in many positions during my time with Head Start. In my current position as Program Specialist, one of my main duties includes, recruiting children and families. As a part of our school family model, we are recruiting children and families who we will help develop a love for learning. Our goal is to lay a strong foundation for families so that they will be able to break the cycle of poverty through teaching them their worth and value. Another responsibility of mine is recruiting staff who also share this vision and share the goal of leading some of our most vulnerable children and helping teach them the skills necessary to be successful once they move on from us. - Taneha Terry, Program Specialist, STEPS Family since 2016**



**"Recycling, making the community and the environment a better place." - Jarvis Mason, Recycling Team Leader, STEPS Family Since 2011**



**"Doing fantastic work in Shred and being kind to others—and teamwork." - Arthur Wade, Secure Document Destruction Sorter/Shredder, STEPS Family since 2004**

# STEPS GETS HEAD START ON FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

A big, yellow bus 51 pulled in front of the STEPS Head Start building on Griffin Boulevard. It was right at 8:15 a.m. on an August Monday morning as rain pitter-patted the concrete sidewalks.

After months of preparation by a dedicated team of educators, the first day of Head Start had finally arrived.

**"With every new Head Start year we are excited about the opportunities and adventures that await,"** said STEPS Vice President for Early Childhood Education Jessica Lehman. "The first day always has its challenges but our team pulls together and ensures that our children feel safe and cared for."

## **These are the steps of life.**

The overarching mission is for the children to feel safe and develop a love of learning in an engaging play-based environment and STEPS' dedicated team makes sure that happens every day.

## **Moving lives forward one child at a time.**

What is happening here at Griffin Boulevard this first day is also happening at STEPS' Head Start centers in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties.

Over the course of the school year, the children will learn how to be good citizens as part of the school community, explore through hands on experiences, and develop the foundational knowledge necessary for them to be school ready.



Head Start teachers develop a love for learning in a safe environment.

After check-in, the 13 students gather on a carpeted area to join in a spirited rendition of the "Wheels on the Bus" and then a fun song celebrating each child by name, before a rousing rendition of "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."

"Bless the teachers that keep up with the energy of our children," said STEPS President and CEO Sharon Harrup. "It's non-stop engaged learning every day."

Welcome to the first day of Head Start. **This is the first of many firsts.**

# TAKING NEW STEPS TO EXPAND CHILDCARE SERVICES

STEPS is pleased to continue our efforts to meet the expressed community need around expanding childcare services. In August of 2022, STEPS opened a new facility in Farmville to serve children from birth to age five years. This facility brings our total Farmville capacity to 92 children, 40 infants and toddlers, and 52 preschoolers through our Head Start program.

**"We are committed to statewide initiatives to expand access to quality childcare programs,"** explained STEPS Vice President for Early Childhood Education Jessica Lehman. "Our strategic plan includes goals to expand services for children birth to three while continuing to meet the needs of preschool age children. We are in the process of becoming a subsidy provider in Charlotte and Prince Edward Counties to move toward year-round programming and private pay childcare."

STEPS Early Childhood Education programs emphasize school readiness with a focus on building children's capacity to be productive citizens as members of the school family through enhanced social emotional development.

We provide high quality, developmentally appropriate practices, in an inclusive, culturally responsive, and individualized environment through play-based hands-on learning experiences.

**"Our focus on serving multi-generational households through holistic services helps us to achieve our goal of breaking the cycle of poverty,"**

Lehman said. "We firmly believe that providing children with quality early learning experiences, and developing a solid emotional foundation is a critical component in preparing children and families to be self-sufficient."



Jocelyn Creasy (left) and Vada Nicholas (right) enjoy taking new educational steps at STEPS Head Start.

Parents who obtained training through HS/EHS **58**



NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED

**66%** Average Monthly Enrollment  
**94%** Eligible Children Served

HEADSTART

**146**

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED

**58%** Average Monthly Enrollment  
**95%** Eligible Children Served

EARLY HEADSTART

**86**

THE PERCENTAGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN THAT RECEIVED MEDICAL AND DENTAL EXAMS

- Head Start Medical Exams **100%**
- Early Head Start Medical Exams **99%**
- Head Start Dental Exams **79%**
- Head Start Dental Screening/Exams **71%**



STEPS Head Start students Raelynn Lawrence (left) and Camden Foster (right) enjoy the playground.

