



ALLIANCE OF  
COMMUNITY  
ASSISTANCE  
MINISTRIES

SM

## 2012 Annual Report

### 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.

## *Allied in Making a Difference*

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.



## **Members**

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston/Houston

East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry

Emergency Aid Coalition (EAC)

Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services  
(ECHOS)

Humble Area Assistance Ministries (HAAM)

Interfaith Caring Ministries (ICM)

Katy Christian Ministries (KCM)

Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM)

My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center

St. Vincent's House

Wesley Community Center

West Houston Assistance Ministries (WHAM)



## **Funder Partners**

Amegy Bank of Texas

The Andrews Foundation

Bank of America

Community Health Choice

Enrico and Sandra di Portanova Charitable Foundation

The Frees Foundation

The George Foundation

The Hamill Foundation

The Henley Foundation

Houston Endowment

Houston Apartment Association

JPMorgan Chase

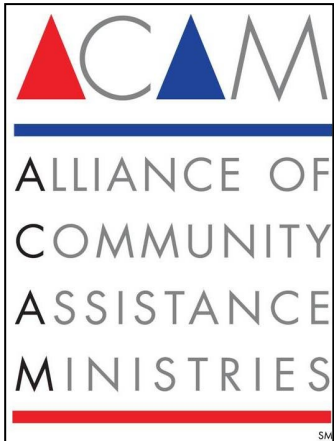
Rockwell Fund, Inc.

The Simmons Foundation

St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities

United Way of Greater Houston





### Board of Directors

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Inc.

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The Simmons Foundation

**Michael Shirl**  
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The Women's Home

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**Jessica Byerly**  
Director of Operations and  
Evaluations

**Kathryn Holland**  
Director of Fund and  
Program Development

## History

Established in 2004, ACAM is a public charity as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. ACAM functions as a management support organization (MSO) for member community assistance ministries (CAMs), which operate in the Greater Houston area. Current and prospective members of ACAM are basic needs providers that are faith-based in mission, vision and origin, without requiring a particular expression of faith or participation in religious activity as a basis for receiving services.

## Purpose

Member ministries serve as the social service "safety net," preventing homelessness, meeting basic needs and helping people become self-sufficient. On average, ACAM members have served the community for over 20 years; collectively, they serve more than 272,000 clients yearly (approximately 39% women and 33% children). They are supported by almost 12,000 volunteers and more than 350 congregations in the Greater Houston area, including Harris, Galveston, Fort Bend, Brazoria and Montgomery Counties.



Having a unique constituency, ACAM's programs for its members are customized and collaborative. ACAM serves as 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 that fit their strategic goals. ACAM helps its members develop collaborations and service models to strengthen the community and have ownership over their training/networking groups 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.



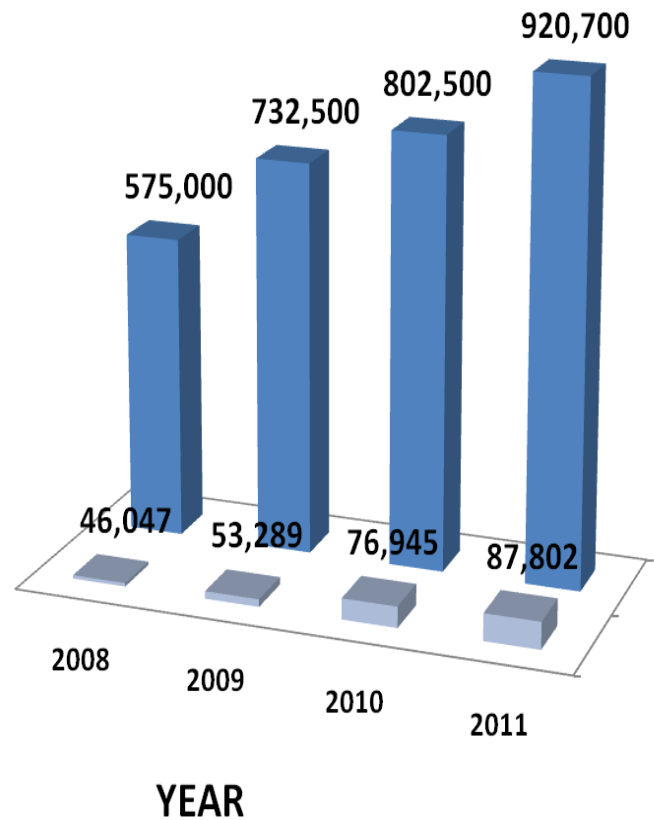


## ACAM's Members Provide Services in Demand

One measure of the demand for services is the number of referrals to ministries for assistance. 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, ACAM Members received 85 times the average number of referrals from 2-1-1 for a total of nearly 88,000 referrals. Our member ministries respond with services to nearly 273,000 people. 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 affect 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 increasing effectiveness and sustainability, ministries benefit from a support system and dedicated resources for capacity building. United Way research found that the top three needs of nonprofits 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



