

PATHWAYS to RECOVERY





Josh Jankowski
SDC Weatherization

OUR HISTORY

Who Are We?

We're still standing. Stronger than ever.

Over the years, SDC's services have changed to address critical needs in our community. However, while programs change, our mission remains the same.

Since 1963, we've been helping people move out of poverty. With research, specialized programming and collaboration, SDC has empowered individuals and families with the resources to move beyond poverty. Section 66.0125(4) of Wisconsin's constitution authorizes this work.

SDC has a rich history. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a War on Poverty during his State of the Union Address. Organizations like SDC grew in popularity.

SDC is a Community Action Agency (CAA). It is one of more than one thousand CAAs throughout the country coordinating state and nationwide services to move families and individuals beyond poverty. SDC is also a commission that studies the root causes of poverty. 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.



President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Economic Opportunity Act

Appointed Partner Agencies



FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



*Elmer Moore, Jr., Chairman
SDC Board of Commissioners
Greater Milwaukee Committee*

2020 was a turning point.

For me. For you. For all the people SDC served during the year.

In 2020, we witnessed history. It was more than the pandemic. We witnessed a movement in which a diverse group of people united and then challenged the status quo.

This movement impacted police reform, but it also expanded to address systemic and structural racism in all areas.

With this as a backdrop, SDC returned to its roots and began a new chapter of advocacy that supports Milwaukee County residents experiencing poverty.

The health disparities, high unemployment rates and lack of opportunities became a rallying cry for the Commission. We leveraged our power, implemented our strategic plan and offered more than programs and services.

In 2020, the pandemic shed light on the public crisis of our time - poverty. In this annual report, you will find that our dedicated employees kept working. We were one of a handful of organizations that did not close. And as commissioners, we leveraged our voice and organizational influence to address this issue head on.

Sincerely,

Elmer Moore, Jr., Chairman
SDC Board of Commissioners

Appointed Commissioners



Nikki Purvis
Vice-Chair
Milw. Mayoral Appointee



Donna Brown-Martin
Secretary
Milwaukee County



Terese Caro
Treasurer
Office of the Governor



Ossie Kendrix, Jr.
African American
Chamber of Commerce



John Jacobs
AFL-CIO
Milw. Area Labor Council



Dan Gomez
Hispanic Chamber
of Commerce



Pardeep Kaleka
Interfaith Conference



Dr. Valencia Brown
Milwaukee Area
Technical College



Matthew Boswell
Milwaukee Public
Schools



Glen Carson
United Way of Greater
Milwaukee



Dr. Chia Youyee Vang
University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee



Rosemary Holley
TARP - Technical
Access Resource Person

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Milwaukee County Elected District Representatives



Carlisa Harris
District 1



Barbara Toles
District 2



Craig Sanders
District 3



Torre Johnson
District 4



Rosa Villa-Menes
District 5



Bennet "Ben" Rucka
District 6

IN MEMORIAM

Commissioner George Matthews

Commissioner Matthews was the voice for Milwaukee County residents living in SDC's District 2. The area included the Sherman Park neighborhood where he was a living legend.

When there was an issue causing a stir in the community, it didn't take long for it to reach Commissioner George Matthews. Well-connected, he had his finger on the pulse of the community. It's what made him a great asset for the Social Development Commission.

As a Milwaukee native and United States Army veteran, Commissioner Matthews focused on a variety of issues ranging from veteran affairs to education.

The community lost a huge advocate and friend when Commissioner Matthews passed away during the height of the pandemic from complications related to COVID-19.

We will never forget the time spent, talent shared and the passion Commissioner Matthews brought to the Social Development Commission.

The seeds he planted continue to blossom and positively impact the city he loved.



Commissioner Craig Sanders
District 3

The 1st Annual George Matthews Award

A new award has been created to remember SDC's late Commissioner George Matthews. The first, inaugural **George Matthews Board Member of the Year, Community Service Award** was given to Commissioner Craig Sanders for exceptional commitment to the board and constituent obligations.

