

# 2024



Affirmations

**AFFIRMATIONS**  
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY CENTER

# Annual Report

mccdetroit.o

For over 35 years, providing a welcoming space where people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and cultures can find support and unconditional acceptance, and where they can learn, grow, socialize, and feel safe.

# A Message from Cheryl Czach, Executive Director

As we wrap up Affirmations' 35th year, and my first year as executive director, we reflect on all we have accomplished in 2024 and the positive impact we have made together for the LGBTQ+ community.

This past year has been a year of growth for the center. We have expanded our Health and Human Services department to include additional capacity for therapy, introduced several therapy groups, and prepared for renovations to begin on our therapy suite thanks to Representative Haley Stevens who secured a \$300k Community Project Funding Federal budget allocation. This renovation will more than double our in-person therapy capacity. Knowing our current space constraints and the dire need for mental health services in our community, we added two new full-time telehealth therapists who can see clients based anywhere in Michigan. This would not be possible without funding from The Flinn Foundation, Sinai Medical Staff Foundation, and The Jewish Fund.

2024 also saw us focus on community building and program expansion. Our youth programming continues to evolve; we offered art classes, started a Youth Advisory Council, and Friday nights are the ever-expanding youth drop-in program. For adults, we have several new social groups: Queer Billiards, Fantasy Book Club, and our Fiber Arts Group. Our CyberCenter also received an upgrade: 6 new iMac computers thanks to a generous grant from the David Bohnett Foundation. Additionally, MIGen's new permanent space in Affirmations provides our LGBTQ+ elders easy access to culturally competent senior programming and support.



As we have grown, the importance of diversifying funding is always top of mind. This year we secured 16 foundational and governmental grants, increased revenue from therapy services, introduced AFF GEMs—our monthly giving program, and welcomed many new donors. Every dollar goes to making our work possible—from paying the internet bill to supporting the Youth Leadership and Job Readiness program to assisting those with transportation needs with bus passes. Your support is a direct investment in the community center and our visitors.

Affirmations' mission has always been to create a welcoming and affirming space for the queer community and as we look to the next several years, that mission feels more important than ever. From the beginning, Affirmations was built by and for our community. We have held each other up in difficult times, celebrated together in times of victory, and affirmed our commitment to advocating for our equality. As we head into 2025, I invite you to continue your support of Affirmations and the LGBTQ+ community we serve.

# A Year in Review

**17**  
FULL-TIME STAFF

**5**  
PART-TIME STAFF

**13**  
HHS INTERNS

**131**  
VOLUNTEERS

- 520 community member phone calls received at the front desk per month
- 6 new iMac computers for our CyberCenter from the David Bohnett Foundation
- 90+ tours of the center to visitors, companies, and funders
- 425 LGBTQ+ cultural competency training participants
- 35 companies volunteered at our center
- 23 vaccination clinics and 100 STI testing clinics held at Affirmations



## Offsite Outreach

*Affirmations isn't just inside the building. We are out and about being part of communities across Michigan.*

- 65 speaking engagements for companies, universities, organizations, and conferences that wanted to learn more about Affirmations and the LGBTQIA+ community
- 13 Pride Events across the state including Detroit, Grand Rapids, Fenton, and Macomb Township



## Groups

*Affirmation groups are intended to provide guests connection, support, and community around a particular issue or identity.*

- Home to 23 support and social discussion groups
- 391 people per month attend at least 1 group at Affirmations
- 4 new groups began in 2024: Queer Billiards Social Club, Whole New Worlds: A Queer Fantasy Book Club, "Stitch, Please": Fiber Arts Group, and Crafts & Conversation: Adult Drop-in



# Health and Human Services

From mental health therapy to care coordination, Affirmations takes a whole-body approach to our community. Whether it's our vaccination and STI clinics, group and individual therapy, health navigation, or monthly clinics that include a food pantry, name and gender marker change, free legal aid, housing, and financial literacy, we are here for you.

