



*Hartford, Connecticut*

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*Organizing Leaders  
for Social Justice.*

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*In 1968, CAC declared that “the church has an opportunity in the fullest sense, not only to change lives, but to change the structures in which these lives exist.”*

In 2015, CAC journeyed more fully into that vision with the launching of its new initiative on leadership development through community organizing. At the heart of this new strategy is the conviction that those most affected by injustice and inequity have what it takes, when given the tools, to be leaders capable of acting collectively for social justice.

There is no greater privilege in ministry than accompanying grassroots leaders through this process. Leaders who participated in CAC’s organizing and leadership development training won housing benefits for displaced residents, bus transportation for student athletes, improved apartment conditions for low-income tenants, and greater transparency around education issues for parents of public school students.

This important work of developing leaders for justice is also taking hold in our communities of faith as we train clergy and lay the groundwork for a faith-based power organization in Greater Hartford. The ultimate goal is for clergy to organize around larger-scale issues of justice in the region so that churches can play a public role in transforming unjust social structures.

The issues before us are large and daunting, but the leaders coming forward to work together are determined and promise better days ahead.



*Cori Mackey*

Cori Mackey  
Executive Director



*Mark L. Deters*

Rev. Mark Deters  
Board President

## VINE STREET RESIDENTS WIN RELOCATION SUPPORT FROM CITY

*On July 26, 2015 a two-alarm fire caused 18 low income families to be displaced from their apartment on Vine Street in Hartford.*



Images courtesy of Patrick Dooley

When residents are displaced from their homes through no fault of their own, a Connecticut law requires municipalities to provide temporary housing, relocation assistance, and other supports to help families. Still, the City of Hartford attempted to provide only two weeks of shelter to these 18 Vine Street families before putting them out on the street to fend for themselves.

To address this wrong, the residents turned to CAC to learn how to organize. For several nights, CAC provided training and guidance on legal research, culminating in a public meeting with

top City officials to demand the supports promised under the law.

With help from CAC, residents won motel stays until they were permanently rehoused, housing relocation assistance, and cash benefits. Not satisfied with securing benefits just for themselves, residents worked with Greater Hartford Legal Aid and won initial court-ordered improvements to Hartford's relocation program with more rulings still to come. Now, the hundreds of families displaced yearly receive the assistance they deserve to keep them in safe and stable housing in the wake of displacements.



## PARENTS WIN TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

*In response to several concerns affecting athletics at Weaver High School, CAC's organizers held a meeting with over 30 parents and a number of athletes to better understand the issues.*

Over 50 students, practicing and playing at Bulkeley High School in Hartford's South End due to school renovations, were given public bus tokens to their North End homes after practice and games, sometimes as late as 10 PM. The parents, many without vehicles, were scared for their children's safety. They wanted bus transportation provided for school-sponsored sports while their children were relocated to a different part of town. They requested this of the school principal and athletic director, to no avail.

With CAC's assistance, the parents researched the cost of bus transportation, identified the administrator in charge of authorizing the necessary funds, and developed a strategy for securing the desired transportation.

A meeting was held with the Chief Operations Officer who oversees transportation and athletics at Hartford Public Schools. The parents asked for transportation with well-reasoned arguments and a preparedness to assemble more parents to obtain media attention should transportation not be provided. By week's end, bus transportation was provided for the 50 athletes.

Through a small, local action, committed parents were given a taste of what is possible when they connect with each other, organize, and strategically seek desired changes. As a result, several parent leaders have deepened their training with CAC and are becoming active community-wide leaders.



## HOW CAC TRAINS LEADERS IN ORGANIZING

The *4-week* training process is designed to teach basic skills of organizing for justice. *Training happens individually, in groups and in classes.*

A group of *10-12 participants* are identified by CAC's organizers and *invited into the Leadership Training where they learn:*

- 1 How to build relationships in the community through individual meetings
- 2 How to build and analyze power
- 3 How to identify issues that can be addressed and won
- 4 How organizing differs from movements, mobilizing and civic associations
- 5 Participants learn how to hold house meetings where small groups gather in their homes to learn what issues are most impacting their life. Problems are identified and organizing priorities get established.