**TOTAL FAMILIES SERVED**

HEADSTART

**146**

EXPECTANT MOTHERS

**17**

EARLY HEADSTART

**86**

**HEAD START BUDGET**

	2021-2022 Proposed Budget	2021-2022 Actual
Personnel	\$ 2,316,511	\$ 1,974,877
Fringe	\$ 395,575	\$ 348,723
Travel	\$ 11,500	\$ 9,954
Supplies	\$ 99,550	\$ 144,398
Contractual	\$ 165,100	\$ 264,113
Other/Admin	\$ 395,885	\$ 599,200
Training & Technical Assistance	\$ 50,906	\$ 50,906
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,435,027</b>	<b>\$ 3,392,174</b>

**Total Amount of Public and Private Funds Received**

SOURCE OF REVENUE		Percentage of Total Revenue
Federal	\$ 3,392,174	96%
Other USDA Reimbursement	\$ 143,930	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,536,105</b>	<b>100%</b>

**COVID RELATED**

	FEDERAL
Personnel	\$ 0
Fringe Benefits	\$ 0
Supplies	\$ 46,399
Contractual	\$ 100,557
Other	\$ 49,435
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 196,391</b>

# WHY I SUPPORT STEPS

**“When our disabled youngest daughter graduated from high school in the late 1980s, STEPS was there to provide her not only with training and a job but also with a supportive community and a sense of self-worth.”**

**- Ellery Sedgwick**



Ellery Sedgwick and his wife, Robin, have long supported STEPS. From left are son Watt, daughter Hannah, Ellery, wife Robin, and daughter-in-law Elise.

STEPS came to Farmville about the same time our family did in the late 1970s. Over the past 40 plus years, STEPS has grown under the leadership of Sharon Harrup from a small, sheltered workshop into a multi service community action agency covering six regional counties with a reach of other services into eleven counties in our region. During that time, it has become an increasingly effective force for good both in our lives and in the community.

**When our disabled youngest daughter graduated from high school in the late 1980s, STEPS was there to provide her not only with training and a job but also with a supportive community and a sense of self-worth. When a job related to her interest in fashion opened up, STEPS proactively placed her there.**

During the 1980s and 90s, we began volunteering with the FACES Food Pantry, an effective local anti-poverty program. FACES was expanding rapidly and needed a new storage and distribution facility. STEPS quickly saw the need and the value of the program and offered to house FACES in their facility at little to no cost. The facility enabled FACES to distribute not only food but clothing as well.

By the turn of the century, STEPS had added a recycling program for newspaper, cardboard and electronics, and later a paper shredding operation both of which have been highly useful to us and to the community.

More recently our paths have again crossed with STEPS. In the interim STEPS had been appointed the Continuum of Care agency responsible for serving the homeless in a six-county area. During the pandemic, the numbers of homeless approximately double and STEPS was seeking other local agencies for help. STEPS received some state funding for placing clients temporarily in local motels but little else. Most arrived with virtually no money for food and STEPS asked FACES for assistance.

The two organizations worked out a program for weekly delivery of about 25 pounds of easily prepared food to each temporarily homeless individual housed in local motels.

**“STEPS has earned all the support the community can give.”**  
**-Ellery Sedgwick**

To deal more effectively with an increasing number of the temporarily homeless, STEPS has now brought together several non-profits, including FACES, to plan a village of “tiny homes” that would provide short term shelter, food and concentrated support services. This is an ambitious and progressive program to deal with a critical problem.

In an even more ambitious approach to the serious regional housing shortage, STEPS has engaged Richmond based Better Housing Coalition to undertake the funding, redesign, and expansion of the 20-acre Longwood Landing housing site. Beginning with the renovation of 96 currently vacant units, the plan will eventually create a community with 300 mixed use apartments and homes. This is a great addition to reasonably priced housing in our area.

