ACAM

ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES

SM

Annual Report 2011

Mission
To provide social purpose ministries with
a professional forum to strengthen their capacity to fulfill their mission.

Vision
A high-performing network of social purpose ministries, funders and
community partners who, through synergistic alliances, will effect change for those in need.

Collective action requires infrastructure.
Through ACAM, a dynamic, high-performing network of member ministries,
funders and community partners increase impact and more effectively respond to the needs
of the community. ACAM members recognize that great organizations can be even greater as they
work together. ACAM is a successful model for capacity building and collaboration.

Allied in Making a Difference

Members

Catholic Charities
East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry
Emergency Aid Coalition
Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services
Humble Area Assistance Ministries
Interfaith Caring Ministries
Katy Christian Ministries
Memorial Assistance Ministries
My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
St. Vincent's House
Wesley Community Center
West Houston Assistance Ministries

Funder Partners

The Andrews Foundation
Bank of America
Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund
Baxter Trust
Enrico and Sandra di Portanova Charitable Foundation
Ray C. Fish Foundation
The Frees Foundation
The George Foundation
The Hamill Foundation
The Henley Foundation
Houston Endowment
Houston Apartment Association
United Way of Greater Houston
Rockwell Fund, Inc.
The Simmons Foundation
Strake Foundation
St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities
Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

History

Established in 2004, ACAM is a 501(c)(3) member services organization committed to supporting excellence in social services and organizational development for Community Assistance Ministries (CAMs) in the Greater Houston area.

Member ministries serve as the social service "safety net," preventing homelessness, meeting basic needs and helping people become self-sufficient. They are faith-based in mission and vision, without requiring an expression of faith as a basis for receiving services. On average, ACAM members have served the community for over 20 years; collectively, they serve almost 274,000 clients yearly (approximately 56% women and 36% children). They are supported by more than 10,000 volunteers and 500 congregations across the Greater Houston area, including Harris, Galveston, Fort Bend and Montgomery Counties.

Purpose

CAMs play a vital role as the social service safety net for the Greater Houston area. Developing strategies to strengthen this sector's ability to meet the rising demands for services is crucial to alleviating poverty.

ACAM proactively responds to the growing and changing needs of our members and the community. ACAM released a Basic Needs Brief in 2010 that was written in collaboration with United Way of Greater Houston on the needs of our member ministries' clients and how members are addressing those needs. A very brief summary is provided below; the full report is available upon request.

ACAM's members are there for people when they have nowhere else to turn for basic needs. ACAM empowers members to serve with an even greater impact as demand for services is great. One measure of the demand for serves is the number of referrals to the ministries for help.

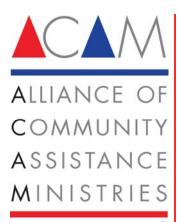During 2011, Texas/United Way 2-1-1 Helpline received 920,700 calls for assistance. This represents an increase of about 60% since 2008. Four of the top five services requested of the 2-1-1 Helpline are core services of ACAM members; collectively they received 85 times the average number of referrals from 2-1-1 – a total of nearly 88,000 referrals. CAMs respond with services to nearly 274,000 people in 2010, an increase of 13% over the previous year. The strength of these organizations is directly related to our community's ability to help those who are most vulnerable.

As today's donors move from a "charity" mindset (giving because they trust the organization) to an "impact" mindset (giving to effect change in a person's life), there is a growing demand for measurable outcomes and organizational effectiveness. In this new, more competitive environment, no nonprofit can take its existence for granted. In order to continue focusing on effectiveness and sustainability, CAMs need a support system and dedicated resources for capacity building. Recent research by United Way found that the top three needs of nonprofit service providers are: better marketing of services, enhanced fundraising capability and more effective boards. ACAM offers resources and training to address these and other needs of faith-based organizations.

