2019 Annual Report





History & Who We Are

Who are we?

The short answer?

We are an organization that helps people move out of poverty.

Created in 1963 through the City of Milwaukee, the Community Relations-Social Development Commission (most commonly referred to as the Social Development Commission or SDC) addresses the root causes of poverty. With research, specialized programming and collaboration, SDC empowers individuals and families with the resources to move beyond poverty. Section 66.0125(4) of Wisconsin's constitution further authorizes its work.

It is also important to note that SDC is a Community Action Agency (CAA). It is one of more than 1,000 CAAs throughout the country coordinating state and nationwide efforts to move families and individuals beyond poverty. CAAs, like the Social Development Commission, grew in popularity after President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a War on Poverty during his 1964 State of the Union Address.

SDC, with a staff of approximately 100 employees, assists a diverse population, including Milwaukee County's non-English speaking residents. Each year, SDC serves more than 8,000 Milwaukee County residents.

SDC develops focused programs and anti-poverty initiatives using results from a community needs assessment. This assessment is local research which amplifies the voice of residents experiencing poverty. The collected data identifies barriers or challenges that residents say keep them stuck in a cycle of poverty. In addition, use of this model ensures that SDC offers strategic and community-driven solutions.

SDC offers a plethora of services that can be categorized in eight core areas: Business and Career Services, Education Services, Personal Finance and Tax Services (VITA), Mental Health and Wellness, Nutritional Services, Residential Services, Senior Services and Youth Services.

SDC is a quasi-governmental agency. Milwaukee County voters elect one-third of its Board of Commissioners to advocate for local residents experiencing poverty. The remaining commissioners are appointed by organizations in public and private sectors. These organizations are: the African American Chamber of Commerce, AFL-CIO, Greater Milwaukee Committee, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Interfaith Conference, Milwaukee County, Milwaukee Area Technical College, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Schools, United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Office of the Governor.

Having the authority to convene these important partner agencies and act on poverty-related issues gives SDC significant influence. Since 1963, SDC has worked with its large network to affect policy, improve quality of life and drive social change.

Letter from our Board Chair

Dear Friends:

When asked to summarize 2019 in one sentence, I responded by saying 2019 was a year for bold ideas. It was an election year. We welcomed several new commissioners, and I was honored to assume the role of Chairman of the Social Development Commission's Board of Commissioners. We all understood the gravity of the moment and committed ourselves to bringing our best selves to our commissions.

I am pleased to report that the overall health and engagement of the Board of Commissioners is strong. With the return of two appointing organizations and new elections, almost every seat is occupied by an active member. In the months that followed the annual meeting, my fellow commissioners and I were privileged to partner with SDC employees to create a bold vision that would drive not only our immediate work but guide us years to come.

With community input at the foundation, we crafted an ambitious and disruptive roadmap to help fight poverty and create opportunity for those impacted by poverty. We committed to prioritizing our commission's mandate, technology infrastructure and inclusive economic opportunity.



Community Action Agencies like the Social Development Commission are built for advocacy. It's in our DNA and should be central to our operation. In 2019, we embraced this and sought ways to be an even more effective voice for our community. We attended community meetings, increasing outreach, visibility and our voice. We also leveraged our board's expertise to better understand trends while we supported programming that increases employment in our community.

It's also important to note that we received high ratings from outside auditors. Our 2019 financial statements showed that we continued to be responsible stewards of our financial resources. We remain well-positioned to continue our fight for Milwaukee County residents experiencing poverty.

2019 was a productive year for the Social Development Board of Commissioners. With our new strategic plan priorities, we have a renewed drive to fulfill our mission of fostering pathways from poverty to success.

