



Mission

Capital Area College Access Network (CAPCAN) is a community collaborative focused on making the completion of post-secondary education an achievable reality for all residents of the capital area. Our community fosters high educational aspirations and will align our institutions and resources to advance that vision. Our mission is to increase college and career readiness, participation, and completion.

2024 Impact Highlights

- 1,700 seniors received postsecondary advising
- 2,200 postsecondary applications submitted
- 58% of seniors completed FAFSA
- 49.4% of high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education within 6 months of graduation
- 48.8% regional postsecondary attainment of 25-64 year olds



Philanthropic gifts provide funding for a College Adviser which will allow CapCAN to do the following :

- **Capacity Building:** Build a college-going culture in our schools and the community.
- **Outreach & Engagement:** Connect within schools, community organizations, students, and families to promote postsecondary education opportunities.
- **Data Collection & Analysis:** Research barriers to college access, track program impact, and support state and school reporting.
- **Student Navigation:** Support student navigation of the planning, application, scholarship and FASFA financial aid processes.
- **Program Development:** Create and implement workshops, toolkits, and initiatives focused on college readiness, financial aid, and career exploration.
- **Leadership Development:** Foster leadership among high school and early-stage professionals to become ambassadors for postsecondary education.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE VITA



What is VITA?

VITA is an IRS-sponsored program that provides free tax preparation services to households making under \$67K annually. UWSCMI staff and certified volunteers help taxpayers file their federal and state tax returns accurately and ensure they claim all eligible credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit. The program aims to make tax filing accessible and prevent taxpayers from paying high fees for commercial tax preparation services.



2024 Impact Highlights

- \$ 7,244,475 total refunds
- \$ 1,061,280 saved in tax prep fees
- 6,020 individuals served with 4,824 federal returns & 4,858 state returns

The mobile unit will allow VITA to reach 800 ALICE households in rural areas who otherwise would not have access to these services.

The gap for the program to be fully funded is \$100,000

Philanthropic gifts close the gap and provide funding for:

- **Expanded Access:** Bringing free tax prep to rural areas with limited resources and transportation.
- **Accessible and Secure:** Outfitted with private workstations, secure Wi-Fi, and ADA accessibility.
- **Serving Community Where They Are:** Stationing at libraries, food pantries, and community hubs.
- **On-Demand Tax Clinics:** Providing pop-up services during peak filing season and urgent needs.
- **Built for Growth:** A scalable model to expand financial services in underserved areas.

“Partnership makes VITA happen.”

Chris Sargent, President & Executive Officer



UNITED WAY
South Central Michigan



What are the Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grants?

Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grants (KMEG) provide \$5,000 grants to eligible microbusinesses within the City of Kalamazoo limits. The program is designed to bring relief to Kalamazoo businesses in need of support. The program is a partnership between the City of Kalamazoo and United Way of South Central Funding for these grants is being provided by the City of Kalamazoo Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds through the American Rescue Plan Act.



Isa Clark, Clark's Special Kitchen

2024 Impact Highlights

- \$250,000 invested
- 50 businesses granted
- 72% Woman or BIPOC owned
- 22% Woman/BIPOC/Priority Neighborhood owned

FALL 2024 CITY OF KALAMAZOO APPLICATIONS BY THE NUMBERS

217

Total # of submitted applications

121

Total # of eligible applications

96

Total # of ineligible applications

167

Total # of denied applications





What does PAC assist with?

At the Program Assistance Center, we support Michigan residents with utility assistance and self-sufficiency services. Our utility assistance comes in two forms: a one-time assistance payment or enrollment into an Affordable Payment Plan.

In addition to financial support, we offer services that help to promote long-term stability. This includes budget reviews, energy savings tips, and other resources tailored to each household's needs.

Everything begins with a personalized needs assessment, where we work one-on-one with clients to identify their goals and connect them with the right support.



A participant joined PAC in November, seeking support during a very difficult time in her life. As a single parent of three, she enrolled in a program designed for individuals with extremely low incomes. The program offers goal setting, monthly coaching, and additional assistance with utility bills for those who stay engaged and attend their appointments.

Her primary goal was to find employment—and she successfully did. More recently, she earned a promotion along with a pay increase. She also joined a GED study group and has been actively taking practice tests.

Throughout her time in the program, she has remained consistent with her monthly CARE payments and has shown remarkable growth in confidence.



What is JobSTAR?

JobSTAR (Support Talent And Retention) is a resource for employers to help employees overcome obstacles that may impede their ability to work. A Success Coach connects workers to services and support to help them overcome challenges that affect job attendance and performance. The results include a stronger workforce, financially stable families, higher productivity and a more vibrant local economy.

2023-24 Impact Highlights

- 21 participating companies
- 744 employees served
- 1,385 referrals



From a participating employer...

Our organization has experienced nothing but positive outcomes from the program. Within a challenging market, benefits like this program provide our staff a sense of security, which influences our purpose toward valuing our staff. The impact is vast and by hearing the success stories throughout the program provides dividends to our investment and brings transparency to real life challenges that we can support in providing sustainable employment with an caring approach.



The nationwide CoC concept grew from a push by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the 1990s for communities to streamline funding requests and coordinate services. In March 2024, leadership of the Calhoun County CoC transitioned from Summit Pointe to United Way of South-Central Michigan (UWSCMI).



2025 PIT & HIC Highlights

- Total Persons Counted: 212
- Total Sheltered Persons: 175
 - Total persons in emergency shelter: 136
 - Total persons in transitional housing: 39

Our Calhoun Continuum of Care:

- Partners with our members to increase coordination and find solutions to the gaps, inequities, and challenges they experience when working to reduce homelessness.
- Measures and analyzes data to ensure accountability throughout the system of services for those experiencing homelessness.
- Write, maintain, and monitor a community-developed, countywide, 10-year Plan to End Homelessness as mandated by HUD.
- Administer state and federal funding streams that mandate the use of the CoC structure.



United Way SCMI leads the Continuum of Care (CoC) program for Kalamazoo, partnering with member organizations to increase coordination and find solutions to the gaps, inequities, and challenges they experience when working to reduce homelessness. In 2024, we piloted a hiring initiative to bring on eight paid community consultants to help guide the work.



“As someone who experienced homelessness for three years and saw other people experience homelessness during Covid and other crucial times, helping anyone in need is like the best thing,”

-Anastasia Minott, previous consultant



RentAble

Rentable provides one-time financial assistance to help individuals and families in Kalamazoo County overcome barriers to becoming or staying housed. Funds can be used for things like application fees, security deposit, rent increases, mortgage payments, or owed utility costs.

- 65 households served
- \$97,282.15 distributed
- Jan 2024-December 2024