Total 2-1-1 Calls for Assistance
Total 2-1-1 Referrals to ACAM Member Ministries

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total 2-1-1 Calls for Assistance	575,000	732,500	802,500	920,700
Total 2-1-1 Referrals to ACAM Member Ministries	46,047	53,289	76,945	87,802

YEAR

ACAM's members face challenges in addition to increased service demands. These include:

- increased stress to budgets and staff
- staff and volunteer management
- leadership development
- need for more robust data management systems
- board development
- long-term planning and strategic development

ACAM helps its members to meet such organizational challenges and become stronger and more sustainable through four core programs:

✔ **Capacity Building**—helps members measure organizational capacity, identify needs and implement plans

✔ **Training & Networking**—provides a venue for members and funders to connect for the purpose of networking, training and collaboration

✔ **Collaborative Initiatives**—garners resources to leverage the collective strength of members in emergency situations that affect the community

✔ **Advocacy and Outreach**—raises the profile of members and awareness of the issues affecting the people they serve

ACAM member ministries provide 38 different types of services to clients.

CORE PROGRAMS

Capacity Building

The heart of ACAM's service strategy is helping its member organizations become stronger and more sustainable because *increased capacity results in the increased ability to serve more people in need.* From the beginning, rigorous assessment of members' organizational capacity and substantive goals for building capacity have been key components of the ACAM Capacity Building Program.

Since the program's inception in 2004 under it's pilot phase, ZCAM, ACAM's Capacity Building Grants Program alone has awarded over $2 million to members. In 2011, ACAM awarded $161,422 for capacity building projects and professional development activities.

To guide this program, member ministries adopted the Nine Elements of Organizational Capacity to help quantify and develop capacity. Using this framework, the capacity building grant program provides technical assistance and support to help improve infrastructure and services in strategic planning, fundraising, grant proposal writing, financial management, board development, staffing and more.

ACAM initially obtained permission from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to use CapMap®, a capacity building tool developed by LISC for community development organizations, to measure four of the Nine Elements.

As a result of these projects, member CAMs have demonstrably built their infrastructure across the four dimensions of organizational capacity measured by CapMap®: board governance, financial management, fund development and human resources/staff development.

Further, CAMs continue to make progress in the growth and sustainable planning development phases, focusing on strengthening board members' oversight role, monitoring their organizations' financial performance, expanding fund development strategies and improving staff performance.

Over the course of three years from 2007-2010, **ACAM members increased their average capacity as measured by the four modules of the CapMap® by 35%.** The average percentage increase in capacity from the initial CapMaps® in October 2007 to 2010 are:

- Board Governance 52%,
- Financial Management 22%
- Fund Development 28%
- Human Resources 39%

Nine Elements of Organizational Capacity

Board Leadership
Human Resources
    (Paid Staff and Volunteer)
Financial Management
Fund Development
Program Strategies and Outcomes
Community Relationships
Technology
Facilities
Executive Director Leadership

Key features of NEAT:
⇒ Developed specifically for CAMs,
⇒ Evidence-based assessments including document reviews and site visits,
⇒ Use of dialogue to identify:
   ∗ Promising new strategies,
   ∗ Capacity gaps and emerging issues not addressed by NEAT
   ∗ Future resource needs.
⇒ Tools that can profile the organizational capacity of an individual CAM as well as the overall ACAM membership

The average scores continue to increase over time but at a slower rate (13% in 2008, 13% in 2009 and 9% in 2010) because growth becomes more difficult at more advanced stages of capacity. ACAM members recognized the benefits of using a system like CapMap® but also realized that they needed a tool designed specifically for community assistance ministries resulting in the Nine Elements. In 2010, a committee began work to develop an assessment tool based on the Nine Elements of Organizational Capacity previously adopted by ACAM members. By fall of 2011, ACAM Executive Directors voted to adopt and implement the Nine Elements Assessment Tool (NEAT © 2011). NEAT is based on a unique model developed by the committee that includes measuring instruments, a reporting system and procedural guidelines for the assessment process.

The completion rate provides a way of quantifying organizational capacity. The overall completion rate provides comprehensive view of organizational capacity based on all Nine Elements.