In addition to increased service demands, ACAM's members face other challenges, including:

- 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** plans and coordinates members and funders connecting for purposes of networking, training and collaboration.
- ✓ **Collaborative Initiatives** garner 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 40 different types of services to clients.**

## Capacity Building

The heart of ACAM’s service strategy is helping its member organizations become stronger and more sustainable because *increased capacity results in 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 as a pilot project, ACAM’s Capacity Building Grant Program has awarded over \$2.4 million to members. In 2012, ACAM awarded \$343,615 for capacity building projects and professional development activities. To guide this program, member ministries adopted the Nine Elements of Organizational Capacity to help measure and further 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, personnel and more.

## Measuring Capacity - Then & Now

ACAM initially obtained permission from the Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) to use CapMap®, a capacity building tool developed for community development organizations to measure four of the Nine Elements. As a result of the CapMap® project, member CAMs began systematically quantifying and building their respective infrastructures.

**From 2007-2010, ACAM members increased their average capacity in the four modules of CapMap® by 35%.** The average percentage increase in capacity between the initial CapMap® assessments in October 2007 and 2010 are:

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

### The Nine Elements of Organizational Capacity

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

### Key Features of NEAT:

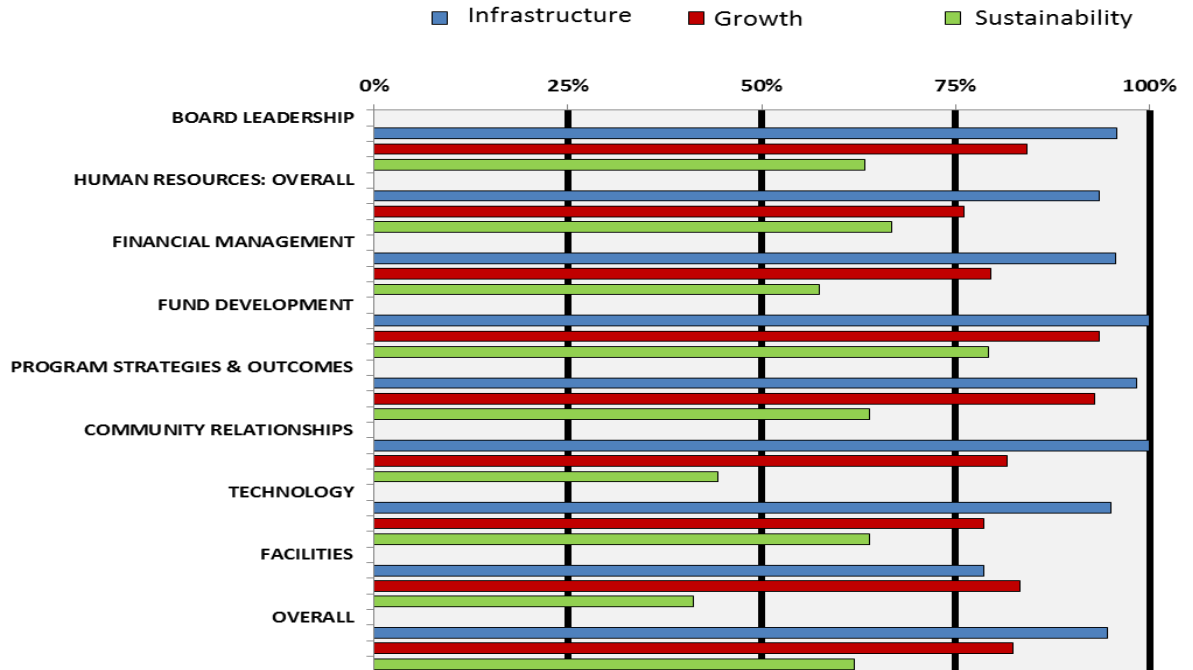
- ⇒ Developed specifically for CAMs
- ⇒ Evidence-based assessments Including document reviews and site visits
- ⇒ Use of dialogue to identify:
  - \* Promising new strategies
  - \* Capacity gaps and emerging issues not addressed by NEAT
  - \* Future resource needs
- ⇒ Tools that can profile the organizational 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 development.

