



# 2017

## ANNUAL REPORT

Photo by Stacey Wegley

**The Center** believes that the strongest communities are full of engaged citizens. We are committed to helping each person discover and develop their skills, find and use the resources they need, and discover partners who share their concern for the well-being of Covington.

Get involved: [www.greatneighborhoods.org](http://www.greatneighborhoods.org)

## **Our Program Areas:**



### **Neighborhoods & Community**

2017 Highlight: Over 12,000 residents organized and participated in community building projects this year to make Covington welcoming for all.



### **Creative Placemaking**

2017 Highlight: The Center received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to use local artists and art in creatively activating the exterior and interior of the Hellmann Creative Center.



### **Real Estate Development**

2017 Highlight: This year we surpassed \$12 million in investment in commercial and residential development across Covington.



### **Health**

2017 Highlight: We launched 4 projects connecting health and creative placemaking: Chef Fellows, Empower Tools, Spring Celebration, and FreshLo Fellow's Project Management Program.



### **Financial Wellbeing**

2017 Highlight: Prepared tax returns for 677 low and moderate income individuals that resulted in over \$1 million in refunds, including Earned Income Tax Credit Benefits of over \$298,000



### **Youth & Families**

2017 Highlight: 200 youth improved their community and developed skills like problem-solving, decision-making, and teamwork.

## Director's Remarks

*This year, The Center for Great Neighborhoods began our fifth decade partnering with families, youth, and neighborhoods in Covington and Northern Kentucky.*

*We completed our first year of operation at the Hellmann Creative Center, hosting a wide range of programs benefiting families in our community, such as Community Restorative Justice Covington, Supporting Latino Families, Music Together, Family Fridays, Forge, Tai Chi, and Kids' Art Club. We built key partnerships that initiated innovative programs like Empower Tools, a tool lending library in which residents can use their Kenton County Library card to borrow home improvement and maintenance tools; the Spring Celebration, a resident-led event focused on local food, healthy living, and building community; and the FreshLo Fellows, providing training and workforce development for unemployed and underemployed women.*

*Our financial services to families saved community members money, transferred skills and knowledge of financial health, and provided the foundation to build for the future.*

*Our ongoing real estate development efforts aimed at reducing blight, providing high-quality affordable housing, and stimulating small business development surpassed \$12 million in investment.*

*We nurtured the leadership and community stewardship of 200 youth through the Born Leaders of Covington KY (BLOCK) program. We are honored to nurture this next generation of leaders in Covington.*

*And throughout Covington and beyond, staff from The Center supported the efforts of over 12,000 residents to share their talents and gifts and work towards their own and their communities' well-being.*

*As has been the case throughout our history, The Center's success has been driven by the response of concerned residents, our many partners, and generous funders and donors. Thanks to all who have shared in The Center's important work of improving the lives of families, youth, and neighborhoods.*

Tom DiBello  
Executive Director



# Neighborhoods & Community



Est. 1939

Home of  
EINE'S SOCIAL CLUB

Bret Schulte 2017

**12000+**  
**RESIDENTS**

engaged by  
33 different  
neighborhood and  
resident-led  
associations

**171**  
**PROJECTS**

completed by  
resident-led  
groups, making  
Covington the  
best it can be



## BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS

The Center partnered with Keep Covington Beautiful, the City of Covington, and Wolf Tree Farms to plant 62 street trees along Madison Avenue and Watkins Street. Street trees provide shade, control stormwater runoff, reduce the urban heat island effect, and improve air quality in addition to beautifying our city.

## EMPOWER TOOLS

The Center partnered with the Kenton County Public Library and Wolf Tree Farms to launch Empower Tools, a tool sharing library which loans community members tools to improve their homes, properties, and neighborhood.



*This year, The Center put  
\$145,000 into the hands  
of artists to complete  
community-based projects  
throughout Covington*

### **Nano Grants**

Between 2015 – 2017, we funded **88 Nano Grant** projects, investing **\$21,830** in community leaders who want to experiment with an innovative idea to bring people together. 2017 Highlights include Cinema in the Cemetery, a community-based Venezuelan cooking class, a youth philanthropy workshop, community gardening workshops, and so much more.

**2017**

**46**

arts-related events

**1600+**

participants



**Creative Placemaking**

# Real Estate Development

It has been one year since The Center completed construction and moved into the **Hellmann Creative Center!** In addition to our offices, the Hellmann Creative Center is home to **8** artist studios and **4000+** sq. ft. of community event and meeting space. The \$2.2 million project is an anchor for additional investment and redevelopment along MLK Boulevard and the Westside.