**Over the last 40 years, largely under Sharon Harrup’s guidance, STEPS has expanded into a highly effective force that proactively identifies and addresses critical needs in our community.** It has earned all the support the community can give.

*Ellery Sedgwick*, Farmville

# Thanks to our Supporters

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

## INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Ellsworth J. Bennett  
 Libby Blanton  
 Pamela Butler  
 Lonnie Calhoun  
 Benjamin K. Campbell  
 Dana Ailsworth Craig  
 Jamie Dalton  
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 Ray Turner  
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 William and Jane Wellons  
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## BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATION DONATIONS

Bug Busters Pest Control Services, Inc.  
 Centra Health  
 Cumberland Farm and Auto Parts

Dominion Energy  
 Faith Bible Fellowship Church  
 Farmville Family Pharmacy, Inc.  
 Key Office Supply, Inc.  
 Crazy Kenny's Car Coop, Inc.  
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## IN-KIND DONATIONS

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 B & M Greenhouse  
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 Charley's Waterfront Cafe  
 Cumberland Community Cares  
 Farmville Family Pharmacy, Inc.  
 J. R. Tharpe Trucking Company  
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Krystal Klear Pools and Spa  
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 Vlahakis Wealth Management  
 ST Tissue  
 Sheldon's Motel and Restaurant  
 The Fishin' Pig  
 Thrifty on 60  
 True Fixins  
 Walmart  
 Watkins Jewelers, Inc.

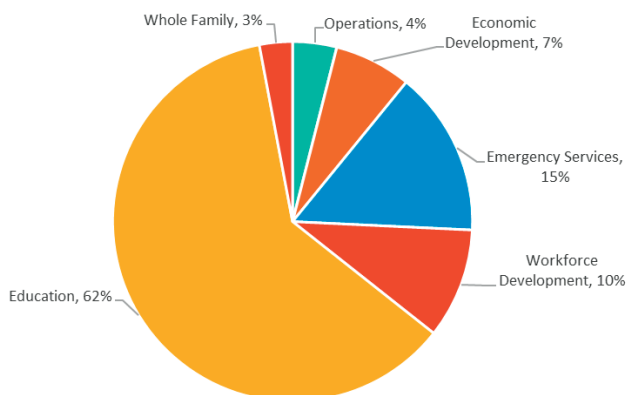
## NAP DONORS

Bernice A. Schoenbaum

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list of donations. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please send inquiries to: Cynthia A. Saunders 434-315-5909 Ext. 209 or [csaunders@STEPS-inc.org](mailto:csaunders@STEPS-inc.org).

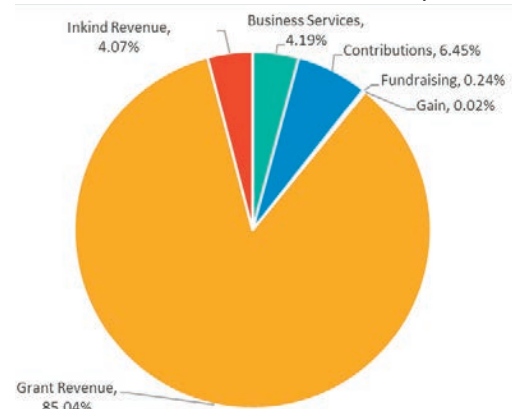
## Functional Expense JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022 (unaudited)

Operations	325,956
Economic Development	511,385
Emergency Services	1,157,895
Workforce Development	786,308
Education	4,804,299
Whole Family	<u>197,685</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 7,783,528</b>



## Revenue by Major Category JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022 (unaudited)

Business Services	311,857
Contributions	479,642
Fundraising	17,521
Gain	1,500
Grant Revenue	6,328,220
Inkind Revenue	<u>302,802</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 7,441,544</b>



Help STEPS to carry  
out its mission of  
**Moving Lives Forward**  
by donating today.



If this report has piqued your  
interest in the programs and  
you wish to know more,  
please visit us online at  
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