Each element has specific indicators that assess and identify goals for improving organizational capacity in the following organizational development phases:

- Infrastructure
- Growth
- Sustainability

The table presents NEAT results for five CAMs; the remaining assessments are scheduled for 2012.

Elements	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Average
Board Leadership	79.3%	96.6%	100.0%	88.3%
Human Resources	47.9%	75.0%	93.8%	76.1%
Financial Management	65.8%	80.0%	97.5%	77.8%
Fund Development	81.3%	88.2%	100.0%	87.9%
Program Strategies & Outcomes	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	93.3%
Community Relationships	73.3%	86.7%	100.0%	82.2%
Technology	48.1%	85.2%	100.0%	80.6%
Facilities	41.2%	58.8%	94.1%	62.7%
OVERALL	66.3%	80.1%	97.2%	80.1%

Networking & Training

Peer learning and networking are vital to successful organizational development. ***ACAM empowers its members to learn from each other and grow together to coordinate services, to better plan for services and to allow organizations to focus on their core competencies.*** To strengthen this network, ACAM convenes five groups, each with a different focus, for the purpose of networking, training and collaboration:

- Executive Directors
- Volunteer Management
- Program Development
- Resource Development
- Thrift Store Institute

ACAM Thrift Store Institute meeting.

ACAM also hosts events for funders and ministries to develop connections outside of the framework of the ask/give relationship. In 2011, thirty two training sessions were held with 193 unduplicated trainees with increased participation from ministries and the public (non-members pay a fee to attend). From 2009 to 2011, attendance by nonmembers increased by 74%

Approximately 99% rated the overall quality of the trainings as "excellent" or "good." Less than 1% rated any training as "fair" and zero attendees rated a training "poor." ACAM clearly understands its members' needs as 100% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the trainings are relevant to their work. Attendance rates are reflected in the chart below.
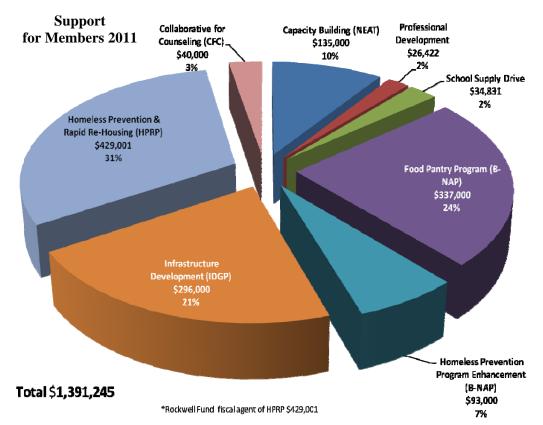
Attendance at Training and Networking events in 2011.	Executive Directors	Program Development		Resource Development	Thrift Store Institute	Volunteer Management	Funder / Member Networking
	Members Only	Members Only	Open	Open	Members Only	Members Only	Open
# of CAMs in Group	12	12	12	12	6	12	12
# of Meetings	11	4	2	3	4	6	2
Unduplicated # of Attendees	12	13	43	52	13	14	92
Average Attendance	10	7	24	22	8	6	60

Collaborative Initiatives

Through the Collaborative Initiatives program, ACAM garners resources to help members leverage their collective strength to address emergency situations that affect the community. In 2011, ACAM awarded 57 grants (an average of five per member) to:

- help members navigate the city-wide food crisis
- boost members' back-to-school efforts
- provide free counseling services at four member ministries
- support homeless prevention during the economic downturn

In 2011,
ACAM support
to member CAMs
totaled nearly $1.4 million

Support for Members 2011

Collaborative for Counseling (CFC)
$40,000
3%

Capacity Building (NEAT)
$135,000
10%

Professional Development
$26,422
2%

School Supply Drive
$34,831
2%

Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP)
$429,001
31%

Food Pantry Program (B-NAP)
$337,000
24%

Infrastructure Development (IDGP)
$296,000
21%

Homeless Prevention Program Enhancement (B-NAP)
$93,000
7%

Total $1,391,245

*Rockwell Fund fiscal agent of HPRP $429,001

Collaborative for Counseling Program (CFC)

Families in need often struggle with multiple problems in addition to the inability to provide the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Ministry clients are candid about the anxiety, depression and stress disorders that result from, or are exacerbated by, the constant battle to provide for themselves and their children. ACAM was awarded $40,000 to continue the Collaborative for Counseling for a third year through Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund.