**In 2011, ACAM members recognized that they needed a tool designed specifically for community assistance ministries, and developed and implemented the Nine Elements Assessment Tool (NEAT© 2011).** NEAT is based on a unique model developed by ACAM and a committee of its members. It includes measuring instruments, a reporting system and procedural guidelines for the assessment process. The overall completion rate provides a comprehensive view of organizational capacity based on all Nine Elements.

Each of the Nine Elements has specific indicators that assess and identify goals for improved organizational capacity in the following organizational development phases (infrastructure, growth and sustainability):

### Average Nine Elements Assessment Results by Phase of Development (2011-2012)



The graph presents NEAT results for all twelve CAMs assessed in 2011 and 2012. In 2013 and 2014, ACAM will be able to assess development as each member ministry has their second Nine Elements Assessment.

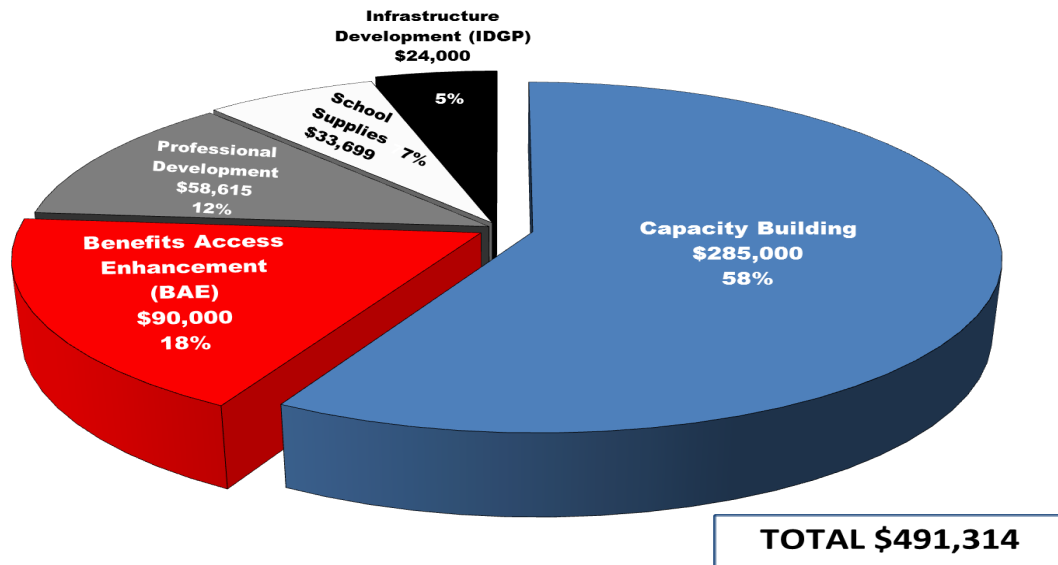
### ACAM Capacity Building and Collaborative Initiatives Fund Member Priorities

Total grants to ministries in 2012 are valued at \$491,314.23. The majority of grant expenditures by members in 2012 fell within three of NEAT’s Elements of Capacity:

- Program Strategies and Outcomes (37%)
- Fund Development (14%)
- Technology (12%)

Volunteerism, Community Relationship and Facilities were also high member priorities funded through ACAM’s various grant programs and opportunities.

### 2012 ACAM Grants to Ministries



## 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, better plan for services and 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

