

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



ballard
center
Changing Lives since 1965

*Changing times,
Changing lives...*

STAFF

Becky Price, CEO

Charlotte Marthaler, COO

August Rudisell, Director Administrative Services

Julia Price, Family Stabilization Director

Jill Ensley, Outreach & Communications Director

Jessica Benner, Education Director

Claire Gallagher, Family Connections Coordinator

Ginger Williams, Accountant

Julie Barnard, Cook/Building Manager

OUR TEACHERS...

Mitra Pakravan | Jori Rudisell | Rachael Washington | Robin Briles |

Mariyah Garcia | Allie Richardson | Kailie Hamilton | Xavier Kenney

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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David Moore, Treasurer

Tom Brady, Vice Chair

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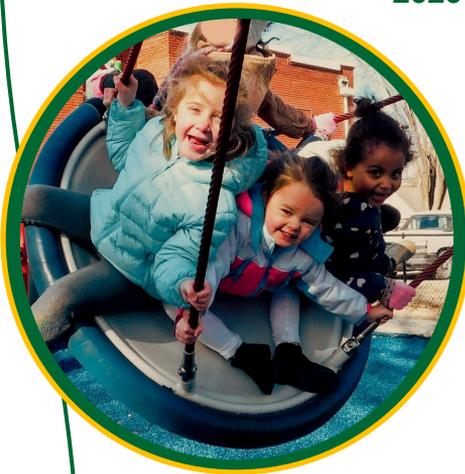
Pam Cullerton

Ivan Huntoon

Stephanie West-Potter

John Krehbiel

Jim Smiley



VISION: Since 1965, Ballard Center has served an important role in our community by offering safety-net support services, which includes emergency services to families to promote stability, and quality early childhood education at an affordable price. These services strengthen families and create lasting change. We believe that the first step in changing lives is to acknowledge that the disparities brought about through poverty exist and strive to address the barriers our children and clients face in finding safety and support.

MISSION: Ballard Center is a non-profit organization that partners with families to achieve stability through early childhood education and needs-based services.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

I was truly blown away by the acts of human generosity our community showed during this unprecedented year, despite the challenges of 2020 when the world around us shut down. I've always felt blessed to have a front row seat at witnessing the wonderful and compassionate giving of our community...a community that is moved by something deeper than manufactured joy...a community that rather than focusing on the usual consumerism is feeding, clothing, and lifting up those that need a little extra help...a community where people are looking out for their neighbors as well as people they've never met...a community that puts the most vulnerable among us first, and finds new ways to stay connected to each other.



Over the past year, early childhood educators everywhere have worked in circumstances that brought entirely new challenges and hurdles to jump. But when the world around us shut down, you stepped up.

We found ways to connect with young children and their families in new and innovative ways, ensuring that they had the most nurturing and safe learning environment possible. During this crisis, you've been there for each other, providing support to children, giving encouragement, and sharing resources with families.

As I contemplate the words to summarize 2020, hoping to avoid focusing on the pandemic, I find that not mentioning it is impossible, as it was such a large part of all of our lives, affecting so many. Yet the impact of the past year on Ballard staff was surprisingly minimal. We were more prepared than many, since facing adversity head on every day is what we've always done. Even though we had a 40% decrease in available staff and predictions that we could expect a 150% increase in clients needing assistance, with a 50% decrease in donors with the ability to help, as you'll see from the following pages, we made it work.

Truly, we are stronger together.

Becky Price,
Executive Director

NOTE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR:

Volunteers are the foundation upon which a non-profit builds its capacity to fulfill its mission of service in a meaningful and cost effective way. This could not have been truer than in 2020, when community groups and caring individuals donated their time and talents to guarantee that our most vulnerable population received food, clothing and financial assistance when they needed it most. Board members, Ballard staff, clients and parents were among the many individuals who supported this heroic effort. Thank you!