### *Insights from Leaders in the Making*

*After attending the leadership training, I learned that situations and circumstances can happen to almost anyone. I learned from the training that what a person does with that situation or circumstance makes or breaks him. The Vine Street fire could have broken me and been the end of my vision for a clothing career. I learned that the difference maker is having the power in you through your own leadership skills to survive. I learned in the training that you have to identify the leader and it could very well be you.*

— Isaac White III > Vine Street

*Being a part of the leadership training benefited me personally, as well as my children. I learned in the leadership training that I am not powerless as a mother in my community. I learned the process of getting to the bottom of a problem in the community that is affecting my family and my neighbors, identifying the persons involved at the decision-making level, following through and negotiating. I learned how to organize the group to be successful in getting a result and not just being frustrated until the behavior became negative.*

— Tamara Roberts > Magnolia Street

## 2015 HIGHLIGHTS

*Many residents have been trained through individual training sessions, group trainings, and by participating in our leadership training series. Additionally, CAC's organizing staff spends the bulk of their time in the community, in individual meetings, getting to know residents. This is how leaders are identified and how we keep a pulse on the issues impacting residents.*

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**12 residents**  
graduated from first  
Leadership Training



**46 clergy**  
participated in  
organizing training



**123 residents**  
participated  
in issue training



**115 residents**  
participated  
in actions



**500**  
individual meetings  
with residents



**300 residents**  
impacted yearly  
by organizing wins  
in housing relocation

## ADVENTURES IN THE CITY SUMMER PROGRAM

In 2015, CAC served *75 kids* during our *5-week summer program* at Thirman Milner School in Hartford. Kids enjoyed classes in karate, beading, water color, science, and world dance.



*Kids enjoyed weekly  
trips to Auer Farm  
4H Camp where they:*



Made ice-cream



Explored the woods



Gardened



## *ADVENTURES IN THE CITY 2016 BECOMES A FREEDOM SCHOOL!*

*CAC is excited to announce that Adventures in the City, entering its 33<sup>rd</sup> year, was selected by the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) to be a Freedom School site in 2016.*

CDF's Freedom Schools were designed in 1995 by civil rights activist and early childhood educator Marian Wright Edelman. She was inspired by her own participation in the 1964 Freedom Schools in Mississippi. CDF's Freedom Schools have grown into a national model with an award-winning literacy-based curriculum and a dynamic student and parent leadership development component.

*Here's what Adventures in the City Freedom School will look like this summer:*

- We will serve 100 children at Thirman Milner School in Hartford for six weeks
- The children are guided by college-age Servant Leaders
- Servant Leader Interns are young adults with at least one year of college experience and will be primarily from Hartford. They receive a week-long curriculum training from national CDF staff in Tennessee.
- Freedom Schools literacy curriculum is award winning and uses culturally relevant books that students get to keep for their home library.
- Nationwide, students engaged in Freedom Schools experienced gains in their reading level when most children from low-income communities lose about 2 months of learning.
- The afternoons are filled with fun learning enrichment opportunities like dance, art, yoga, karate, painting, and exciting field trips.
- All scholars receive a healthy breakfast and lunch as part of the program.

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### *Why Freedom Schools?*

More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college and more likely to enter the juvenile justice system or prison. This Freedom School program changes that trajectory.

## 2015 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

### ASSETS

#### *Current Assets*

Cash	111,387
Accounts receivable	35,496
Mortgages and loans receivable, current	10,211
Development costs/properties for resale	252,794
Other current assets	8,273

Total Current Assets	418,161
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#### *Non-current Assets*

Fixed assets, net	146,937
Land leases	4,377,863
Mortgages and loans receivable, long-term	137,023
Investments	5,928,607

Total Non-current Assets	10,590,430
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Total Assets	\$11,008,591
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### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

#### *Current Liabilities*

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	9,587
Line of credit	85,000
Land leases	178,573

Total Current Liabilities	273,160
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#### *Net Assets*

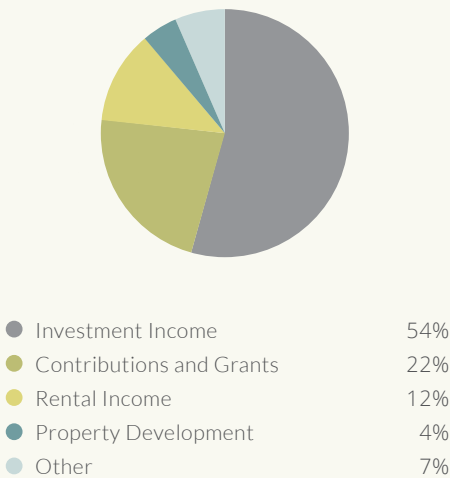
Unrestricted	(427,452)
Temporarily restricted	2,915,527
Permanently restricted	8,247,356