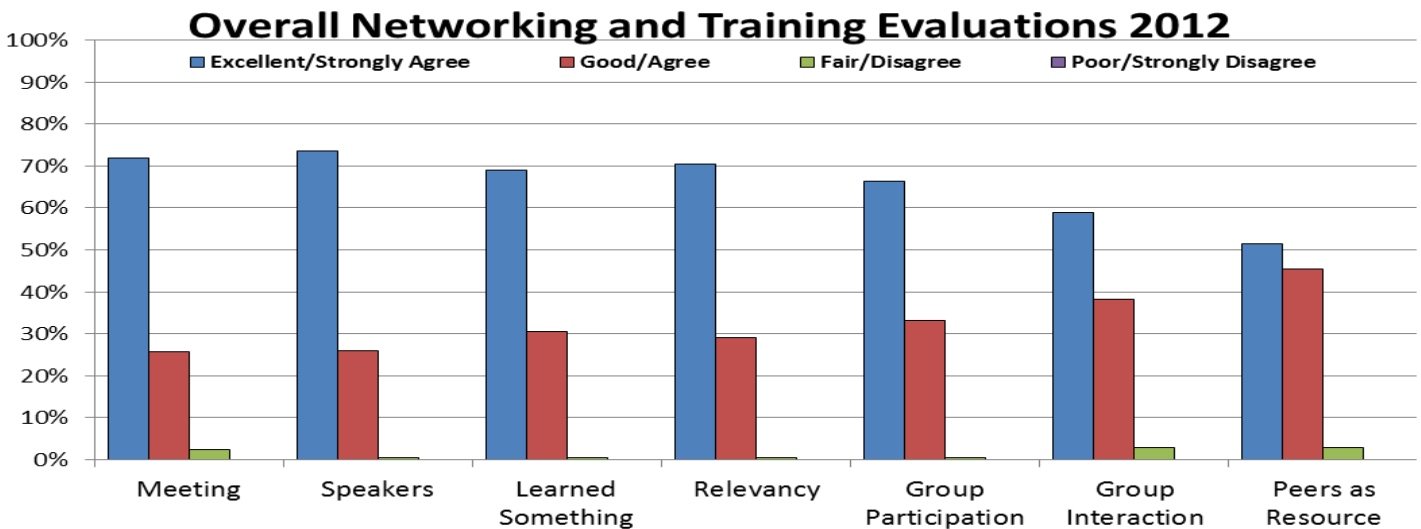
***In 2012,  
ACAM hosted 33 training &  
networking sessions that  
served 185 unduplicated  
attendees.***



ACAM Thrift Store Institute

ACAM also hosts events for funders and ministries to develop connections outside of the framework of the ask/give relationship. In 2012, thirty-three training and networking sessions were held with 185 unduplicated attendees with increased participation from ministries and the public (non-members pay a fee to attend).

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. The graph below presents the results for each category the attendees rated.



## 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 2012, ACAM awarded 42 grants (an average of 3.5 per member) to:

- Provide free counseling services at four member ministries
- Enhance their ability to provide public benefits access services
- Homeless prevention and intervention
- Develop their organizational infrastructure and program delivery
- Boost members’ back-to-school efforts

***In 2012,  
ACAM support  
to member ministries  
totaled \$491,314***



### ***Collaborative for Counseling Program (CFC)***

In addition to the inability to provide the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, families in need often struggle with 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***

ACAM's Counseling Collaborative 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.

### ***Benefits Access Enhancement Project (BAE)***

The goal of the ACAM Benefits Access Enhancement (BAE) Project funded by Community Health Choice (CHC), is to enhance public benefits access through the adoption and usage of an automated benefits application system at neighborhood based community assistance ministries.

The five (5) ACAM members collaborating on this project provide a wide array of basic needs, self-sufficiency aids and other human services. They ARE the places in their neighborhoods where people already come for a variety of assistance. Their locations, reputations, effective services, professional staff and experience with providing benefit application assistance make them the ideal choice for implementing or expanding electronic application assistance to positively impact the health care outcomes, as well as increase potential for families' self-sufficiency. Navigators and other ministry staff trained on the system will provide hands-on assistance to clients seeking public benefits and provide resources for health care once benefits are received. Benefits for

which clients can apply include, but are not limited to: Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). During the project, ACAM will track the total number of applications completed as well as the number and percentage approved. BAE program objectives include:

- Assist clients to complete 2,750 applications for public benefits
- Train staff beyond those funded by this grant to submit electronic benefit applications and help them to transition to the electronic model
- Improve and/or broaden relationships between community assistance ministries, access providers and health care providers.

### ***Homeless Prevention and Intervention***

ACAM remains dedicated to homeless prevention. After the success of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program funded through the Recovery Act from 2009-2011, some of ACAM members formed the Homeless Prevention and Intervention Workgroup dedicated to collaboratively developing effective and efficient program models for homeless prevention and intervention. The group will work together to develop resources to support these services at the member ministries.

The data collected through the ACAM Collaborative indicates that the average cost of 85 days of services for a family of three is \$3,056.36, approximately 44% less than the cost of an emergency shelters for a similar duration. The daily cost to prevent homelessness was \$11.44 per person. In addition, many families were able to avoid the physical duress and emotional strains associated with becoming homeless. The group is preparing to apply for a TDHCA Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) in 2013.