1500+ therapy sessions held



207 mental health therapy clients



Team has grown to include 8 therapists and 13 therapy interns



1000+

people attended the Lettuce Help Food Pantry in 2024

600

bus passes given out annually

194

Care Management clients guided through public benefit applications (e.g., veteran benefits, Medicaid)

## Youth

While Aff continued our Youth Leadership and Job Readiness program (45 youth served), we piloted and expanded into new areas:

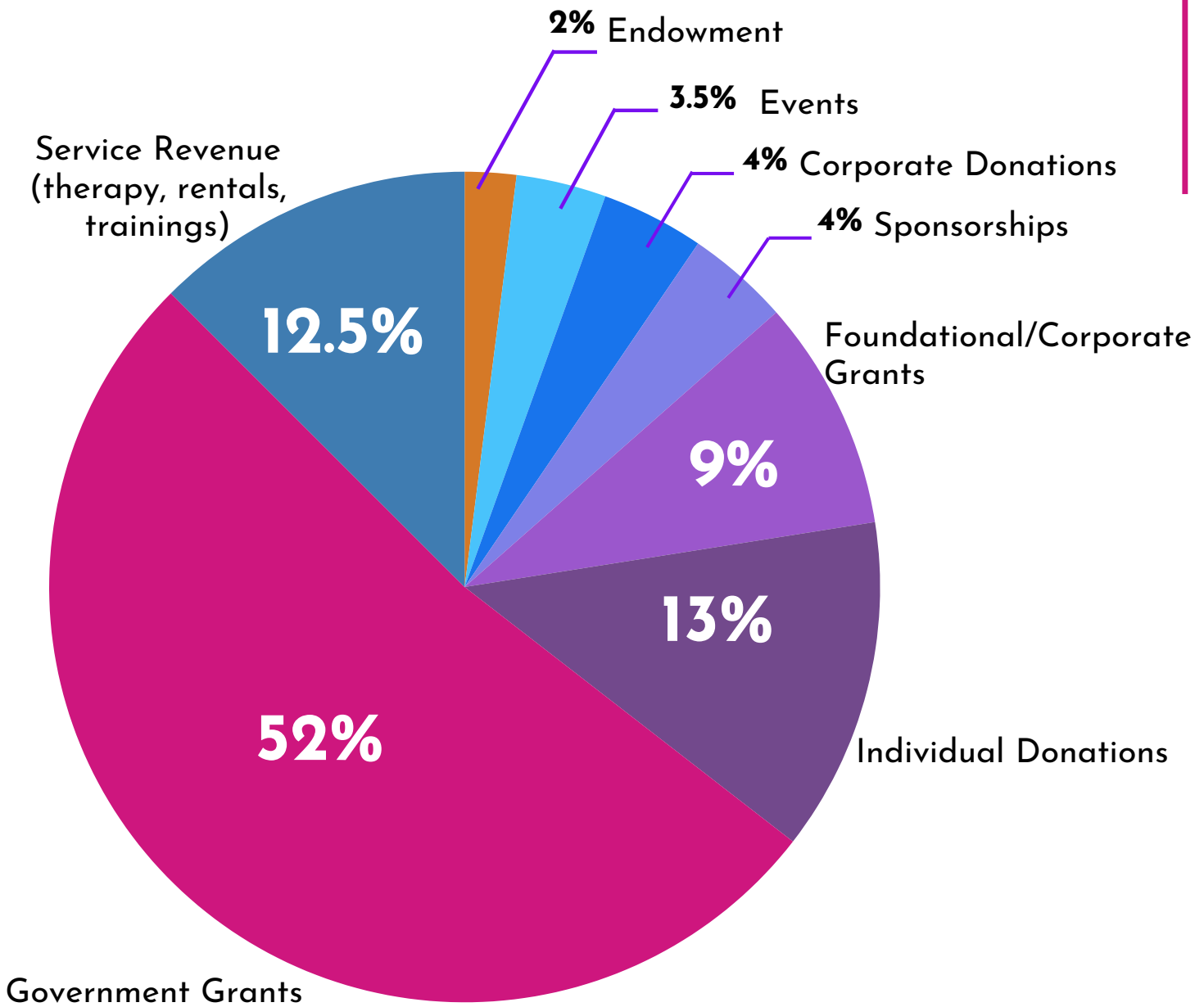
- Youth Drop-in served 664 youth (ages 13-18) through November 2024
- Piloted FREE art classes throughout the year with local artists and groups—serving 55 youths
- Launched 2 new summer groups: Lavender Explorers and BIPOC Youth Empowerment
- Added a Youth Advisory Council to help lead Affirmations' youth programming in the future