FINANCIALS

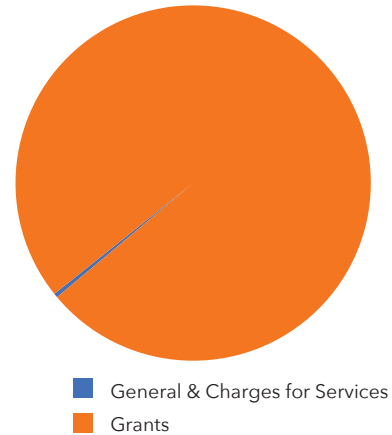
Revenues:

General	\$1,042
Grants	\$32,690,050
Charges For Services	\$121,756
Total	\$32,812,848

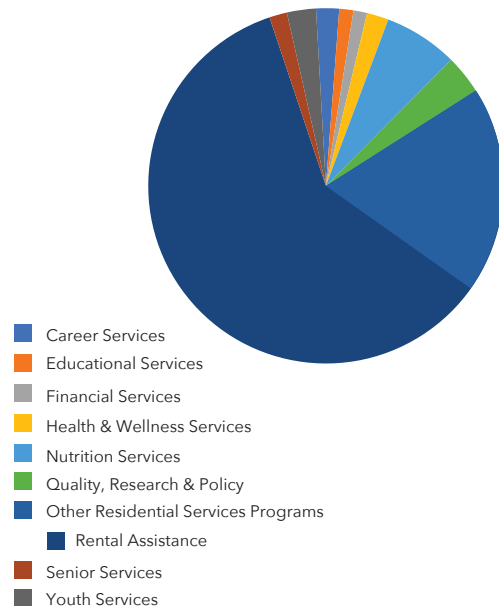
Expenses:

Career Services	\$679,832
Education Services	\$418,606
Financial Services	\$404,231
Health Services	\$645,412
Nutrition Services	\$2,195,671
Quality, Research & Policy	\$1,147,507
Residential Services	\$25,666,277
Rental Assistance	\$18,807,729
Senior Services	\$524,436
Youth Services	\$859,630
Total	\$32,607,084

Revenues



Expenses



Irma Medrano, Accounts Payable Coordinator

Employee Award: Irma Medrano

Finance Director Patrick Kirslenlohr selected Irma Medrano for the **Employee of the Year, Manager's Choice Award** in recognition of her outstanding ability, willingness to share talents, and supporting of translating needs across departments.

FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends:

This was a difficult letter to write. What do you say about a year filled with so much loss and hardship?

After giving this topic much thought, here's what I'd like you to remember.

In the face of a pandemic, social and economic unrest, SDC lived up to its mission and provided resources for Milwaukee County residents experiencing poverty.

Throughout the pandemic, our critical services never stopped. When people needed help, SDC answered the call. In 2020, SDC was a rock that helped stabilize a community in crisis.

As you will read in this Annual Report, SDC launched a quick, multi-faceted pandemic response. Our dedicated staff fed the homeless. We administered programs that helped families avoid eviction and remain in their homes.

SDC's case managers increased mental health services to address increased depression in the community.

As a commission, SDC played an important role. It was an advocate for people experiencing poverty. It helped fuel a movement to dismantle systemic racism and health disparities. It highlighted barriers that keep people in poverty.

More than anything, 2020 reminded us that life is precious.

Like so many, our SDC family endured a painful loss. COVID-19 claimed the life of our own Commissioner George Matthews.

The last year was a difficult one. But with a strong commitment to community, we persevered. Speaking for more than 100 SDC employees, I assure you this: SDC will continue to support our community. Collectively, we continue to build pathways to recovery.

And in 2020, we proved that you can count on us.

Sincerely,



George P. Hinton, CEO
Social Development Commission



George Hinton, SDC CEO

OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE



Thomas Fair, Rental Assistance Customer

handyman helped him make ends meet. But when the pandemic started, business stopped. Fair fell behind on rent.

"I had to make the choice of either paying my rent or paying utilities," Thomas Fair says. "That was upsetting. The money wasn't there to cover all of the expenses. I needed some help."

That's when Thomas Fair contacted SDC. SDC helped Fair receive rental assistance. SDC also helped Fair get FoodShare benefits and financial coaching.

"SDC is a God-send," Thomas Fair says. "SDC gave me relief so I can go on. I have grandsons. I have a son with four kids and I want to be here for them."

SDC distributed more than 16 million dollars in state and city emergency COVID- related rental assistance funding to help people like Thomas Fair stay in their homes.

In March 2020, life as we knew it stopped. The world was immobilized by a pandemic. In the months that followed, things got worse with a wave of massive unemployment, illness and death.

People experiencing poverty were hit the hardest.