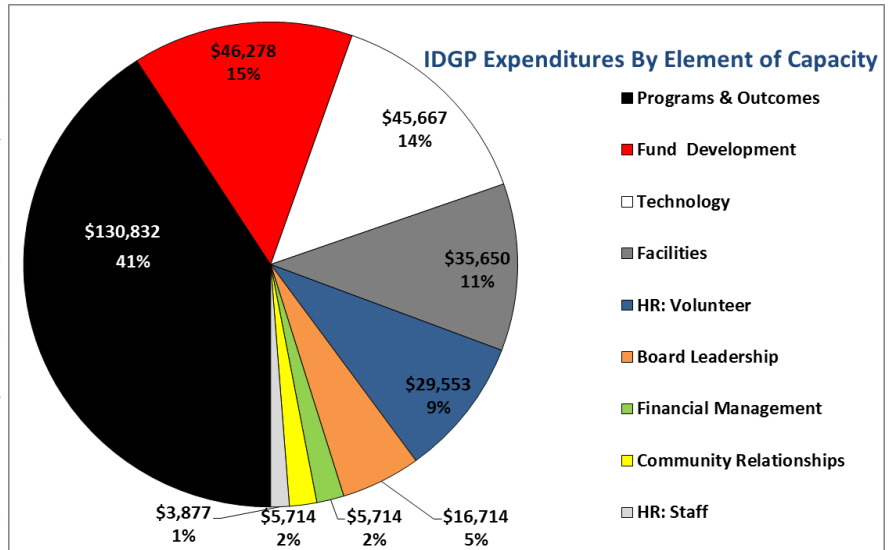
***The daily cost to prevent homelessness and regain housing stability is about \$11.50 a day per family member***





### ***Infrastructure Development Program***

The Infrastructure Development Grant Program (IDGP), funded by Rockwell Fund, Inc., was designed to maximize funds allocated to CAMs while employing a positive funding approach that is neither competitive nor subjective. ACAM’s involvement increased economies of scale, saving staff time of both the funder and member ministries, standardizing reporting among ministries for easier review and developing a common evaluation process, making it easier to measure outcomes year over year. ACAM awarded twelve member ministries \$320,000 to develop infrastructure and employ enhanced services models. Overall, the funded projects were challenging, creative and measurable.



### ***Back to School Program***



ACAM has partnered with the Houston Apartment Association (HAA) for the last three years to assist member ministries with their Back to School Programs. An average of more than 13,500 clients have been assisted annually with a total of nearly \$86,000 in grants for school supplies and uniforms. In addition, HAA collected and distributed donated supplies.



## **Advocacy and Outreach**

Through Advocacy and Outreach, ACAM aims to increase membership, raise members’ profiles as community service hubs and raise awareness of the issues affecting the ministries’ clients. Ongoing activities include participation in One Voice, the Texas Association of Nonprofit Organizations (TANO), Coalition of Behavior Health Services, the Alliance for Nonprofit Management and the Coalition for the Homeless (CFTH). ACAM also participates in service specific advocacy and outreach. ACAM participates in the Hunger-Free Texans Regional Coalition and the Coalition’s Steering Committee, Houston Community Preparedness Collaborative (HCPC) as well as the region’s Continuum of Care.

### ***Reaching Out to Nonmember Ministries - Programs for the Advancement of Capacity Elements (PACE)***

The PACE Program, funded in 2012 by Houston Endowment Inc., is designed to help nonmember community assistance ministries develop organizational infrastructure. ACAM and its members will reach out beyond the membership to provide selected nonprofits with support and resources that have proven successful over the last eight years of ACAM’s work. Each of up to 10 participants will receive:

- ◇ Up to \$10,000 in grant funding tied to the achievement of self-selected capacity building goals
- ◇ An organizational review
- ◇ Technical assistance
- ◇ Group training opportunities

The goal is to empower nonmember ministries to engage in capacity building and planning through a Nine Elements of Capacity Assessment focusing specifically on the Infrastructure and the Growth phases of organizational development.

## Planning For the Future

ACAM helps strengthen and sustain the Greater Houston region's basic needs safety net. As ACAM's membership and programs have grown, constituents are asking us to continue to be a leader in the fields of homeless prevention, disaster planning, emergency relief and organizational development.

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

Members not only participate in ACAM's programs, but also in the development of the collaborative. The current strategic plan, covering June 2010 through June 2013, was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee with input from four highly participatory meetings of the member executive directors, during which four core competencies of ACAM were evaluated.

Six significant goals are included in the strategic plan:

- 1) Demonstrate measurable increases in ministry capacity
- 2) Increase concept development and the impact of collaborative initiatives
- 3) Work toward becoming a national model
- 4) Develop leadership in the areas of capacity building, emergency relief, basic needs, and homeless prevention
- 5) Raise the profile of ACAM members
- 6) Raise awareness of socio-economic issues affecting members' clients.