Serving on the Ballard Center Board of Directors with so many dedicated individuals is truly a rewarding experience. But the biggest reward of all is bringing hope to so many families. Seeing the relief on the face of a mother when a hot meal and some extra paper products are delivered to her front door, or the smile on the children's faces when they are able to return safely to the classroom makes volunteering so worthwhile! I encourage everyone to follow their hearts and support our mission to help families gain access to quality, affordable childcare and achieve financial stability.

Sincerely,



Colleen Gregoire, Board of Directors





SAVE THE DATE!



Changing
 LIVES
 GALA

It's time to safely party in person!

Friday, August 13th, 2021



*"It's wonderful.
My son has been there
since he was two and he's now four. I plan to
have my daughter go there as well once she
turns two. The teachers are so amazing and
consistent. It's a really diverse place and I feel
like my son is getting a great early education in
every aspect. **Ballard is also a big part** of the
Lawrence community overall and I love that my
son gets to see and experience all the ways they
give back to the community. I highly
recommend!" —Ballard Parent*



PROGRAMS

**Although our mission may sound simple, explaining
our wrap-around services is not!**

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:

We believe that all children, regardless of income, deserve the opportunity to receive an early childhood education. This is why we have one of the lowest tuition rates in Douglas County and assist families in securing funding and scholarships.

In the unprecedented circumstances of 2020 when the world around us shut down, the impact was especially difficult for children and families of color, those living in poverty, and frontline workers. Ballard teachers stepped up. We found ways to stay connected with our students and their families, ensuring that they had food and learning tools during the shutdown. And the moment it was safe, we opened our doors and created the safest learning environment possible. Every day our teachers give it their all to make a monumental difference in the lives of our students. Despite the drastic increase in need, and decrease in staff able to work, our staff managed to pull it together to meet our families needs. With many of the support services our students with disabilities need, such as speech therapy unavailable to continue due to Covid-19, we became adept at securing the resources needed to ensure they are able to thrive. We've become experts at understanding the collective trauma our kids are feeling, the increased level of anxiety or depression during this time, and implemented tools to help them adjust.

COMMUNITY & FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES:

Financial Stability Goal: United, we battle food insecurity. We support families through the struggles life throws at them. It may be as simple as a need to visit our food pantry, or help with an unexpected bill, or a car that needs repaired so that a parent can get to work. It may be a more extensive crisis - medical bills, a divorce, a death or loss of a job where a family needs the rent or utility assistance we provide.

Ballard's pantry services are able to offer clothing, household goods, toiletries, diapers, and food, regardless of income. Our pantry also offers a workwear closet for those needing clothes for a job. We offer emergency services for rent & utility assistance, and more. We are able to cultivate the power of generosity by connecting people to community resources and making informed and thoughtful referrals to Douglas County partners for services we are unable to provide. By building relationships with community partners, we are creating a robust client referral system where barriers are eliminated through warm handoffs to services.

Throughout the year, Ballard also participates in seasonal assistance projects, such as Adopt-a-Family, T.O.Y.S (Take Our Youth Shopping), and others.

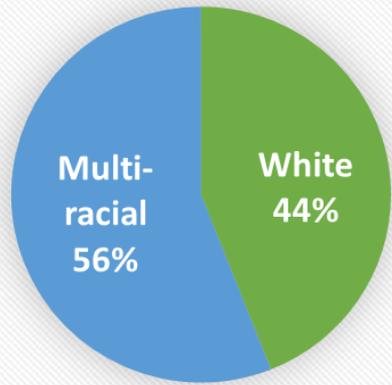
We also offer a bi-weekly Mobile Food Distribution in conjunction with Harvesters at the Douglas County Fairgrounds that feeds over 800 people each month.



From a Ballard parent: "Thank you! Thank you, Ballard Center for helping me get to work, and be able to take my children to school and work!! I am forever grateful and so, so blessed. Meeting Julia today is proven fact that you all are amazing and so good to the community of Lawrence. She walked in with a burst of positive energy and brightness and I *definitely needed that today*....and it's reassuring to know that this energy is being spread among the children and families in connection with Ballard Center, and that my daughter is receiving this love and energy as well!!!!"