People on the edge, struggling to keep their heads above water, slipped into financial crisis. Our neighbors had no way to pay for housing and basic necessities, including food.

74-year-old Thomas Fair was like millions of Americans living on a fixed income. His side-job as a



COVID-19 RESPONSE IMPACT

\$16.7M

Awarded through the rental assistance programs.



SUPPORTERS

Feeding the Homeless

SDC has fed Milwaukee County's children for years.

Whether it was a peanut butter and jelly sandwich to go or a hot lunch at a local daycare center, SDC made sure children had access to at least one well-balanced meal a day.

Then the pandemic hit.

Suddenly, children weren't the only ones in need of a healthy meal. As the local economy collapsed, Milwaukee's homeless population increased significantly. With shelters at capacity, some lacked basic food to eat.

That's when SDC stepped up to the plate.

While other restaurants and food service organizations shut their doors, SDC increased production and expanded its outreach.

From its commercial-grade kitchen, SDC's nutrition services staff cooked and delivered healthy meals to the homeless throughout Milwaukee County.


These essential workers kept the assembly line moving and selflessly served their fellow neighbors in need.



Jermaine Allen
Nutrition Services Monitor Supervisor


SUPPORTER



A photograph of two men standing indoors, holding a large white sign. The man on the left is older, with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit and a striped tie. The man on the right is Black, with a beard and glasses, wearing a patterned blazer over a white shirt. The sign they are holding has a teal border and contains the following text and graphics:

Wisconsin Opportunity Act

Learn more at
www.wiscap.org

A teal-colored silhouette of the state of Wisconsin, positioned at the bottom of the sign.

The background shows a hallway with warm lighting and a wooden door on the left.

Learn more at
www.wiscap.org

*Former State Senator Gary Goyke
and George Hinton, SDC CEO*



ADVOCACY

Increasing Impact with the Community Action Agency Network

The mission of the Social Development Commissions is two-fold. SDC empowers people with the resources to move beyond poverty. It provides programs and services like weatherization and income tax assistance.

However, SDC does more than that. SDC is also one of the state's largest advocates for people experiencing poverty.

This core mission took SDC's CEO George Hinton to the Wisconsin State Legislature.

SDC is a member of the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP). It joined partnering agencies to push for initiatives that called for investment in housing, transportation, employment and business development training.

It was important.

SDC was a powerful voice advocating for under-represented communities.

In 2020, SDC used its platform to advocate for a variety of issues including police reform and accountability, an end to systemic racism, the Black Lives Matter movement, Minimum Wage Increase, and the Dental Therapy Bill that would increase dental resources in communities experiencing poverty.

Since its creation more than 55 years ago, SDC has worked with its network. It has represented people experiencing poverty at all levels of government, the private sector and with the public at-large.



*State Senator LaTonya Johnson
and George Hinton, SDC CEO*

SUPPORTER



*"They gave me that jump-start.
SDC opened up a lot of doors for me.
People are calling me for work opportunities."
~ Jasmine Upshaw, ChefStart Graduate*



CAREER SERVICES

ChefStart Program: A Recipe For Success!

Consider it an introduction to the professional culinary world. ChefStart is a class that helps the home cook get professional accreditation needed to run a commercial kitchen.

After taking the six-week ChefStart class, Jasmine Upshaw was marketable. Because she was so qualified, Jasmine earned a highly competitive culinary apprenticeship offered by one of the largest health care systems in the state.

As a culinary apprentice with Aurora's St. Luke's hospital, Jasmine is now beginning a career in the food services and nutrition industry. Over the next three years, Jasmine will work as a cook and increase her skills in all aspects of her field.

The best part? Jasmine's work is now her passion. That wasn't always the case.

As a young mom, Upshaw put her culinary school dream on hold. The schedule interfered with family time. Other jobs paid more money. As a single mom, Jasmine stayed in jobs she didn't like in order to pay the bills.

One day a friend told Jasmine about ChefStart. The class offered the flexibility and support Jasmine needed to begin work she loved.

"It was a jump start for my career and it changed my life," Jasmine says. "It means I can think about what I want and not just what I have to do for my kids," Jasmine adds.

ChefStart is one of SDC's most popular programs. It's more than just a class. ChefStart empowers people with new knowledge. And ultimately, it puts them on the path to success that's right for them.