The 2010-2013 strategic plan outlined key areas where ACAM would take significant steps to increase capacity as an intermediary. In the last year ACAM:

- ◇ Obtained tax exempt status as an independent public charity
- ◇ Developed infrastructure to lead collaborative initiatives
- ◇ Gained significant experience in managing multiple collaborative projects
- ◇ Developed brand value and reputation in the community
- ◇ Developed a Disaster Preparedness Plan regarding ACAM's role as an intermediary responder (communication, community relations, and resource management)

To guide the work of the collaborative, member executive directors formed eight workgroups:

- 1) Nine Elements Assessment Tool (NEAT)
- 2) Recruitment, Retention & Compliance (RRC)
- 3) Transition
- 4) ACAM Development & Assessment
- 5) National Model
- 6) Data Management
- 7) Peer-to-Peer Program (Peer Mentoring)
- 8) Homeless Prevention & Intervention (HP&I)

Though participation and attendance were completely voluntary, to date there have been 31 sessions and almost 69 hours of member input designed to move the collaborative forward and forge the future of ACAM.

### *Measuring for Even Greater Success*

The collaborative believes that the ability to provide a comprehensive picture of member ministries' resources, efforts and outcomes will have a positive impact on achieving our vision for ACAM. Areas that will be impacted by the collective's ability to measure services include:

⇒ ***Collaborative Initiatives and Resource Development*** – Funders understandably expect collaborating organizations to compile grant requests and outcomes. Therefore, the ability to efficiently and accurately aggregate member ministry service data is essential for securing funding and developing future collaborative opportunities.

⇒ ***Measurably successful*** – Data is a powerful communication tool for demonstrating the scope of the ministries' accomplishments.

⇒ ***Growing network of strong organizations*** – By establishing member-wide data standards, the members will provide valuable leadership in the development of effective homeless prevention services and efficient reporting practices.

⇒ ***Formidable educational/advocacy group*** – The ACAM network provides an important forum for developing a comprehensive profile of those in the Greater Houston area who are chronically at-risk of becoming homeless.

It was determined that information needed to be gathered from the membership in order to facilitate discussion about units and tracking systems. ACAM members provide 40 different services in the community serving over 270,000 people annually. The project is complicated by the fact that the average number of services provided by an ACAM member is 12 and the range of different services is between 5 and 19. Funding for these services comes from a variety of sources with the funding mix and vary from ministry to ministry.

How units of service are defined and measured also varies by ministry. A group of member Executive Directors have volunteered to serve on the ACAM Data Management Workgroup. The workgroup has achieved the following:

- ⇒ Supported the engagement of a consultant to inventory how each member ministries currently defines their services units and propose recommendations for possible common measures through development of the *ACAM Member Data Inventory Report and Recommendations*
- ⇒ Completed a proposal for common units of measure for food pantry services, rental assistance and utility assistance
- ⇒ Completed a section of the *Units of Measure Data Dictionary*
- ⇒ Made recommendations for the future work of the group as well as defined goals to be included in the 2013 strategic plan



## Making a Difference

### Member Satisfaction with ACAM Programs

High member engagement may increase member satisfaction. The results of our 2012 member satisfaction survey demonstrate that our members are satisfied their membership in ACAM and also ACAM’s four core services.

<b>High Member Engagement and Satisfaction</b>	Percentage of Members Very Satisfied or Satisfied	Number of Members Rating Very Satisfied or Satisfied
Capacity Building	92%	11/12
Training & Networking	100%	12/12
Outreach & Advocacy	83%	10/12
Collaborative Initiatives	92%	11/12
Overall Satisfaction	92%	11/12



### ACAM Honored as a 2012 Top-Rated Nonprofit by GreatNonProfits

ACAM was honored with a prestigious 2012 Top-Rated Award by GreatNonprofits, the leading provider of user reviews about nonprofit organizations. The Top-Rated Nonprofit award was based on the number of positive reviews that ACAM received – reviews written by volunteers, donors and clients. For example, one person wrote, “ACAM is an extraordinary example of collaboration at its finest. It is an honor to be associated with this visionary organization which facilitates the building of my agency's capacity in meaningful ways. We benefit from being part of a larger organization of resources, from being exposed to new and best practices, from networking with other Ministry professionals, and from being held accountable for our growth. Houston's neighbors in need benefit exponentially because of the high engagement relationships between funders, consultants, ministries and their Boards.”





## Jean West Evans, Executive Director Emergency Aid Coalition (EAC)



As a social services administrator/planner with over 20 years of experience, I began my tenure as Executive Director of the Emergency Aid Coalition (EAC) eleven years ago. After a long history of working with collaborative initiatives in many different human services arenas, I was already a strong believer in the power of collaboration -- in fact, I had conducted training workshops on the exponential benefits of collaboration, especially for clients.