*"[YLJR] has helped me with goal setting which is super important it has help me with my mental health and my identity. I love this community so much and I feel so welcomed."*

- Francis

# Finances



## 16 grants were received this year

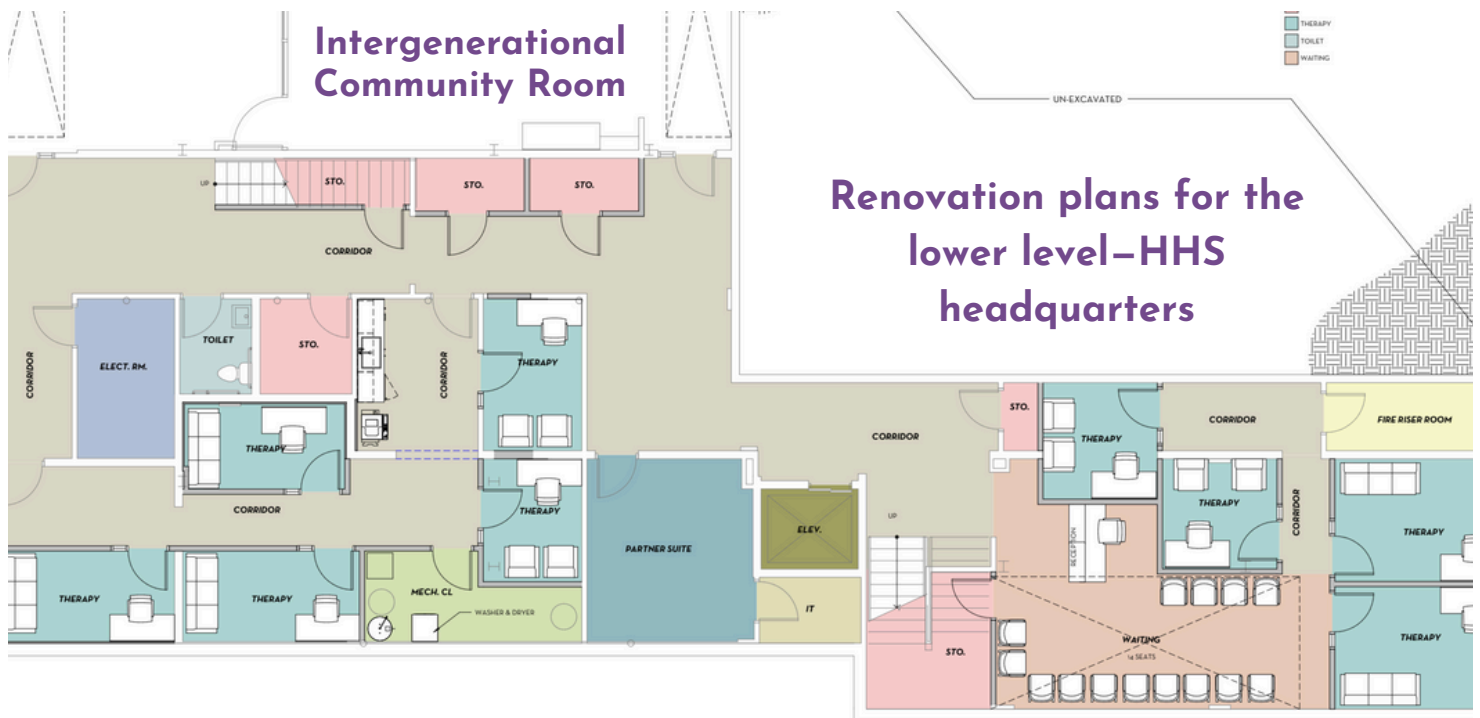
- 5 governmental grants from MDHHS, MPHI, and Community Project Funding
- 11 foundational and corporate grants from United Way for Southeastern Michigan, The Flinn Foundation, The Jewish Fund, Ford, and MGM Resort

