COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK (CAN)

Community Action Network (CAN) was started in 1987 as an informal community group at the Hikone Community Center by co-founders, Cathy Baldwin and Nancy Bogen. Since its inception, CAN began to shift to the image we see today under the former Executive Director, Joan Doughty, in 2002 to include two other residential sites, Green Baxter Court and Bryant Community Center, shifting from its original roots as an afterschool program to now cover a variety of basic needs of the community it serves. In 2017, Derrick Miller took over as the Executive Director during CAN’s 30th anniversary to guide CAN to the next chapter of positive impact for families in Ann Arbor.

Today, Community Action Network operates various programs at five locations throughout Ann Arbor providing support to individuals and families at residential complexes, community centers and schools. Their sites include Green Baxter Court, Hikone Community Center, Bryant Community Center, Brick Elementary, and Mitchell Elementary. Further, CAN partners with Arrowood Hills Cooperative and Bryant Elementary to provide support to their summer programs. CAN serves around 300 households between its three residential sites. However their reach does not end there as thousands of clients are served at Bryant Community Center’s food distribution, where they open the doors to the rest of Washtenaw County.

CAN is built upon three major pillars: (1) educating children and youth, (2) stabilizing families, and (3) building strong communities. Residents that live in these communities are empowered to thrive together through resident councils. The resident councils are made up of resident-elected positions that are recognized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to actively participate in Washtenaw County. Children have opportunities to participate in afterschool programming and summer camps which offer supportive services where children can thrive academically, socially and meet personal goals through tutoring, mentorships, activities, and friendships. Families can stabilize with the support of weekly food distributions, an emergency food pantry, housing and utilities assistance in partnership with DTE and Ann Arbor Housing Commission to prevent eviction, and have access to other support groups like AA or senior activity groups.
Has your agency undergone any significant changes in the last year?
Thanks to some key partners, City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation and the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED), we are currently renovating the Bryant Community Center which has been really exciting. We will have twice as much space for our elementary school and teen programming. We recently hired a full-time Director of CAN Art & Design that brings art and design-focused curriculum to under-resourced youth. We are expanding this program to provide art education for teenage youth at all of CAN’s locations.

What do you wish others knew about your program or mission?
We work to build stronger communities for the most underserved. We have so much here in Ann Arbor, but we hope to one day expand into Ypsilanti and elsewhere if we can make sure it is sustainable. We have incredible summer programs, YouthWorks and A2 Expeditions, that I think are often not seen by the rest of the community.

What do you think makes your sites highly successful in its programming?
Our Summer Food Service sites live within a particularly close-knit community, especially Green Baxter Court. Well, all of our sites are this way - welcoming, and building a family atmosphere. We work to build trust with parents, through active engagement in our parent councils. Kids that grow up here at Green Baxter end up going through all the programs as they just keep coming back.

What is your favorite thing about working with the clients you serve?
Everyday is different and you never know what is going to happen. I have the opportunity to help introduce people to different parts of the community they didn't even now existed - but as we know, poverty exists everywhere. I also love the atmosphere that is cultivated here - I always hear, this is like a family and I want to keep coming back.

CAN is always looking for volunteers and currently hiring program assistants for the upcoming fall semester. For more information on how to get involved, email volunteers@CANannarbor.org or check out www.canwashtenaw.org.

SUMMER SUCCESS!

Beyond CAN’s already impressive community presence, CAN goes above and beyond with its summer programs. CAN serves five Summer Food Service Program sites: Green Baxter Court, Hikone Community Center, Arrowwood Hills Cooperative, Bryant Elementary and Brick Elementary. All sites provide meals and snacks to participating youth, and camps run Monday through Thursday throughout the summer.

“Ready Set Tech!”: Elementary-aged children participate in summer camps that work to retain knowledge and continue learning while school is out. Youth participate in a project-based STEAM curriculum using design thinking skills, practicing math, geography, reading, and art and design. All youth receive snacks, lunch and dinner, and they have opportunities to go to the pool and other field trips.

A2 Expeditions: Serving middle school students, A2 Expeditions strives to teach independence and executive functioning by enabling youth to navigate the bus system to learn about the surrounding community of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Youth go on expeditions to learn new facts while exploring the city at museums, government buildings, the mall, swimming pools, and more! Those that complete the program take a free trip to Cedar Point at the end of the summer.

YouthWorks!: Teenagers, ages 14-18, can learn job skills while exploring various career paths through YouthWorks! They engage in different career tracks such as health care, child care and education, animal welfare, hospitality and event planning, and sports and recreation. In addition, teens learn basic work skills and professionalism, while matching their own interests and strengths to a future career path. Beyond the essential skills they learn, teens receive a stipend for their efforts.
SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

WHY? For kids who rely on school meals, summer is a time of hunger. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), funded by the USDA, was created to ensure that all children can continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations, when they do not have access to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

WHAT DO WE DO? Food Gatherers is the largest sponsor of summer meals in Washtenaw County and partners with sites where program meals are served by volunteers. Free meals are made available to children 18 years of age and under or persons up to age 26 who are enrolled in an educational program for the mentally or physically disabled that is recognized by a State or local public educational agency. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FINDING A FREE SUMMER MEAL SITE IS EASY! The program runs from June 18th—August 24th.

- Use your phone: Text FOOD to 877-877 to find a site near you
- Map it online: Go to http://www.mcg.state.mi.us/schoolnutrition/ to find a site online
- Call for details: Call 1-866-3HUNGRY to find a site and learn more

WANT TO GET INVOLVED? LeRonica Roberts, Community Food Programs Coordinator, manages the SFSP partnerships with Food Gatherers throughout the county. If you are looking to get involved with the program or have any questions, please reach out to her at summerfood@foodgatherers.org

- Help us spread the word by passing out flyers to families at an upcoming distribution!
- Be a superhero and volunteer to help serve meals and plan activities for the kids at a site this summer!