And Jasmine's story gets even better. ChefStart helped her launch the career of her dreams. But now that dream job is going to pay her to go to college.

We see this often. The first steps toward success start with SDC.



CAREER SERVICES IMPACT

Absolute Advantage Program

43 individuals enrolled

15 individuals obtained employment at or above \$11.52/hr

ChefStart Program

20 individuals obtained a recognized credential, certificate, or degree

YouthBuild Program

92% of individuals obtained a recognized credential, certificate, or degree

Skills Enhancement Program

100% of individuals obtained a recognized credential, certificate, or degree



SUPPORTERS

Absolute Advantage Program Success Story

When Alex graduated from high school, he was like many new graduates. He didn't know what he wanted to do next.

Alex's brother was an electrician so he thought about that. Another brother was a plumber so he thought about that too. However, Alex couldn't find the clarity he needed to begin his career. Then Alex enrolled in SDC's Absolute Advantage program that offers construction pre-apprenticeship training.

"You don't know what it's like until you get your hands on something," Alex says. "You can read all about ladders but you're not going to know what it's like to be on top of a ladder until you get on top of a ladder."

SDC gives students hands-on training and instruction. That, combined with access to some of Milwaukee's biggest employers, makes the Absolute Advantage program hard to beat.

In the end, Absolute Advantage helped Alex get the breakthrough he needed. After graduating from the Absolute Advantage program, Alex accepted a job that allows him to grow and apply his construction skills in the solar power industry.

"Even though you might start as the little worker doing all the little tasks you work your way up. Next thing you know, you're the guy in charge. It feels good."

~ Alex Last, Absolute Advantage Graduate



EDUCATION SERVICES

Davin Jenkins Success Story

Life is unpredictable. You can do all the right things, and then bam! Something happens to set you back.

That's what happened to Davin when he was hit by a car speeding out of control. The life he knew was shattered. Davin sustained serious injuries. They were so severe, he could no longer work. Eventually, Davin lost his house, his job and his entire savings.

With no high school diploma, rebuilding the life he had would be difficult.

That's when Davin reached out to SDC. SDC helped Davin create a path forward.

Davin went back to school and earned his high school diploma.

By partnering with the Milwaukee Area Technical College, SDC has developed a curriculum that gives students like Davin tools to build satisfying careers.

Davin didn't stop with a GED. After earning a high school diploma, Davin was still hungry for knowledge. That's why he took advantage of other SDC classes. Davin enrolled in SDC's pre-construction apprenticeship and developed even more skills that will make him marketable.

Today, Davin's injuries are healing and he is positioned for a successful career once again.



*Davin Jenkins
HSED & Absolute Advantage Graduate*



EDUCATION SERVICES IMPACT

72 individuals obtained a High School Diploma or Equivalency

SUPPORTER





Nyvonne Stevens and
her daughter Irish
VITA Customer

SUPPORTERS



Greater Milwaukee
& Waukesha County

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program Success Story

Nyvonne Stevens knows what a tax credit can do. It's powerful. In her case, a sizeable tax refund allowed her to save money for a down payment on a house.

Very few initiatives give taxpayers this much money in a short period of time. But there's a catch.

You have to know the credit is available. And unfortunately, too many people don't. Especially people experiencing poverty.

That's why the Social Development Commission administers Milwaukee County's largest volunteer income tax assistance program, VITA. Trained tax preparers help customers understand what's available to them.

For more than two decades, the SDC VITA program has helped Milwaukee County residents create an emergency savings account, buy a car or save for retirement. And the VITA program is free to customers.

That was important to Nyvonne Stevens who paid as much as \$500 to file taxes with for-profit tax preparation companies. But beyond eliminating fees for the tax preparation service, and some are predatory, VITA helped Nyvonne Stevens with her wealth-building goals.

Although she lives in low-income housing now, Stevens is positioned to acquire assets like a home. She hopes that one day she can pass it to the next generation which includes Stevens' three-year-old daughter, Irish.

Last year Stevens got \$3500 from federal earned income and child tax credits. As she looks for the best way to invest it, this money will continue to grow.



FINANCIAL SERVICES IMPACT

4,819 households received VITA

1,618 VITA volunteer hours



George Hinton, SDC CEO
& Mayor Tom Barrett at the
VITA Kick-Off Press Conference



Christopher Davis
Youth Services Program Assistant

SUPPORTERS



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

The 2020 pandemic challenged all of us.