Total Net Assets	10,735,431
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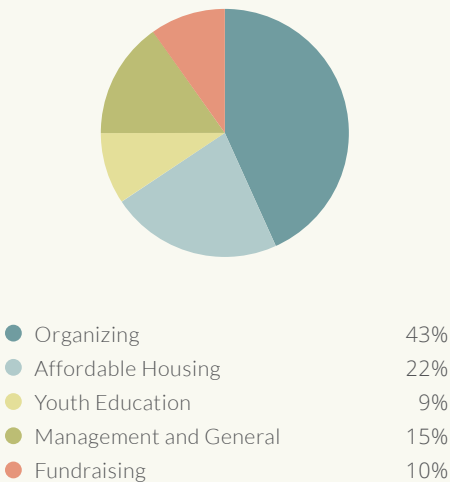
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$11,008,591
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2015 audit performed by Whittlesey & Hadley, P.C., is available upon request.

2015 Revenue



2015 Expenses by Program



*Christian Activities Council  
to Change its Governance  
Structure and Deepen  
Connection to Congregations*

The CAC has been faithfully governed over the years by a Council comprising delegates from area congregations in the United Church of Christ. In addition to the Council, there has been a Board of Directors overseeing the governance of the organization and reporting to the Council. This structure served the organization well for many years.

After examining the needs of the organization as it moves into its next chapter of ministry, it became clear that CAC needs a more efficient governance structure. As of 2016, CAC will be governed by a traditional Board of Directors, foregoing the need for official delegates. We will maintain our identity as a United Church of Christ organization while expanding the ways in which our organization is connected to our congregations.

Rather than rely on one person to connect CAC and the congregations, we are developing a partnership approach where we recognize and build on the many connections we have with congregations and other organizational partners who collaborate in the work of social justice.

We have expanded our board committees to include non-board members. We have developed a mission team structure which allows people with a passion for social justice to expand CAC’s capacity by serving as a mission team member carrying out various initiatives aligned with our mission of developing leaders who act collectively for social justice.

## CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS



*In 2015, as a UCC organization, CAC received financial contributions from a total of 18 UCC churches in the Greater Hartford area.*

Asylum Hill Congregational Church \$250.00	Avon Congregational Church \$1,368.00	Broadview Community Church \$250.00	Buckingham Congregational Church \$700.00
Congregational Church of Marlborough \$443.00	Congregational Church of South Glastonbury \$2,500.00	East Granby Congregational Church \$2,750.00	Elmwood Community Church \$150.00
First Church in Windsor \$1,500.00	First Church of Christ, Hartford \$1,000.00	First Church of Christ, Simsbury \$1,500.00	First Church, Glastonbury \$2,250.00
First Congregational Church in Bloomfield \$1,000.00	First Congregational Church of Granby \$500.00	Flagg Road United Church of Christ \$300.00	Rocky Hill Congregational Church \$3,500.00
Somers Congregational Church \$250.00	South Congregational Church East Hartford \$1,010.00	TOTAL CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS \$21,221.00	

## ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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### FOUNDATIONS, CORPORATE & PUBLIC SUPPORT

- Advanced Benefits Strategies
- Aetna Foundation, Inc.
- Better Quality Management Resources
- J. Walton Bissell Foundation
- DeManche McChristian, LLC
- E-Benefits Group
- Edwin H. Bingham Estate
- Ellen Jeanne Goldfarb Memorial Trust
- Ensworth Charitable Foundation
- Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
- Stanley D. and Hinda N. Fisher Fund
- Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
- Irene Hills Estate
- Lippincott Family Charitable Fund
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation
- Schwab Charitable Fund
- The Fund for Greater Hartford
- Travelers
- United Way of the Capital Area
- Weston Estate

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- Richard Pawlich
- Kenneth A. Poppe
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- Peter Reynolds
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- Clara Ruffin
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Muse Mohamoud  
*Community Organizer*

Pat Speer  
*Mentor Organizer*

Stacey Lopez  
*Adventures in the City  
Youth Program Director*

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\* Deceased



The Christian Activities Council is an urban mission organization founded in 1851. We are supported and sponsored by the congregations of the United Church of Christ in the 32-town Greater Hartford region.



CHRISTIAN  
ACTIVITIES  
COUNCIL

*We are located in  
The Mack Center*

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