Sincerely,

Elmer Moore Jr., Chairman

Social Development Board of Commissioners

Board of Commissioners

Appointed Commissioners



Board Chair Elmer Moore Jr. Greater Milwaukee Committee



Vice-Chair, Nikki Purvis City of Milwaukee Mayoral Appointee



Board Secretary Donna Brown-Martin Milwaukee County



Board Treasurer Terese Caro Office of the Governor



Dr. Valencia Brown Milwaukee Area Technical College



Ossie Kendrix Jr. African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin



Sara Van Winkle Interfaith Conference



Dan Gomez Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



Rosemary Holley
TARP – Technical Assistance
Resource Person
Governance Committee



Matthew Boswell
Milwaukee Public Schools



Glenn Carson United Way of Greater Milwaukee



John Jacobs Milwaukee Area Labor Council



Appointee
University of Wi -Milwaukee

Milwaukee County District Representaives



Carlissa Harris



District 2 George C. Matthews



District 3 Craig Sanders

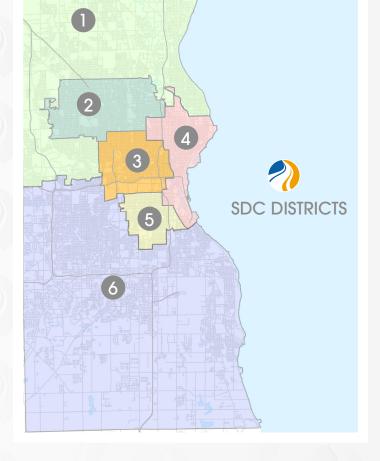


District 4



District 5 Rosa Villa-Menes

District 6 Bennet "Ben" Rucka



Letter from our CEO

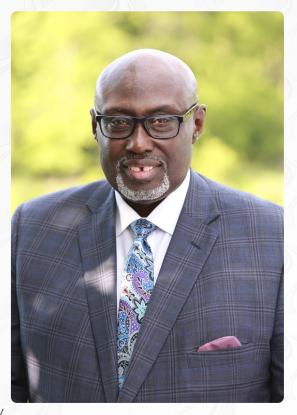
Dear Friends:

In 2019, the Social Development Commission helped individuals and families obtain resources that allow them to thrive. We helped people find higher-paying jobs. We helped young people address mental health and substance abuse issues. And when the city of Milwaukee tackled the threat of lead poisoning in our community, we were there to provide critical education and testing in Milwaukee County's hardest-hit neighborhoods.

In this annual report, you will see how the Social Development Commission continues to be relevant, responsive and strategic as it works with individuals and organizations that help us make a real difference in the community.

As we look back at the year, I am pleased to report that we experienced success worth celebrating.

In 2019, our data-driven work started with an extensive community needs assessment. We surveyed hundreds of Milwaukee County residents to better identify barriers or challenges keeping residents in poverty. In response, SDC provided specific programming and initiatives to meet their needs. We helped the unemployed access education and build new skills especially for the construction and culinary industries. We provided companionship to help seniors stay



in their own homes and age with dignity. Also, we expanded our signature Summit on Poverty and partnered with Marquette University and Ascension Wisconsin to better address policies affecting poverty, its root causes and related issues.

Not only did we invest in people, in 2019 we made the decision to "go green" and positively impact our environment. SDC secured funding for solar roof panels. These will be installed at our North Avenue headquarters. In addition, we are now able to install windows in the front of the building. As a major anchor in the Lindsay Heights neighborhood, we strengthened and beautified the area around us.

While our work is ongoing, this is the time when we pause and reflect on the contributions we made to the community. Again, we couldn't do it without you - our enthusiastic and dedicated partners in the war against poverty.

Sincerely,

George P. Hinton, CEO

Social Development Commission



growth.





At SDC, we also know how to have fun. In fact, our SDC Pride Committee guarantees it. This employee group organizes everything from staff and family zoo outings to festive, office costume contests and chili cook-offs.

other. Behind the scenes, we've created a culture that values employees, invests in their health and wellness and promotes personal and professional

We know our employees are our greatest asset. When we take care of each other, it shows.

CAREER SERVICES

Absolute Advantage

When Andrea Robinson grabs a sledgehammer and knocks down the interior frame of a house she's renovating, she's striking down more than drywall. With each blow, Andrea shatters obstacles including stereotypes that keep women from entering the construction industry. Andrea is a rising star in a field dominated by men. However, the road to success hasn't been easy.

A series of bad decisions and a run-in with police put Andrea on the wrong path. Glancing around the halfway house where she served the remainder of her sentence, Andrea wondered how she would find a job. That's when she noticed a flyer promoting SDC's Absolute Advantage pre-construction apprenticeship program. She picked up the phone and called.

"From the very beginning, I felt that people at SDC cared about me and my future," Robinson says. "I found a family that believed in me when I didn't believe in myself."

