



Helping Hands, Inc. 2020 Annual Newsletter

## CEO'S NOTE

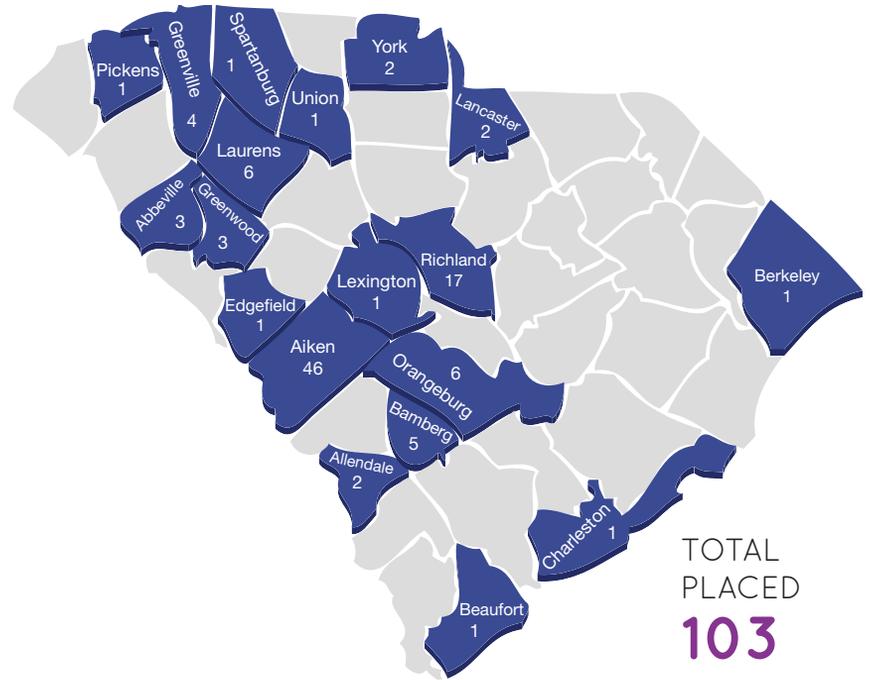


**C**hallenging... that would be a great word to describe 2020. It didn't start out that way but the abrupt closing of offices

and schools, the supply shortages, and the "cabin fever" has required a new level of creativity and patience for our residents and staff. As always, the staff at Helping Hands has met the challenges placed before them and innovated our way to lasting change. We have new ways for volunteers to engage with our agency and our residents. We are learning to have fun "at home" more. And just like you, we are learning to appreciate the people and things around us that bring us joy and move us forward. The difficulty of this year might be paralyzing to some but our youth are continuing to push forward towards their goals. Our staff members continue to model and promote healthy physical, mental, and emotional development. Our volunteers continue to offer innovative ideas and projects. Thanks for hanging in there with us and being a constant in the lives of our children and this agency. Your support has helped us adjust and continue with our mission to ZOOM TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE!

Carmen Landy  
Chief Executive Officer

## PLACEMENT BY COUNTY



TOTAL  
PLACED  
**103**

## FINANCES

Revenue \$1,459,402  
Expenses -\$1,417,208  
\$42,194

# ADAPTING TO A CHANGING WORLD

Monica Jeffcoat, Director of Residential Services



**C**COVID has compelled our staff and clients to quickly adapt to a changing world. For most families, this meant staying at home, wearing PP, and practicing social distancing. For our youth, it meant that and so much more. Some have not been able to have in person therapy sessions or family visits since the start of this pandemic. Imagine not being able to physically see your family since March, and the effects it can have on you. It is because of their

resilience and staff support that they have been able to navigate through this pandemic.

As an agency, we have had to adapt to how we ensure our residents received necessary services. We now have a laptop in the program to accommodate virtual therapy sessions. Our child advocates have worked closely with DSS to ensure our clients have virtual visits with their loved ones. Our college kids were not able to return to campus this year but attend classes virtually. The K-12 youth also had to adjust to Online learning through Aiken Innovate Virtual School. Our essential staff has had to leave their families at home

in this pandemic in order to provide the nurturing care and services our residents need.

Our education department has worked closely with our school district to ensure our clients were enrolled virtually as well as future clients. The hard work and dedication of this department has made it possible to create daily school schedules and customize work spaces for our youth. Another challenge that we have handled is resident activities. We had to create new ways for our youth to have safe off campus activities, be good citizens through volunteer activities, and virtual independent living classes.

Through flexibility, communication, and teamwork, our staff has made this unimaginable pandemic manageable for our youth. I would be remiss to not take this time to again say thanks to the staff and our youth for pushing through this pandemic. The future will be brighter, and we will continue to shape brighter futures!



Summer Blast was different this year. One activity involved Summer Olympic games at the park!