*\*Affirmations' budgets, 990s, and audited financial statements going back 4 years can be found on our website. Please visit [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org) to see these documents.\**

# What's Ahead in 2025

Affirmations Board of Directors passed a \$2.23M budget for the upcoming year, which includes:

- Our new Deputy Executive Director, Tracy Hall
- New and expanded youth programming
- Continued advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community within the state of Michigan and across the nation
- A renovation to our lower level for our Mental Health and Care Coordination services. This will include 9 therapy rooms and a trauma-informed waiting room. Check out our design plans below.



## Mark Your Calendars!

**January  
17**

**Open House  
7-9 PM**

**March  
29**

**Family Fun Day  
Time TBA**

**June  
27**

**Prom ReDeux  
Time TBA**

# 2024 GRANTORS & SPONSORS

*Our work could not be accomplished without these amazing grantors:*



**Sinai Medical Staff Foundation**



*and many more!*

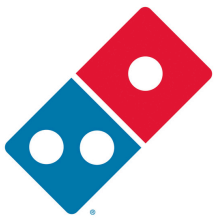
*Thank you to our generous sponsors!*

**PRESENTING SPONSORS**

**JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.**



**CORPORATE SPONSORS**



**Liam Thomas MacDonald**

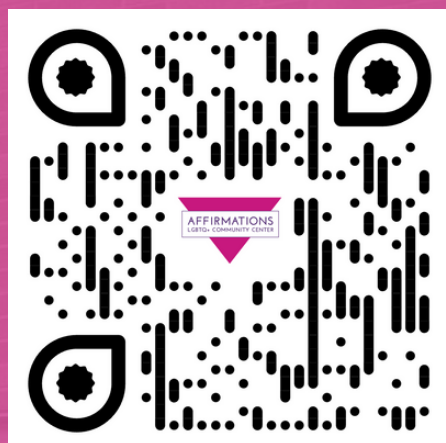
**COMMUNITY+ SPONSORS**



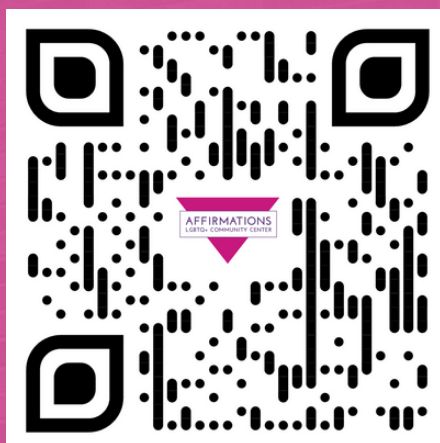
**CONTRIBUTING SPONSORS**

**Blue Cross Complete  
Cat & Len Mazzola  
Slay Entertainment  
TuckThreads**

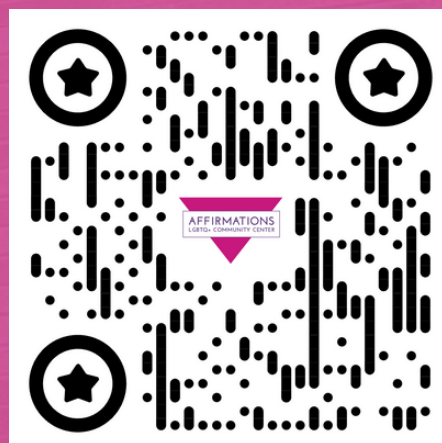
**CONTINUE TO HELP US  
GROW BY PLEDGING  
YOUR SUPPORT TODAY!**



[mccdetroit.org](http://mccdetroit.org)  
**Support**



**AFF GEMs Program**



**Sponsorships**

**WWW.GOAFFIRMATIONS.ORG**