For over two months, SDC's case managers helped Andrea rebuild her confidence and develop skills to become marketable in the workplace. While at SDC, Andrea benefited from SDC's integrated case model strategy. Staff helped Andrea with employment but they also offered services that address needs like housing, mental health and long-term financial goals.

When Andrea completed the Absolute Advantage training program, she had earned some of the construction industry's most valuable certifications. But more than that, she had a new blueprint for life.



ABSOLUTE ADVANTAGE: ANDREA ROBISNON

In 2019, Andrea was released from the penal system. Wearing a beautiful polka-dot dress and a megawatt smile, she came back to SDC and spoke at a town hall employee meeting. With tears streaming down her face, she expressed thanks.

"You have no idea how much this program has changed my life," Andrea said. "I want to thank everybody. The people who got the grants. The security guards who greeted me when I got off the bus. My teachers. Something special happened here and it's because of you."

Andrea plans to open her own construction business specializing in renovation and demolition.

Developing the Next Generation of Skilled Trade Workers With Partnerships

In 2019, the construction industry struggled to replace an aging workforce. Demand for skilled workers was high but top-paying jobs required significant experience and industry certification. Taking an innovative approach, SDC partnered with general contractor, JCP Construction and the Milwaukee Area Technical College. Together, these influencial organizations are helping Milwaukee County's unemployed residents access family-sustaining jobs and higher education.

With SDC's Absolute Advantage Program, students receive classroom instruction. JCP Construction supervises onsite training that allows students to get



experience renovating a foreclosed neighborhood house purchased from the City of Milwaukee for a dollar. At the same time, students have an opportunity to continue their education and take college classes at MATC.

Career Services At A Glance

80%

Absolute Advantage graduates maintain employment for at least 45 days.

85%

Youth Employment Program participants maintain employment for at least 45 days. 111

Career Service participants obtained Vocational Training, Credential, or Certificate.





July 2, 2019 - Milwaukee's Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee approves the construction program. It is later endorsed by the City of Milwaukee Common Council.



Pictured: SDC's George Hinton, Tyrone McKee, Courtney Kelly; Jalin Phelps, JCP Construction; David Polk, MATC and other supporting staff.

Education Services

GED/High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)

SDC offers GED/High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) programs that help students earn a high school diploma, increase career opportunities and earning potential.

The highly-structured and intensive HSED program meets four days a week, for 16 weeks. SDC offers day and evening classes to accommodate a variety of schedules. The curriculum consists of three parts:

- Mathematics
- Communications
- Pathways (Civics, Social Studies, Science, Health, and Employability)

Education Services At A Glance

63 GED & HSED Graduates

Students received post secondary education preparation

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Personal Finances & Tax Services

The last time Brenda Johnson used a tax preparation service, a for-profit tax service charged fees that could have covered a month's rent. Money was already tight. Bills went unpaid. A painful injury left Johnson unable to work. But still, she had to pay for rent, food and insurance. Johnson needed extra income. And fast. So, she turned to a predatory tax service promising quick tax refunds and it came with a hefty price.

"It was really a rip-off," Johnson says. "What they charged me was ridiculous. At the time, I felt like I didn't have many options."

Johnson isn't alone.

Every year, low to mid-income tax filers lose 25% of their hard-earned income tax refunds. Experts say it's because they are victimized by excessive fees. Instead of saving, taxpayers are exploited. That's why SDC is committed to providing the first line of defense.



VITA Participant: BRENDA JOHNSON

"I tell everyone about SDC," Johnson says. "This is a lot to do. I needed the help."

For almost 20 years, SDC has operated Milwaukee County's largest Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program or VITA. For qualifying taxpayers, the tax preparation service is free.

IRS-certified tax preparers help customers file taxes and educate them about Earned Income Tax Credits. The credit is recognized as one of the most effective financial tools helping individuals and families move beyond poverty.

For Brenda Johnson, VITA meant she could keep 100% of her refund. For others like Denise, a mother of eight, VITA's assistance led to a new car. Earlier in the year Denise was involved in a hit-and-run accident that totaled her car. Tax preparers at SDC helped her access a tax refund that allowed her to buy a new car.

"All of my money gets to come back home," Denise says. "Right now I'm with all my children on the bus. I have to make sure they get to their doctor's appointments. I have to get to and from work. This is truly a blessing."