Early Education Demographics



■ White ■ Multi-racial



HEROES AMONG US...



Greg Gardner has an abundance of talents and gifts and is willing to share his time regardless of the need, from fixing a toilet or ironing curtains to creating financial policies and procedures, Greg gets the job done! With grant support from the Douglas County Community Foundation to fund the resurfacing of one of our two playgrounds, Greg

took on the massive project of replacing wood mulch with rubber mulch. Despite being high-risk for COVID-19, he stepped up and worked 12-hour days to complete this project. He miraculously found a way to not only get both playgrounds done but also landscaped the entire yard! A true leader and doer, Greg laid a fabric barrier and spread 15,000 pounds of landscaping rocks and 48,000 pounds of rubber mulch with some help!

All in a day's work for Greg!



Wint Winter, Jr.

The safety-net services Ballard offers families vary depending on the crisis. A common need among many clients is access to an attorney especially one willing to provide services pro bono. Legal service truly changes clients by giving them a voice and letting them know they are not alone. Navigating the legal system is an overwhelming experience for most of us; often an individual who feels marginalized is not aware of their rights and just needs an advocate to stand with them and be their voice. Our Advocate of the Year, Wint Winter, Jr., does just that! Wint gives clients a voice to be sure they are heard...and believe me, when Wint speaks, people listen!

LIVES CHANGED — Stories of real impact...



A mother of one of our Ballard students recently had to have a double mastectomy. She has been battling cancer since late summer. On the day of her very first treatment of chemo, her husband ended up having multiple seizures, making him unable to drive her to her appointment, or any subsequent appointments. Her husband, who worked in the food industry, also lost his job

due to COVID. While the mother underwent chemo treatments, her 4-year old son was not allowed to attend Ballard due to the increased infection risk. The family had faced hardship after hardship since this last Summer.

Ballard was able to cover most of her unpaid rent and utility bills, gather together and deliver a recovery basket, help with their holiday gifts, and hold a spot for her son to return to Ballard in the future. As of now, the mom is cancer-free, the son is attending Ballard, and both parents are back at work. Truly, a wonderful outcome for an extremely difficult set of circumstances.

Elson, now raising two boys on his own, overcame a paralyzing stroke at just the age of 38. To create a better life for himself and his boys, Elson invested in professional training and is now a full-time barber.

Finally, back on his feet, the COVID-19 pandemic forced him out of work. In both instances, Ballard was there to provide emergency food, utility assistance and even bikes for Elson and his sons. In return, they helped Ballard by delivering meals to people during the shutdown. *“I have been blessed by so much, and it’s important to teach my boys to give back.”*





Jessica & Vida's story....

Recently, Ballard received a text from one of our parents. She was reaching an important place in her life and stated to Ballard staff, "I just wanted to let you know that after I get my income tax this month I will be debt free! Whether Vida's dad makes payments or not, going forward I will be paying Vida's daycare bill and making payments on the balance accumulated. Ballard has literally made mine and Vida's lives 100x better in so many ways, whether it be a friendly smile,

encouraging words on hard days, calls or texts checking on us during the pandemic, food drop offs or the teachers offering to watch Vida to give me a little me time. I don't know where we would be without all of you. They say it takes a village and for a long time I felt alone, you all at Ballard have become our village and I am forever thankful. Thank you."

Miss Jessica is a single mother of 4-year old Vida, who is a student here at Ballard. Raising Vida on her own, Jessica has accomplished so much. When an admin staff asked Jessica if Ballard truly helped her, she replied with, "Yes! Between not having to worry about \$600 plus a month for daycare with Vida's scholarship, and all the extra help I have received from just watching Vida, to helping with utilities, or allowing me to use the pantry, it has made a huge difference for me.

Until mid last year we were definitely struggling paycheck to paycheck and then it got easier when she got her scholarship because I only had to pay half as much, so we weren't struggling for groceries as much, and now I've got everything but my midwife bill and Vida's balance paid in full."