I had noted that the word collaboration had become a buzz term that many professionals seemed to neither truly understand nor be willing to commit to beyond short-term projects. While EAC is an example of collaboration at the congregational/community level, I am proud to be involved with ACAM, a collaborative organization of collaborative organizations! The ACAM collaborative commits the significant allocation of time, talent and treasure essential to developing and maintaining capacity-building enhancements for Assistance Ministries, which, of course, serves to enhance our clients' capacities.

EAC began 30 years ago and continues today as an interfaith collaborative of congregations founded on the principle that together, we can accomplish more for Houston's poorest and hungriest neighbors than any one of us can alone. EAC is proud to have been part of ZCAM/ACAM since its inception and we are profoundly grateful for the many benefits derived from membership in this extraordinary organization. ZCAM/ACAM has assisted EAC with technology, taking us from a paper file system to state-of-the-art computerized client, donor and volunteer data bases. ACAM has enhanced the capacity of EAC's volunteer coordination, has increased support from and enhanced relationships with member congregations, strengthened our administrative capacity, offered staff development and marketing enhancements, and has provided many collaborative opportunities to establish relationships/bonds with other CAMs.

In addition to the obvious benefits to the members of ACAM, there are benefits which are difficult to quantify. As ACAM members, CAMs are "pre-vetted" for potential funder community opportunities; we are able to be part of something larger; we are held accountable for our growth; we are exposed to new and best practices; we have ready access to valuable contacts, tools and resources that we might not have had prior to ACAM membership.

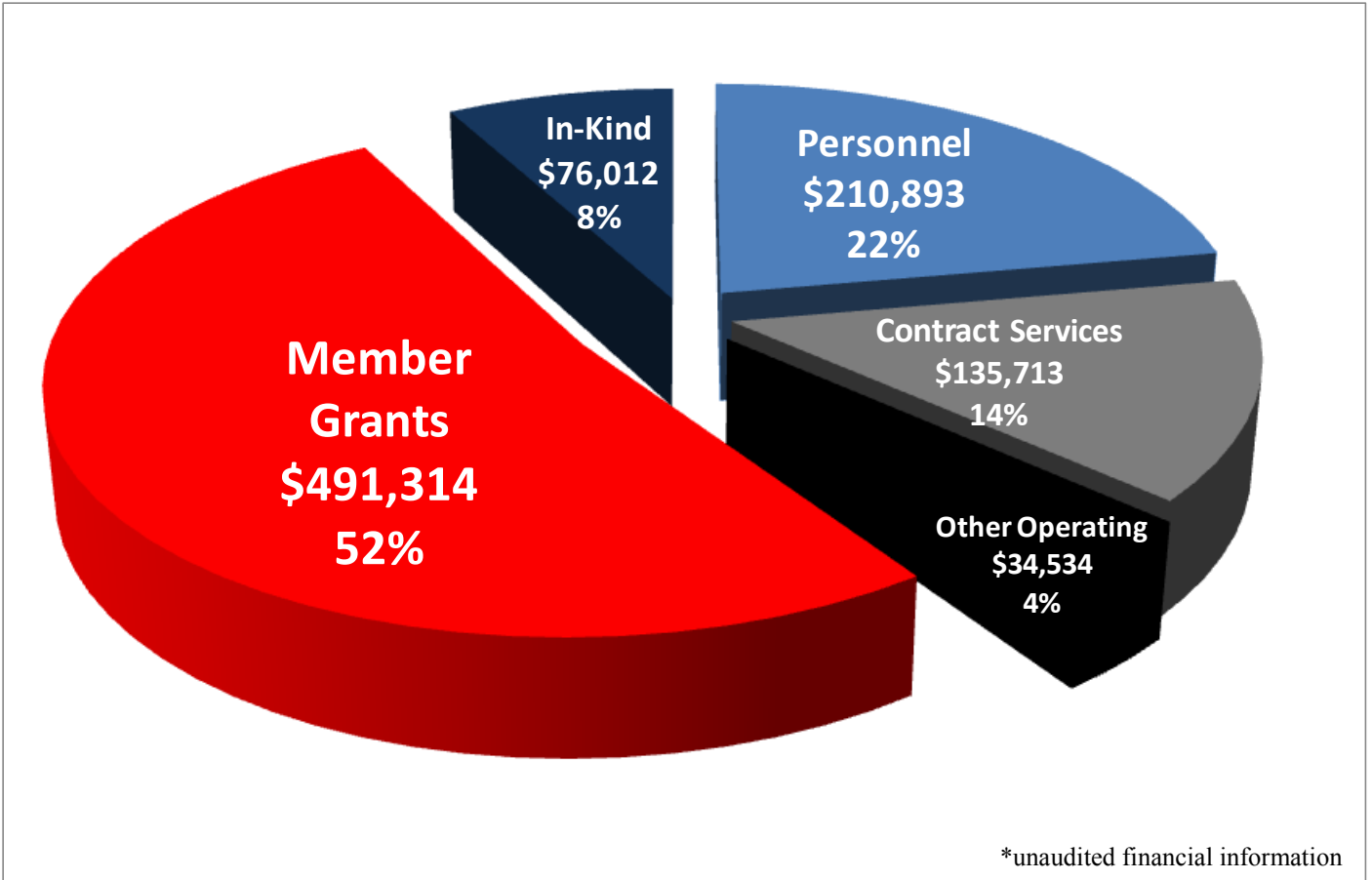
ACAM has played a significant role in taking EAC to the next level. In fact, EAC has been brought to the level where we have been able to engage in an exciting collaborative partnership with the Houston Food Bank (HFB). As the Operator of the HFB's Emergency Food Pantry, EAC has been able to double our client base. ACAM has developed a model for high engagement philanthropy that is of national merit. We have all been a part of this model and it is still evolving. That's part of the process, the challenge and the privilege of membership. What ACAM is accomplishing is Impressive. What ACAM is about is Important. What ACAM is providing is Imperative to the clients we serve.