Financial Services At A Glance

5.470 VITA Customers

2.470 VITA Volunteers

368 Financial Education Workshops



2019 VITA Volunteers

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

Lead Outreach Program



Lead Poisoning. It is one of Milwaukee's most pressing health issues. So, when the City of Milwaukee announced an expansive effort targeting communities impacted most, it turned to the Social Development Commission for help.

Trusted in the community for more than 50 years, SDC has the credibility and influence to reach families with some of the highest lead-poisoning levels in the state.

As part of a pilot program launched in the fall, community outreach workers administered blood tests to detect lead poisoning. Additional follow-up included preventive education, healthcare referrals and introduction to SDC's full range of programs and services.

Health & Wellness Services At A Glance

Education & Awareness Presentations Participants

Counseling Family Sessions

NUTRITION SERVICES



Nutrition Services At A Glance

1,699,865 Meals Served

5 9 1 8 Children Served

Organizations Served

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Weatherization Program



When Cherae Rose lost her mother, she lost her best friend. Together, they lived in the family home Cherae and her siblings grew up in. Any stranger can see that this is a special place. Hand-knitted blankets lie across a cozy couch in the sunny living room. And despite the home's small appearance, the house has plenty of room for family gatherings. Childhood photos on the wall capture happy

However, as time passed, the older home would need more repairs. Heating the home was a challenge. Unable to pay mounting bills, Cherae feared that she may lose the home and all the special memories that went with it.

"Over the years, all my expenses went up but my income didn't go up with it," Rose says.

With SDC's Weatherization program, Milwaukee County homeowners and renters can get some relief. Cherae Rose lives on a fixed income. Because she qualified for the Energy Assistance program operated by Milwaukee County, she also qualified for SDC's Weatherization program.

An energy auditor checked the condition of her furnace, hot water heater and the insulation lining the walls. With some adjustments to make the home more energy

efficient, SDC's energy auditor helped Cherae reduce her heating bill by almost half. The savings was enough to make household expenses manageable.

"If you guys didn't take care of this, I wouldn't be able to do it," says Cherae. "My mom worked all her life so we could have a safe home. I didn't want to lose it."

Residential Services At A Glance

Weatherization
Homes Weatherized

Emergency Furnace Program
Furnaces Installed

6 Neighborhood Improvement Project Homes Improved

SENIOR SERVICES





Giving Extra Help, Lots of Love with Foster Grandparent Program

When you walk into the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, 81-year-old Georgia Dennis chirps out a cheerful hello. The pint-size grandmother is a burst of energy as she escorts a group of second and third graders down the hall in a single-file line.

The children are obedient and quiet. As they enter the classroom, they pull out their assignments and Dennis begins to read one-on-one with a student sitting next to her. Dennis easily maintains control of the class, providing additional support to teachers.

Georgia Dennis is everything a grandmother should be. She is affectionate, patient and kind. And in part, it's why SDC's Foster Grandparent program is improving life for Milwaukee County elementary school students.

"Without the Foster Grandparents being here, a lot of children would miss that personal touch that we give them," Dennis says. "We love on them. We mentor them. And the Foster Grandparent program has helped me too," Dennis adds. "I'm getting older now and I don't want to sit in the house and waste away."

In 1960, a White House Conference on Aging looked for ways to help older people stay active. The Foster Grandparent program is a result of that initiative.

"I really find joy being a part of their lives and trying to help them. Some of these students don't get any support at home," Dennis says.

With assistance from the Social Development Commission, Milwaukee County principals agree. They say Foster Grandparent volunteers make a positive difference in the classroom. At a time when many classroom teachers can use the one-on-one support that some students need, Foster Grandparents provide that extra relief.

In 2019, SDC had almost 50 Foster Grandparent volunteers. And that means some lucky students are getting extra academic help, behavioral support and a lot of love.

Senior Services At A Glance

Foster Grandparents

Volunteers

41,065

Volunteer Hours

Senior Companion Program

64 Volunteers

58,351 Volunteer Hours

356

Individuals will stay in their homes because of our senior volunteers

YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Employment

Already, at the age of 15, Darren Hudson knows what it takes to succeed in life. And as an SDC Youth Employment Program graduate, he's developed new skills to help him reach his goals.