## IN 2017, THE CENTER:

**COMPLETED 12 FACADES** (four more on the way) through our Creative Facades Program which helped build over \$600,000 in equity for homeowners in the Westside

**SOLD** 8 vacant buildings through our Homes for Makers program which pairs Artists/Makers with a building to live/work in the Westside, helping to decrease the Westside vacancy rate

*2017 residential renovation in Covington's Westside neighborhood*






In 2017, The Center supported the efforts of **Ride the Cov** – a resident-led coalition of over 50 individuals in Covington dedicated to creating a safe and visible infrastructure for bicyclists



*This year, The Center accepted the invitation to be the backbone support organization for **Livewell Northern Kentucky** and its **7 local community coalitions**. We are excited to be at the helm of this community-based effort to create a **stronger culture of health** in Covington and the Northern Kentucky region.*



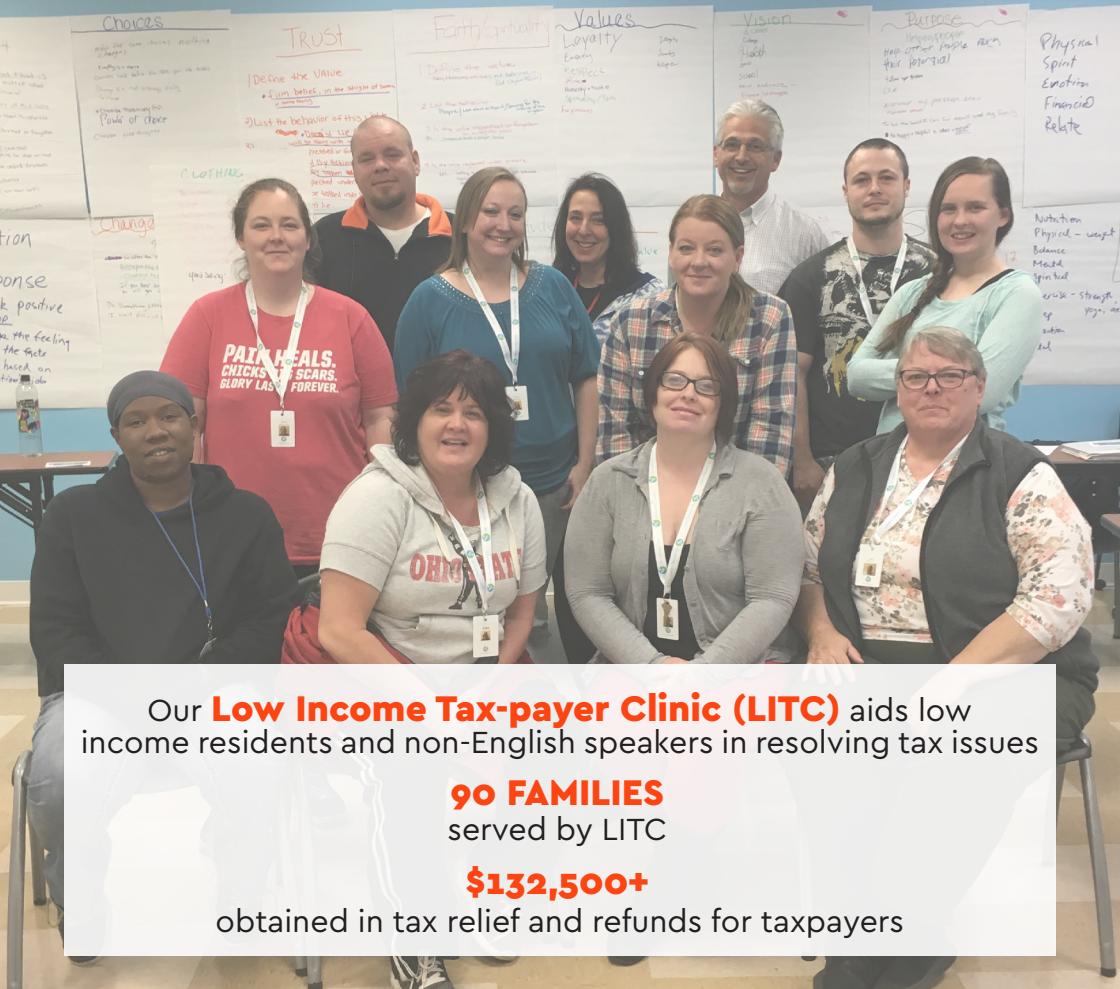
In 2017, The Center received a \$200K **FreshLo Implementation Grant** from The Kresge Foundation, using food as a platform for neighborhood revitalization. Our FreshLo Programming includes:

- Chef Fellowship** – entrepreneurial support for at home chefs
- Empower Tools** – a tool lending program in collaboration with the Kenton County Public Library and Wolf Tree Farms
- Spring Celebration** – an event celebrating neighborhood makers and urban ecology efforts
- FreshLo Fellows** – a workforce development program



**Health**

# \$ Financial Wellbeing



Our **Low Income Tax-payer Clinic (LITC)** aids low income residents and non-English speakers in resolving tax issues

**90 FAMILIES**  
served by LITC

**\$132,500+**

obtained in tax relief and refunds for taxpayers

**677 FAMILIES**

received free income tax preparation services

**251 INDIVIDUALS**

participated in financial workshops and coaching

**\$1 MILLION+ REFUNDED**

to families through our free income tax preparation service





## 200 Youth

participated  
in youth  
leadership  
efforts in  
2016 – 2017

*"I believe BLOCK is important because it helps build up students' confidence in themselves. BLOCK gives students a safe space to explore, create, and try new things. Students are able to develop new friendships, learn about diversity and participate in leading their community."*

*- Rachel Ramsey, BLOCK instructor*

### **BLOCK (Born Leaders of Covington, Kentucky)**

**105 youth** involved in planning and implementing **5 service learning projects**. **94%** of 3rd, 4th and 5th graders reported the increased ability to **set goals** and **solve problems**.