ACAM contracts with quality providers and pays for the mental health services with a cash match from the member ministries of $3,500 per year in addition to their in-kind contributions of space and staff.

Four ACAM members provided 652 clients with 2,500 hours of free counseling

Program outcomes include:
- 84% of clients increased their ability to handle the presenting problem/mental health issue
- 82% of clients report functioning better
- 95% of clients report an improvement in their overall mental health.

Basic Needs Assistance Project (B-NAP)

B-NAP is an emergency relief project funded by the Houston Endowment, Inc. to address the recent food shortage at the member ministries' food pantries and support for homeless prevention program enhancements.

ACAM collected eleven proposals from member ministries, prepared and submitted a proposal, developed grant agreements and reporting formats and promptly distributed $430,000 in B-NAP funding in January 2011. $337,000 was distributed to members to support food pantries experiencing significant shortages and the remaining $93,000 was distributed to members to support enhancements of the Homeless Prevention Program.

ACAM members represent one of Greater Houston's largest distributors of food to families experiencing emergency need. ACAM members annually serve almost 210,000 men, women and children with over $2 million in emergency food provisions. Ministries were able to leverage B-NAP funds to buy approximately two dollars worth of food for every dollar spent. In other words, the members were able to obtain and distribute about $674,000 worth of food throughout Greater Houston.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP)

HPRP is a federal program created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The purpose of HPRP is to provide homelessness prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are homeless.

CAMs have been, and will continue to be, primary providers of homeless prevention services in the Greater Houston area. Over two years, the ACAM HPRP Collaborative (Katy Christian Ministries, Humble Area Assistance Ministries and Interfaith Caring Ministries) took in and reinvested $1,067,479.58 into the community. ACAM members (including Memorial Assistance Ministries, Catholic Charities, Wesley Community Center and the ACAM Collaborative) were awarded approximately 40% of the HPRP funds available for the Southeast Texas region.

ACAM Collaborative Initiatives have prevented homelessness for 1,097 men, women and children served by three of our members

At a 90-day follow up:
- 91% of families remain in their homes (85.4% of families located at the same address)
- 96% of participants reported a reduction in risk factors for homelessness
- 92% completed one or more of the goals listed in their Individualized Housing Plan
- 94% of households were stably housed at program exit
- Households saw an average increase in income of 33% during the course of their 85 days and 5 case management sessions.

The ACAM HPRP Collaborative demonstrates the success of homeless prevention programs in comparison to emergency shelters and transitional housing, as illustrated below:

Assistance Type	Monthly Costs	Per Diem	85 Days – Avg. Stay in ACAM Collaborative
Emergency Shelter*	$ 1,423.80	$ 47.46	$ 4,033.90
Transitional Housing*	$ 3,418.80	$ 113.96	$ 9,686.58
ACAM Collaborative – Financial Assistance Only[1]	$ 705.30	$ 23.51	$ 1,998.35
ACAM Collaborative – Financial and Supportive Services	$ 1,058.13	$ 35.27	$ 2,998.04

*Source: Bello, Marisol. 2010. "Apartment rents cheaper than stays in homeless shelters." USA Today. March 25, 2010

[1]This includes the costs of rental assistance, utility payments, rental security deposits, utility security deposits, motel/hotel stays, and moving costs for program participants as of December 31, 2011.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that the cost of homelessness ranges widely (HUD No. 10-055). Homeless Prevention is significantly more cost effective than homeless intervention services, such as shelters and transitional housing, as indicated above. The data collected through the ACAM Collaborative indicates that the average cost of 85 days of services for a family of three is $2,998.04, approximately 26% less than the cost of an emergency shelters for a similar duration. The daily cost to prevent homelessness was $11.45 per person. In addition, many families were able to avoid the physical duress and emotional strains associated with becoming homeless.