Drug use and suicide rates increased. The elderly were isolated. Even young people battled depression.

The 2020 pandemic impacted more than our physical health. It affected our mental health and, unfortunately, no one wanted to talk about it.

However, SDC did several things to highlight mental health. It targeted those suffering in silence.

SDC's health and wellness team distributed self-care kits to local group homes, detention centers and community centers.

In each self-care kit, there was literature about mindfulness and counseling resources. There were coloring books and even provisions to make a cup of tea to help eliminate stress. It was an important gesture that, as pandemic data suggested, had the potential to save lives.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES IMPACT

65 individuals received counseling



AlexJovann Guzman
Nutrition Services Driver

NUTRITION SERVICES

During the pandemic, SDC played a critical role. When essential employees went to work, we did too. We supported working parents by providing their children with healthy meals.

As long as essential workers were on the job, daycare centers stayed open. SDC prepared and delivered meals to daycare sites throughout Milwaukee County.



NUTRITION SERVICES IMPACT

934,806 meals served

And when new daycare sites opened to accommodate children of healthcare workers, we were there too.

Essential workers took care of our community. We helped take care of the kids and gave working parents peace of mind.

SUPPORTERS



Constance Hutchins, Shipping & Receiving Clerk

Employee Award: Constance Hutchins

Food Services Manager Earl Guyton selected Constance Hutchins for the **Employee of the Year, Manager's Choice Award** for being mission-driven and providing outstanding continuity of service both internally and externally.



*Erica Rocha & Daughters
Lead Safe Homes Customer*

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Lead Safe Home Program Success Story

When Erica Rocha and her husband moved into Milwaukee's Burnham Park neighborhood, they found a great home for their young family. It was a house with lots of windows, a basement where children can play and a nice backyard. To the untrained eye, it was perfect.

However, after a visit to the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, doctors found that Rocha's oldest daughter had elevated lead levels in her blood. The family may never know how it happened.

Lead can be found everywhere. And in this case, it was. Lead was in the soil in front of the house. Lead was in peeling paint. Lead was on windows. The stairs. It was in the basement. Lead was outside where the children liked to play.

With a second daughter beginning to walk, lead had to be removed immediately. But with extra money used to purchase the house, the new homeowners had no savings to fix this issue even though it threatened the family's health.

This is where SDC's Lead Safe program made a difference.

In this case, SDC sent a lead specialist to evaluate the Rocha's home. SDC helped provide water filters to ensure water safety. They also renovated key areas of the home to remove the lead threat.

In total, the project cost more than 24 thousand dollars.

The family was unable to remove the lead without SDC's help.

Today, the Rocha home is everything a home should be. It's beautiful. It's a place to make memories. And most importantly, it's safe.



**RESIDENTIAL SERVICES
IMPACT**

491 homes weatherized



SUPPORTERS



"Guidance"

by DeJohn Sloan, 11th Grade
Rise Above the Influence Art
Competition, 1st Place

YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Advisory Council

Today's youth have something important to say. And by partnering with SDC, young people are leading important discussions that positively impact teens in our community.

SDC's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is created for teens and is run by teens.

YAC gives youth a chance to meet like-minded teens from all over Milwaukee County. While working to better the community, the group advocates for teens in ways that impact health, social justice and education.

With an emphasis on public service, YAC is grooming tomorrow's leaders today.

Event: Rise Above the Influence

In 2020, nothing was normal. Not school. Not work. The pandemic disrupted everything. It left many young people feeling isolated and stressed. Depression and substance abuse was on the rise.

That's why SDC's YAC created an opportunity for local teens to express their feelings with art.

Paintings by teens explored topics like suicide, drugs and even peer pressure. This form of art therapy helped eliminate the stigma associated with depression while providing the community with important resources for access and to improve mental health outcomes.



YOUTH SERVICES IMPACT

1,008 youth participated in before and after school programs

254 hygiene kits distributed

SUPPORTERS



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

CDPG
Milwaukee

DeJohn Sloan, 1st Place
Rise Above the Influence Art Competition





*Foster Grandparent, Allie Durley
Thanksgiving Drive-Up Giveaway*

SENIOR SERVICES

Senior Companions

When Wisconsin's Governor Tony Evers issued a mandatory "Stay At Home" order during the height of the pandemic, regular social activities stopped.