Serving youth in communities where teens frequently complain that there is nothing to do, SDC and its partners are putting teens to work. More than that, the Youth Employment Program is an alternative to Milwaukee County's juvenile justice system. Judges refer eligible participants to the program, instead of issuing harsher penalties.

Youth Employment participants train at local McDonald's restaurants operated locally by owner Robert Pyles of the McPyles Corporation. After extensive hands-on training, students are prepared for work at local fast-food restaurants. In 2019, additional transportation services were provided by HeartLove Place.

"Before, I just spent money. But once I got this job, I wanted to have something to show for my work," Hudson says. "I wanted to be able to tell myself that I accomplished what I wanted to accomplish."

As part of the program, students meet with a variety of guest speakers who also provide career advice. Darren Hudson's father notices a difference in his son.



"I like the fact that you can be somewhere peaceful and get a lot done in the right way," Hudson says as he reflects on the program. "I'm looking forward to getting a new job. Somebody gave me this training opportunity for free, I am going to do the best I can with it."



Youth Services At A Glance

2,388 Conflict Resolution & Meditation Workshop Youth Attended Workshop

Recreational Leagues
Youth Involved

116

Community Service Alternative Program Youth Involved

Hygiene Kits Youth Received

















Summit on Poverty Hosted by the Social Development Commission and Marquette University

As a Commission on poverty, SDC has authority to convene meetings, assemble focus groups and host public hearings as it advocates on behalf of people experiencing poverty. However, its biggest event continues to be the annual Summit on Poverty.

In 2019, the popular event was a little different. SDC partnered with Marquette University and put on a two-day summit that brought together academic, social service and health care sectors as well as the general public. National speakers included the Reverend William Barber, one of the country's foremost anti-poverty activists. Focusing on a variety of root issues contributing to poverty, the summit also featured trauma-related workshops and included trauma-expert Dr. Shaili Jain.

Created over five years ago by SDC and community partners, the Summit on Poverty accomplishes an important goal. It has created a safe place for the community to analyze, educate and engage with each other around some of the biggest issues impacting quality of life in the region. This includes examination of policies and systems, isms (racism, sexism, etc.), trauma and cognitive dissonance.

A major outcome from the 2019 summit was historic.

For the first time, three of Milwaukee's most influential organizations – Marquette University, Ascension Wisconsin and the Social Development Commission – have committed to future collaboration on major initiatives aligned with the core mission, values and goals of the institutions.

Look for great news about this in the year to come.

Daddy/Daughter Dance

Who says building strong communities can't be fun?

The Daddy/Daughter Dance, sponsored by SDC, proves you can strengthen families and kick up your heels at the same time!

This is an annual event that celebrates a father's relationship with his daughter. It also debunks a stereotype that suggests men don't want to have an active role in their children's lives. Although statistics show that a little more than 38% of children live in single-parent homes, this event shows who has captured Daddy's heart.

SDC is committed to supporting events that strengthen Milwaukee County families.



Back to School Fair

More than three out of 10 students in Milwaukee Public Schools live in poverty. In the Milwaukee County suburbs, there are similar stories. That's why the Social Development Commission hosted its county-wide Back-to-School Resource Fair in the fall.

Students received backpacks filled with school supplies, including expensive and mandatory calculators. But more than that, families attending the school fair were introduced to a variety of agencies offering critically important services, including health care and information on voter registration.

This was an event that truly embraced the entire community. Local law enforcement officers gave kids high-fives while firefighters allowed kids to climb into their trucks. Participants enjoyed music, food and some even won prizes.

As a major anchor in the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood, this is just one of the many ways SDC is a good neighbor, bringing value and resources to the community.





Youth Received School Supplies

Holiday Open House

Sometimes, the best way to celebrate the end of the year is with a big party. In December, that's exactly what we did as we opened our doors and invited everyone in Milwaukee County!

The SDC Holiday Party created an opportunity for us to reconnect with customers we served during the year. At the same time, we met new friends and reached out to more people in need of supportive services.

The holiday season can be tough. It's the season of giving. And that can be a stressful time for families already experiencing poverty. To help reduce the financial burden, for parents in particular, employees purchased gifts with their own money. Staff gave away dolls, board game baskets, gift cards, special gifts for children and even bikes. And everyone left with a delicious, boxed meal. No guest went home empty-handed.