### **Pre-K Readiness**

The Center supported **5 projects** to prepare Covington's youngest residents to excel at school.

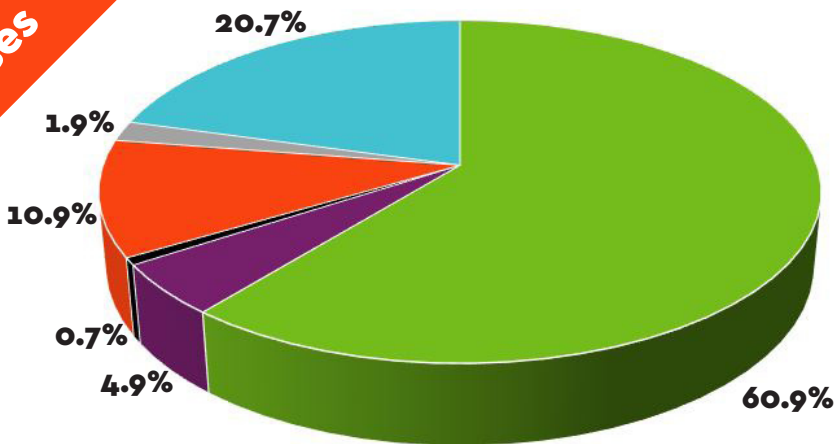
### **Healthy Mind, Body, & Soul Camp**

This summer The Center hosted a **youth summer camp** to encourage **nutritious eating, physical activity, and mindfulness**.



## Youth & Families

## Expenses

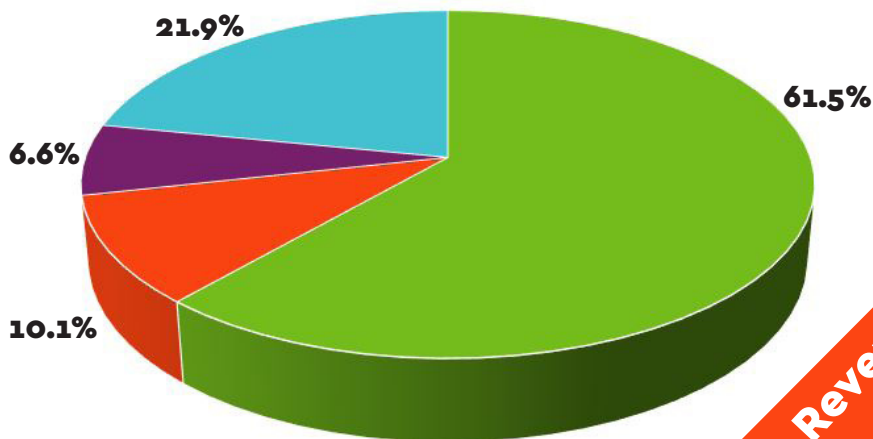


	Program Services: \$1,336,029
	Housing Development: \$106,888
	Rental Properties: \$14,755
	Administrative/General: \$240,290
	Fund Development: \$41,492
	Custodials: \$453,441

Financials represent an 18 month period (7/1/2016 – 12/31/2017)  
The Center changed our accounting period from a fiscal year to a calendar year, effective January 2018.

## Net Assets: \$2,219,879

	Foundations, Trusts, Individuals: \$1,284,330
	Government Grants: \$210,196
	Other Revenues: \$138,156
	Custodial Revenues: \$456,996



## Revenue



## The Center Staff

- back row -

**Tom DiBello:** Executive Director

**Shannon Ratterman:** Program Manager, Community Development

**Rachel Hastings:** Program Director, Community Development

**Mary Lepper:** Attorney, LITC

**Peg Baldock:** Finance Director

**Sarah Allan:** Program Director, Creative Placemaking

**Monica Ibarra:** Attorney, LITC

**Angel Johnting Brown:** Business & IT Manager

- front row -

**Jameela Salaah:** Program Manager, Youth Education

**Adam Rockel:** Program Manager, Real Estate Development

**Kate Greene:** Program Manager, Community Development

**Dan Petronio:** Associate Director

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**The Center for Great Neighborhoods**  
**321 W. MLK Blvd/12th St**  
**Covington, KY 41011**  
**[www.greatneighborhoods.org](http://www.greatneighborhoods.org)**