Advocacy and Outreach

Through Advocacy and Outreach, ACAM aims to increase membership, raise the profile of ministries as service hubs in their communities and raise awareness around the issues affecting the people served by the ministries. Ongoing activities include participation in One Voice, the Texas Association of Nonprofit Organizations (TANO), Coalition of Behavior Health Services, Alliance for Nonprofit Management and the Coalition for the Homeless (CFTH).

In 2011, ACAM facilitated member participation in the CFTH Homeless Enumeration and the Faith Breakfast. ACAM represented its members in:

- workgroups for the Homeless Prevention Best Practice Evaluation
- a session on the HEARTH Act (federal funding to address homelessness)
- a session on a City Planning Grant
- a Meta-Leadership Summit on Disaster Planning
- meetings with the Houston Food Bank to plan for future needs.

ACAM negotiated with the CFTH to formally represent its members in the Continuum of Care process which determines funding allocations. ACAM was invited by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) to present on ACAM's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) Collaborative outcomes at the October 2011 Homeless Conference in Austin, Texas. ACAM continues to advocate for its model and its members with agencies concerned with state-wide capacity building efforts.

Planning For the Future

ACAM has helped Greater Houston's basic needs safety net grow stronger and more sustainable. As ACAM's membership and programs have grown, its constituents are asking it to continue to be a leader in the fields of homeless prevention, disaster planning/emergency relief and organizational development. The current strategic plan spans three years from June 2010 through June 2013.

Six significant goals are included in the plan:
1) Demonstrate measurable increases in ministry capacity
2) Increase concept development and collaborative initiatives
3) Work toward becoming a national model
4) Develop leadership in the areas of capacity building, emergency relief, basic needs/homeless prevention
5) Raise the profile of ACAM members
6) Raise awareness around the issue affecting the clients.

The strategic planning design incorporated four highly participatory meetings of the member executive directors, during which four core programs of ACAM were evaluated.

Members not only participate in ACAM's programs but also in the development of their collaborative

The results of these meetings were taken into account by the Strategic Planning Committee in determining the agency's needs and future direction.

The plan focused on the strategic development of ACAM within its four core programs, as well the development of ACAM's capacity to serve a growing membership.

As a part of the plan implementation, the member executive directors formed seven working committees:
1) Nine Elements Assessment Tool (NEAT)
2) Recruitment, Retention and Compliance (RRC)
3) Transition
4) Peer Mentoring
5) National Model
6) Data Management
7) Peer-to-Peer Program

Though participation and attendance were completely voluntary, 2011 was a year of high member engagement. ACAM member executives spent over 37 hours during 16 sessions designed to move the collaborative forward and forge the future of ACAM.

Summary of Executive Director Workgroups

Executive Director Workgroup Meetings	Number of Sessions	Total Session Hours
Nine Elements Assessment Tool (NEAT) Development	11	32
Peer Mentoring (Peer-to-Peer Program)	1	2
Recruitment, Retention and Compliance (RCC)	3	5.5
Transition	8	16
TOTAL 2011	16	37.5
Total Prior Years	7	18
GRAND TOTAL	23	55.5

Suzy Domingo, Executive Director
Interfaith Caring Ministries

A year ago, I was appointed Executive Director of Interfaith Caring Ministries (ICM). As an employee of the agency for over a decade, I have watched as my agency became a member of ZCAM (the pilot phase of ACAM), and then watched as ZCAM matured into ACAM, now an independent 501(c)(3). Now, as Executive Director, I no longer watch - I am an active participant in the ACAM collective.