Thank you, ACAM!



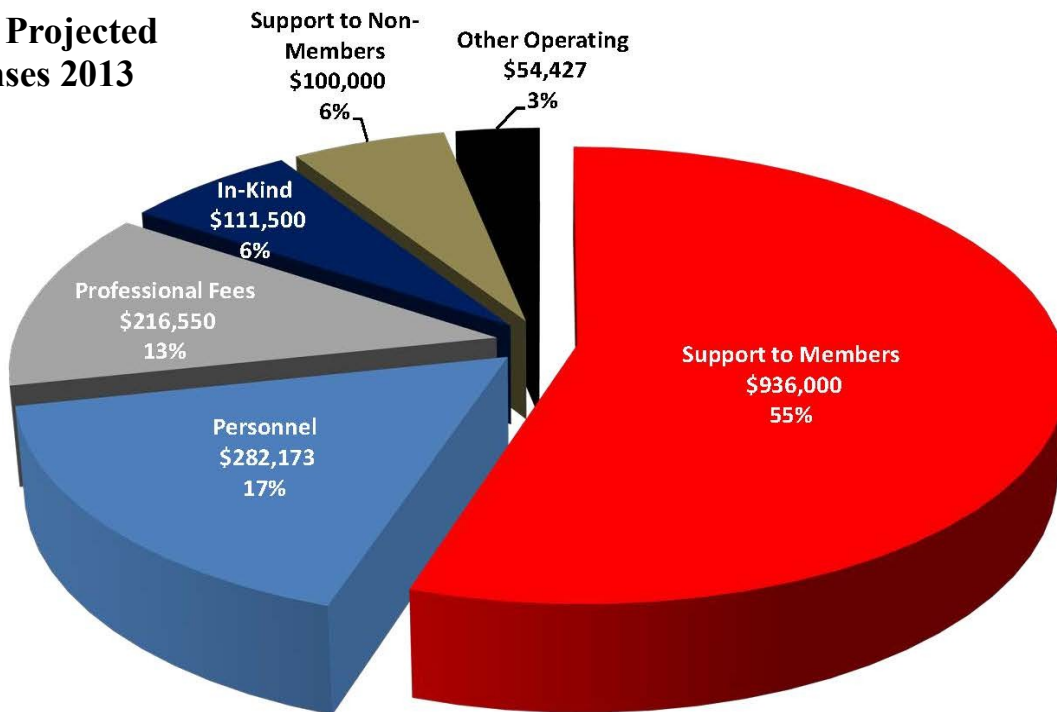
# Financials

## ACAM Expenses 2012



More than half of ACAM’s expenditures in 2012 were grants to members. ACAM is now searchable on GuideStar and has earned a GuideStar Exchange Seal for having a complete GuideStar Profile, putting ACAM in the upper percentile of organizational transparency. ACAM would like to thank the many organizations, consultants and individuals who have offered their time and talent in-kind to help ACAM fulfill its mission.

## ACAM Projected Expenses 2013





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