In about a month, Jessica will have pulled herself out of over \$15,000 of debt, including years of overdue student debt, with Ballard's help. Participating in at least three budgeting classes, either hosted by Ballard or a partnering agency, Jessica has a fast track to breathing easy now.

In 2020, we also had some amazing organizational growth!

We were one of five non-profits selected statewide for the **Points of Light Service Enterprise Certification** training! This is a volunteer mentoring program that is helping key Ballard staff learn how to grow new relationships with volunteers and maintain long term commitments. By developing stronger and longer lasting relationships with volunteers, Ballard Center can increase programmatic outcomes in the areas of community outreach and resource development that will strengthen our organization and bring about better resourced Education and Family Stabilization programs.



We earned a **Silver Seal of Transparency with Guidestar**. Guidestar is the world's largest source of information about nonprofit organizations and is an easy way for them to demonstrate their commitment to transparency while telling their real stories.

With help from Community Partners, we were able to leverage funding to make the following high-impact improvements...



COVID DIDN'T KEEP US DOWN!

BALLARD'S IMPACT 2020:

204 Children & families benefitted from Early Childhood Education

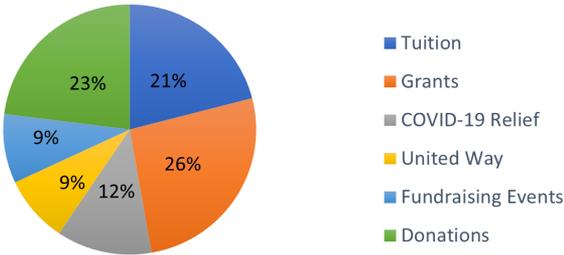
1,188 Household members received rent & utility assistance, and stabilization resources

10,460 Mobile Food Pantry household members impacted

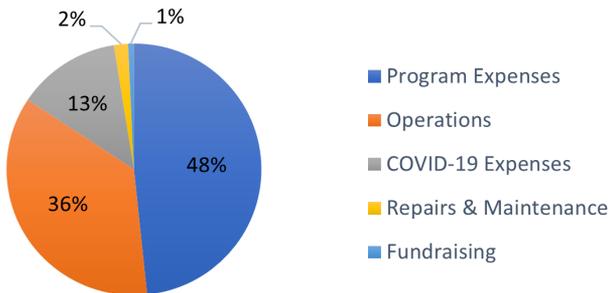
3,386 Household members impacted by Pantry Services

728 Household members impacted by our Adopt-a-Family program

2020 INCOME TOTAL \$869,828



2020 EXPENSES TOTAL \$807,056



WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most outside visitors were excluded from entering Ballard Center, which greatly reduced the number of potential volunteer opportunities....

...but despite these limitations, Ballard saw an *increase* in the number of volunteer hours in 2020 over 2019 with 3,232 and 3,105 hours respectively!

So...to the many volunteers who helped us out at our biweekly food distributions, to the board and committee members who shared their skills, connections, and labor, to the community members who stepped up to help us deliver food and cheer during shutdown, to the dedicated groups who joined us on their weekends to clean, organize, and improve our beloved building...

THANK YOU!!!



YOU ARE ESSENTIAL TO US!

10 WAYS YOU CAN HELP...

Ballard Center could not exist without the support of volunteers. We offer a wide array of opportunities for individual or groups to donate their time and talents.

1. Make a tax-deductible financial contribution.
2. Volunteer your time & skills.
3. Donate season appropriate adult & children's clothing, shoes, non-perishable food, diapers, household essentials, or toiletries.
4. Share our social media posts to tell others about Ballard Center and our mission.
5. Encourage friends & family to support Ballard Center.
6. Sponsor a drive to collect coats, hygiene products, food, or other items Ballard Center offers without charge.
7. Offer professional services related to Ballard Center needs to maintain operations and assist the community (i.e. maintenance, technology skills, administrative, legal, print services, etc.)
8. Participate in activities and events as a guest or volunteer.
9. Volunteer your art, dance, music, or gardening instruction skills for childhood enrichment.
10. Repeat!