Over the last year, I have realized so much about what challenges an Executive Director. I learned that I can't make everyone happy, that I can't get all of my work done in 40 hours a week and that meeting agency budget goals can be difficult in an unstable economy. But increasingly what I've come to realize are all the things that I CAN do - much of it due to the incredible support I have received through ACAM.

I can admit I don't know how to deal with a personnel issue, but more importantly I can find others that have dealt with the same issue and get some great suggestions. Access to the trainings provided by ACAM has helped both me and my staff learn ways to keep lines of communication open.

I can share that our sales are down at the resale shop, but more importantly I can call on my peers to find creative ways to significantly increase the revenue that is vital to sustaining our programming. The ACAM Thrift Store Institute has helped my staff immeasurably with training on pricing, merchandizing, marketing and everything in between.

ICM has received almost $400,000 from ACAM for capacity building projects, professional development and needed services, but just as important as the grant funds is the technical assistance and guidance that allows my agency to leverage the funds and increase their impact in the community. In addition, my agency was awarded funding through the collaborative initiatives program that we were only able to access as part of the collective.

We can't anticipate the next food shortage, hurricane or recession. That's not our job. What we can do is work together through ACAM to create a strong infrastructure whose job it is to respond to crises as they happen.

One of the most valuable and rewarding experiences has been participating in the Executive Director Networking Group. Every month I look forward to sitting around that table of 12 and learning to be a better leader. Maybe it comes from being one of 12 children, maybe it comes from hours and hours of committee meetings or the knowledge that many of them are just a phone call away. Whatever it is, I am a stronger, more confident leader and Interfaith Caring Ministries is a stronger agency because of our affiliation with ACAM.
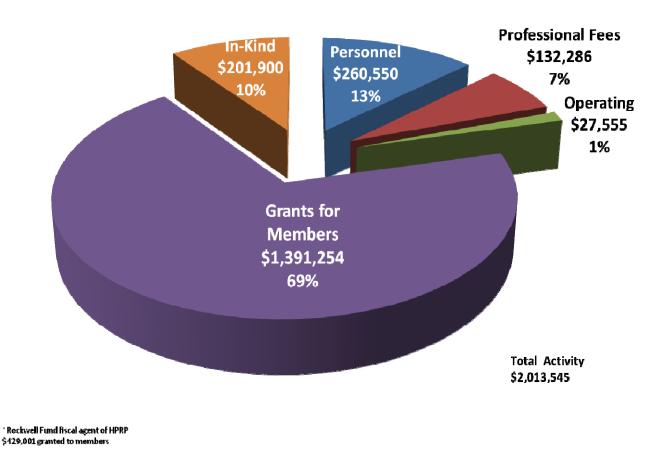
Why ACAM Matters

As a member services organization representing a unique constituency, ACAM's programs for its members are customized and collaborative, and its role in the community is one of both an advocate and a catalyst. ACAM members are partners in their own capacity building. They develop plans within the structure of ACAM's organizational assessment tools in an individualized way that fits their strategic goals.

ACAM helps its members develop collaborations and service models to strengthen the community. Members have ownership over their networking groups and trainings to ensure that offerings meet their needs.

ACAM helps to create awareness of the benefits of the CAMs and their clients' needs in order to forge mutually-beneficial relationships that produce positive results.

The Houston community, specifically the nonprofit and philanthropic sector, desires a model for collaboration for obvious reasons: to coordinate services, to better plan for services and to allow organizations to focus on their core competencies. The ministries have unique features that position them to work together effectively. With ACAM's help, their ability to cooperate and reach out to other partners creates an effective network of nonprofits and a lifeline for families in need in our community.

Financials

ACAM Expenses 2011*

In-Kind $201,900 10%

Personnel $260,550 13%

Professional Fees $132,286 7%

Operating $27,555 1%

Grants for Members $1,391,254 69%

Total Activity $2,013,545

* Rockwell Fund fiscal agent of HPRP
$429,001 granted to members

*unaudited financial information

ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES

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