MEET THE SFSP INTERNS THIS SUMMER!

The Summer Food Service Program could not run without the dedication and hard work from the School of Public Health interns! This summer, Food Gatherers has four interns that will be working with our summer food site partnerships.

Emily Smale, School of Public Health Intern
Emily is an MPH student in the Health Behavior and Health Education program with a specialization in gender, sexuality, and population health. Emily enjoys cross stitch, embroidery, cooking, and swimming. She is looking forward to working with the Community Food Programs team and learning more about the community partnerships involved with Food Gatherers.

Gina Sellinger, School of Public Health Intern
Gina is a 2nd-year MPH student at the University of Michigan studying nutritional sciences. She is interested in how nutritional status can affect mental health, how food can support those in recovery, and how to create a more sustainable food system. Gina will be working with the Summer Food Service Program and is excited to be part of such a wonderful organization. In her free time she enjoys playing with her dog Scoby, being outdoors, and seeing live music.

Krystina Auble, School of Public Health Intern
Krystina is currently pursuing her MPH in Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics at the University of Michigan. She is especially interested in maternal and child nutrition and hopes to serve in the Peace Corps after graduation. In her free time, Krystina enjoys reading novels, slacklining, and visiting her family and three young nephews in Ohio. Krystina is interested in working with the Summer Food Service Program this summer!

Natalie Reid, School of Public Health Intern
Natalie is an MPH student at the University of Michigan. She tends to focus on race and ethnicity, food insecurity, eating disorders, maternal child health, and education. She loves eating pizza and dismantling capitalism. In her evaluation internship here at Food Gatherers, she hopes to learn more about increasing fresh fruit and vegetable intake in marginalized communities, social service uptake, and what makes programs effective and sustainable.
**SUMMER WEATHER TIP!**

Food Gatherers strives to provide nutritious and attractive food to the agencies we serve, and do not distribute any food we do not feel is safe or wholesome. We adhere to local, statewide and national food safety regulations as well as guidelines from the national network of food banks, Feeding America. All employees that handle food at Food Gatherers are trained and certified in food safety. Our food sources adhere to applicable regulations and we also require our partner programs to be trained and/or certified in food safety.

All donations are carefully inspected for safety, but we also rely on you to check all product going out to your clients. Regarding the “expiration” date of a product, different suppliers and processors use various labeling techniques. These include packing dates, “sell-by” dates, “use-by” dates, “best before” dates etc. These dates are used for food retailers, to make sure that customers will have an extended time to consume the product. Different food items have different guidelines, and Food Gatherers distributes food accordingly.

As I’m sure you have all heard by now, Food Gatherers recently changed the sorting method for bakery items. We will no longer be sorting bakery products (sliced bread, rolls, tortillas, bagels, desserts, etc…) by the printed date on the packages, and giving a five day date extension, but rather sort it by visual inspection. We have updated our perishable product sorting guideline handout and you can find this on our website here:

http://www.foodgatherers.org/?module=Page&slID=agency-documents#Food%20Safety%20Resources

As a result of this change, agencies will need to visually inspect the bakery products at your site to make sure the bakery items are safe to distribute, rather than checking the products for dates. It is our hope that sorting the bakery items by visual inspection will help us provide your clients with more product!

However, you’ll want to keep a close eye on those bakery products all summer long! These products can run the risk of spoiling much quicker with all the heat and humidity! If there is any chance that food safety is compromised, the food is thrown away. If you receive items that are questionable or do not meet the requirements, please call us at 734-761-2796 or email at cfp@foodgatherers.org.

**MEET ANIKKA!**

Many of you have already met Anikka! Anikka started her internship with Food Gatherers this past winter and she will be with us through the fall. Anikka has been working with the Community Food Programs department on a variety of projects and she is currently working closely with our Neighborhood Grocery Initiative (NGI) partners to evaluate this program. The NGI programs are distributing food at a residential complexes to provide supplemental groceries to the individuals living at those properties.

![Anikka Van Eyl, Social Work Intern](image)

Anikka is currently a dual degree MSW and Master of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Michigan studying both Management of Human Services and Community Development with a minor in Social Policy and Evaluation. She is also pursuing a certificate in Sustainable Food Systems. Anikka is interning at Food Gatherers until December 2018, working with the Community Food Programs and Human Resources departments. She is interested in the intersectionality between food insecurity, urban spaces, and social justice. She looks forward to learning more about how Washtenaw County and other communities help ensure all people have access to nutritious food and how they work to eliminate food deserts.
Made with love by the Community Food Programs Department

Erin Freeman, Community Food Programs Coordinator, erin@foodgatherers.org
LeRonica Roberts, Community Food Programs Coordinator, leronica@foodgatherers.org
Victoria Alden, Program Evaluator, victoria.alden@foodgatherers.org
Shaira Daya, Nutrition Projects Manager, shaira@foodgatherers.org
Amy Diehl, Community Kitchen Staff, amy.diehl@foodgatherers.org
Scott Roubeck, Community Kitchen Manager, scott@foodgatherers.org
Markell Miller, Director of Community Food Programs Department, markell@foodgatherers.org

**CFP Interns**

Anikka Van Eyl, MSW Intern, anikka.vaney@foodgatherers.org
Emily Smale, MPH Intern, emily.smale@foodgatherers.org
Gina Sellinger, MPH Intern, gina.sellinger@foodgatherers.org
Krystina Auble, MPH Intern, kystina.auble@foodgatherers.org
Natalie Reid, MPH Intern, natalie.reid@foodgatherers.org