# STRONGER IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Rysheeka Bush, Clinical Program Manager



The year 2020 has certainly been a year of flexibility and willingness to learn new things. The field of mental health has made many adjustments to continue providing quality services to those in need. I was very fortunate to have a clinical space in which services could continue with social distancing guidelines in place. However, as a precaution, I completed a refresher course on telehealth services in the case that guidelines

changed or health issues became a factor. I've also had the opportunity to engage in more on-line trainings and webinars that have enhanced my clinical skills.

I've always enjoyed walking through the programs and having one on one interactions with the residents in their living space. It has been difficult not to be able to give high fives and hugs as I walked through the halls. Handing a client a tissue or giving a hug at the end of session to let them know someone cares is temporarily not allowed. For the first time in my history with the agency, I've felt somewhat detached from the youth and that has

been difficult to manage.

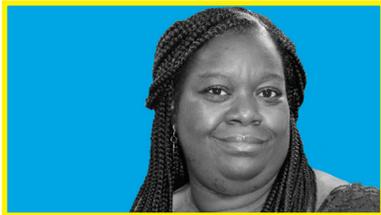
I feel that I have become a better therapist as a result of the pandemic. As a clinician you are taught to have empathy, to provide compassionate care for your clients. Well, not only do I have empathy for my clients, I now have a shared experience with my clients. We've shared the same feelings of uncertainty, worry, and anxiety about the future. I often share with them that what doesn't break you makes you stronger. With certainty, I do say, we are all stronger, much stronger than we know.



Rysheeka Bush taking precautions and showing off her Helping Hands apparel.

# STAYING CONNECTED

Tiiu Goode, Director of Community Programming



**W**ith Aiken Youth Empowerment, we were so used to being out in the community and schools, assisting and observing the reproductive health curriculum, facilitating Girls Circle and Boys Council groups, conducting Parent Power sessions, and just being very visible physically. We had to change our delivery to be able to provide these services all while being safe.

Therefore, we have adapted by becoming familiar with

the various virtual platforms that we now use along with lots of emails and phone calls! The work isn't impossible to do, we must find another way to do it as effectively as we have before. The only thing that changes is delivery, which can now reach a wider audience!

To have a positive impact on the future, we continue maintaining the close relationships with those we have worked with previously. I let them know that Aiken Youth Empowerment is still here and able to provide those same services and groups, just in a different format.

For instance, we held our first Virtual Teen Maze on

October 25th through Oct 31st, 2020. Participants were able to learn about a variety of topics from healthy relationships to healthy eating, win prizes, and participate in a scavenger hunt, all from the comfort of their home. We partnered with lots of great agencies and organizations to make this happen.



**October 25<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> 2020**

# HELPING HANDS 2019 STATS

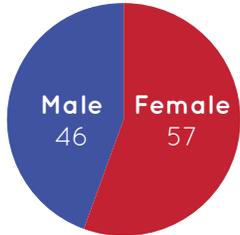
**19** average children per day

**42** staff members

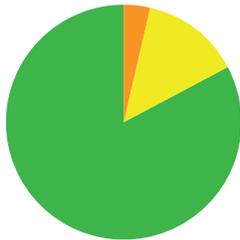
**4** program areas

**46** years of experience

## RESIDENTIAL



Residents' Age



- Ages 0-5: 4
- Ages 6-12: 14
- Ages 13+: 85



**68**

Average days in our care



**146**

Life Skills instruction for teens (hours)



**\$\$48,385**

Amount spent on groceries for three meals and snacks each day



**43,190**

Miles traveled



**816.49**

Staff continuing education hours completed



**478**

Volunteers



**1,337.65**

Volunteer hours



**\$33,441.25**

Fiscal impact of volunteer hours



**654**

AYE Participants



**50**

Participants in Boys Council



**37**

Informative single session presentation participants



**85**

Participants in Girls Circle



**94**

Real Care Infant Simulators area student participants

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## FOSTER HOMES

Submit application to be licensed as Child Placing Agency.

## ILS

Collaborated with Augusta University to revise and enhance the program evaluation system for all agency programs.

## MENTAL HEALTH

With a full time therapist, began to offer more group therapy services and seek credentialing to bill insurance for services.

## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Continued planning with Board and community partners for the development and financing of independent living housing within the city of Aiken. Began meeting with state-level officials about the development of a designation as a formal supervised independent living program. Completed Council on Accreditation re-accreditation process for Group Living Services (GLS).

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION EXPANSION

Working cooperatively with the City of Aiken to provide programming for community youth at the Lessie B Price Senior Youth Center and parents at Aiken Head Start. Completed Council on Accreditation re-accreditation process for Counseling Services and Education (CSE).



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**MON**  
March 29  
2021

**Woodside Plantation Country Club**  
Aiken, South Carolina

To benefit: Helping Hands and Tri-Development Center  
For information, call us at (803) 648-3456



A unique night of wine and food, featuring some of the CSRA's finest chefs, an auction, and live entertainment.