SDC's mental health services team also held workshops to help with everything from substance abuse to depression. An SDC career coach promoted job training programs leading to family-sustaining jobs. A chef gave guests tips for healthy meals. A Zumba instructor held lessons and showed participants new ways to stay fit.

Yes, it's true. Everybody loves a party as seen here. But in the end, the best gift we gave our guests was the gift of hope.









NSP₁₈

Just outside downtown Milwaukee, towards the far northwest side of the county and near the now-vacant Northridge Shopping Center, pockets of extreme poverty go unaddressed. The region's high-paying manufacturing jobs are gone and public transportation is sparse. So are most of the major retailers that once populated local neighborhoods. Quick-cash lending businesses and liquor stores anchor nearby strip malls where every other store is vacant.

This is one of Milwaukee County's newest food deserts.

With no grocery stores in walking distance, local residents have limited access to healthy foods or community resources to help them meet basic needs. But that is changing.

In 2019, SDC hired local residents living in the area and expanded its outreach efforts in and around this area commonly referred to as the historic Granville District. Collaboration was at the heart of the initiative. Along with Cross Way Church (it has a church in nearby Germantown), SDC is planting roots in the community and is committed to offering wraparound services that will include job training services and the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA).

Understanding that poverty has no boundaries, SDC continues to be relevant in an evolving community. With new affordable housing under development, SDC plans to open an office on site fulfilling its mission of empowering Milwaukee County residents with resources to move beyond poverty.



City of Milwaukee Neighborhood Strategic Planning (NSP) Area #18

SD Foundation

Dear Friends:

Congratulations on a successful year. We are pleased to continue to work with you as, together, we empower people and fight poverty in our community. The need for our work remains great, as Milwaukee still ranks high among cities experiencing poverty.



In 2019, one of our most important collaborative projects was the Summit on Poverty, hosted by the Social Development Commission and Marquette University. Reaching new audiences, the Social Development Foundation was pleased to contribute to this powerful event. It illuminated poverty's root causes and bridged the gap between funders, community, academia and the social services. Very few events have the reach and ability to address poverty in this way.

This is just one example that illustrates how our work with the Social Development Commission gives the Social Development Foundation an opportunity to leverage our philanthropy and help those in our community who are hurting most.

We look forward to exploring new ways to impact and invest with the Social Development Commission in the future.

Al Smith, President SD-Foundation

Allen I Smith

SD Properties

Greetings:

On behalf of SD Properties, I am pleased to report that in 2019 SD Properties was able to see some of its long-term goals come to fruition. We successfully secured funding for major renovation at our North Avenue headquarters. This will allow us to install large picture windows in the front of the building. With



this critical funding in place, we have also laid the groundwork for installation of a new façade on the west side of the building. These developments add significant value to our investment, as the building is owned by SD Properties. Furthermore, we're pleased to report that these improvements will increase visibility and strengthen the SDC brand in the busy North Avenue corridor.

2019 was also the year that SDC went green. Funding acquired for a new roof at the North Avenue headquarters will allow us to be more environmentally friendly and energy-efficient. Already, newly-installed solar roof panels are saving money at SDC's Teutonia location and the SDC warehouse located at 1810 West North Avenue, next to SDC headquarters.

While there was significant work to the exterior of our buildings, great things were happening inside too. The interior of the North Avenue headquarters was re-configured to accommodate a growing customer base. In addition, SD Properties leased administrative space to Common Bond, an outside agency. This created an additional revenue stream for SD Properties.

Other accomplishments during the year include the purchase of new trucks for Food Service drivers. Vehicle upgrades ensured the high quality and safety of meals delivered to Milwaukee County day care centers and other sites.

SD Properties remains a good financial steward and is proud to be part of initiatives that improve quality of life in Milwaukee County.

Ossie Kendrix

SDC Board Member

2019 SDC Funders

U.S. Department of Treasury-IRS

U.S. Department of Labor

Wisconsin Department of Administration

City of Milwaukee Health Department

Wisconsin Department of Justice

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)

City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants Administration

Milwaukee Area Technical College

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Employ Milwaukee

Milwaukee County- DHHS Division of Youth & Family Services

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

University of Wisconsin - Madison

Wisconsin Bureau on Aging

Milwaukee County Department on Aging

City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO)

Wisconsin Dept of Children and Families

Milwaukee County- Families Moving Forward

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development- Apprenticeship Council