It left older adults isolated and detached from the usual check-ins that ensure seniors stay active, healthy and safe.

However, in the midst of the lockdown, SDC came up with some innovative solutions.

With a little creativity and a lot of commitment, SDC's senior services team developed new "socially distant" ways to keep seniors connected.

SDC organized drive-up giveaways.

We delivered bags of groceries.

We helped seniors access the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it became available.

Our senior programs have always helped older adults maintain an independent lifestyle. In 2020, our services were critical.



**SENIOR SERVICES
IMPACT**

128 seniors cared for

SUPPORTERS



**AmeriCorp
Seniors**



*Diane Robinson, Senior Services
and VITA Manager*

Employee Award: Diane Robinson

CEO George Hinton selected Diane Robinson for the **Manager of the Year, Director's Choice Award** for her exceptional flexibility and willingness to take on varying leadership assignments.

SD FOUNDATION

Greetings:

It's been said before, and we agree.

2020 was a wake-up call for foundations like the Social Development Foundation. The pandemic allowed everyone to see extreme health and economic disparities related to poverty.

One thing was especially clear to us.

Milwaukee County needs the Social Development Commission and the safety net it provides our most vulnerable populations.

We fund initiatives targeting people experiencing poverty. If there was a silver-lining in 2020, it is that we saw firsthand how our financial gifts to SDC help people recover their lives. The support from organizations like SDC was critical as the pandemic destabilized families and businesses in our city.

The partnership between our foundation and the Social Development Commission is critical now more than ever before.

Sincerely,



Al Smith, President
SD Foundation



Al Smith, President
SD Foundation



Social Development
FOUNDATION

SD PROPERTIES

Dear Friends:

Infrastructure is important. Our buildings and diverse physical assets impact how we work, grow and serve our community.

It's why we've invested thousands of dollars and made structural changes to SDC buildings throughout Milwaukee County.

North Avenue: Have you seen our new windows? We are extremely proud of the windows installed at our North Avenue headquarters. This addition creates a welcoming environment, increases community visibility and beautifies the neighborhood.

In 2020, we also added environmentally-friendly solar panels to reduce our carbon footprint and reduce utility costs.

Teutonia Avenue: Home to our popular ChefStart program and Nutrition Services department, SD Properties made improvements at our Teutonia location too. We increased and upgraded our classrooms. We added new solar panels and improved the ventilation system.

76th Street: This is new. In 2020, SDC expanded its presence to Milwaukee County's northwest side. We opened a new location near the old Northridge Mall. With this addition, we positioned SDC to reach more customers, address food insecurity and become a resource to nearby residents and employers impacted by the ongoing labor shortage.

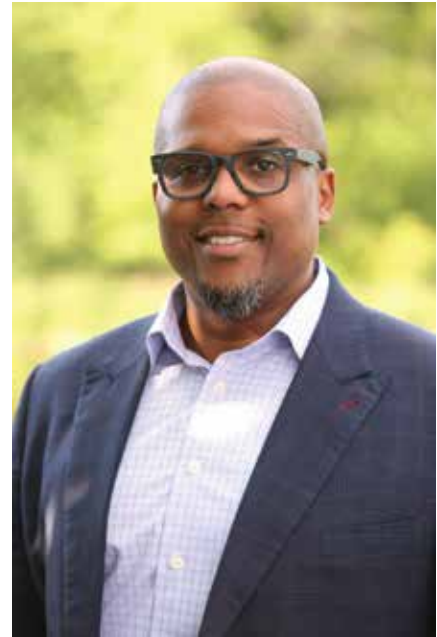
Chase Avenue: Strategically located on Milwaukee's southside, our Chase Avenue location was upgraded and continued to increase SDC's outreach. The space was reconfigured to accommodate an expanded crisis services team in 2020.

Yes, infrastructure is important. It bears repeating. It's also important to know how proud we are to build and contribute to the health of our community with the Social Development Commission.

Sincerely,



Ossie Kendrix, Jr.
SDC Commissioner



Ossie Kendrix, Jr.
SDC Commissioner



COVID-19 Resource Fair & Supply Giveaway

Community Action Promise:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



Social Development Commission
Pathways from poverty to success

SDC Main Office
1730 W. North Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53205

SDC Teutonia
6850 N. Teutonia Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53209

SDC Southside
2968 South Chase Ave.
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