



African American
Community Fund

An affiliate of
FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN OHIO

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





ABOUT US

The African American Community Fund (AACF), an affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio (FAO), provides a way for anyone to support the region's African American people and communities, today and for years to come.

Established by and for the Black community as one way to grow resources and create opportunities, AACF also serves as a vehicle to address disparities and improve the physical, economic and structural conditions that affect quality of life throughout the region. A committee of volunteers sets AACF's programmatic vision and direction and reviews grant requests, with FAO providing back-office support.

With the support of our donors, we award grants annually to Black-led and Black-serving nonprofit and public organizations for projects and programs that advance opportunities across five areas of need, known as our Pillars of Prosperity.



ARTS & CULTURE



COMMUNITY &
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



EDUCATION



ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP



HEALTH & HUMAN
SERVICES

Our investments improve health, create educational opportunities, advance economic development and environmental stewardship, and provide access to arts and cultural experiences.

OUR COMMITTEE

- ERNEST A. BYNUM
- ROSETTA CARTER
- TEE FORD-AHMED
- LAWRENCE FUNDERBURKE
- JOHN JACKSON
- RUTH LOMAX
- KEN MASON
- MICHELE REYNOLDS
- RALPH SMITHERS JR.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more information about planned giving, to make a gift to AACF or to create a fund to support a cause closest to your heart, please contact us!



740.753.1111

AACF@fao.org

African American Community Fund

www.AppalachianOhio.org/AACF



Special thanks to the AEP Foundation for a visionary gift to the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio to support philanthropic growth in the region, including FAO's partnership with the African American Community Fund.



Since 2020, AACF grants have helped support the work of ACTION and Dress To Succeed, serving Mahoning and Trumbull counties. After years of operating out of various locations, the nonprofit organizations kicked off 2023 in a new permanent home in Youngstown.

2023 GRANTS

In partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio and with support from the AEP Foundation, the African American Community Fund awarded 21 grants, totaling \$128,750, in 2023.

AFRICAN AMERICAN AWARENESS RESEARCH COUNCIL

2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown vs. Board of Education decision that ruled school segregation unconstitutional. This grant is helping fund a Highland County panel discussion and screening of "The Lincoln School Marchers," documenting the two-year battle a group of mothers and children waged to end segregation of Hillsboro's elementary school.

To the right: The late Elsie Young, who was the last living Marching Mother, is pictured on the Lincoln School Marchers memorial bench outside the Highland County Courthouse. The bench is dedicated to Young and all the other mothers and children who fought a two-year battle to end segregation in Hillsboro schools.

ACTION: DRESS TO SUCCEED

Dress To Succeed has served 20,000 men and women in Mahoning and Trumbull counties since the program began more than 12 years ago. This grant is helping the organization provide free professional attire to individuals in need, including those returning from incarceration, to help them pursue new opportunities and embark on new beginnings.





For more than five years, GO Community Development Corporation's Warm Feet Project has been providing boots, hats and gloves to those in need in Ashtabula County. AACF grants have supported those efforts for the past four years.

2023 GRANTS

ENTERPRISE MUSKINGUM

Enterprise Muskingum is a cradle-to-career approach committed to parity in education, employment and health outcomes for every Muskingum County child, with a focus on people of color and families living below the poverty line. This grant is helping fund the development of a website for the nonprofit, allowing it to better communicate with stakeholders and the community.

GO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

A 2022 AACF grant helped GO Community Development Corporation's Warm Feet Project provide 300-plus children in Ashtabula County with winter boots. This grant is supporting that project again, assisting with the purchase of boots, hats and gloves amid a growing need for food, clothing and basic needs.

GROUNDWORK OHIO

This grant is helping to recruit, train and provide stipends to five African American families from Appalachian Ohio to participate in the Family Action Network. The goal? To empower parents and caregivers to share their experiences with Ohio's policymakers – and help dismantle structural/systemic barriers and close racial and geographic disparities experienced by Black families.



Groundwork Ohio launched its Family Action Network in 2022, bringing together a diverse statewide coalition of Ohio families to engage with policymakers on the issues that matter most to them. A 2023 AACF grant is supporting the organization's efforts to recruit five African American families from Appalachian Ohio to participate in the network.

2023 GRANTS

KOOL BOIZ FOUNDATION

Since 2019, more than 240 Youngstown youth have participated in the Young Men's Empowerment Series Mentoring Program, which includes an annual in-person conference and a monthly virtual series. This grant is supporting the multifaceted program that explores long-term success through education, leadership, life skills and hard work.

MACEDONIA MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

A revitalization project is returning Lawrence County's Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Ohio's first Black church and its only surviving antebellum Black church, to service as a historic site and community center. This grant is providing the lead match for a Jeffris Family Foundation Capital Campaign Challenge Grant, which will secure funding needed to complete the restoration.

MAHONING YOUNGSTOWN COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

The Community Action agencies in Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull counties are collaborating to better assist seniors with limited transportation, creating a mobile solution that brings services to them. This grant is providing food vouchers for the Tri-County Senior Food/Program Mobile Services.



More than 90 young men of color in grades 7-12 participated in the Young Men's Empowerment Series Mentoring Program's 2022 annual conference. There, mentors, speakers and city leaders educated participants on leadership, scholarship, financial literacy and a successful mindset. AACF awarded grants to the Kool Boiz Foundation in 2022 and 2023 to support the program.

MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH PRESERVATION SOCIETY

This grant is helping to put Mount Zion Baptist Church in Athens back on solid footing by assisting with repairs to the basement. The work is part of a plan to restore the historic Black church and transform it into the Mount Zion Black Cultural Center, a multi-use community center.



Mount Zion Baptist Church in Athens, Ohio

2023 GRANTS

MUSKINGUM COUNTY SOCIAL JUSTICE COALITION

This grant is supporting the third year of the Career Connections Camp, through which Muskingum County junior high students explore career pathways. The camp includes college campus tours, local industry visits and hands-on skill development activities – all designed to help youth make informed decisions throughout their secondary education.

NELSON T. GANT FOUNDATION

The Nelson T. Gant House stands as a testament to a man who pulled himself up from servitude to become a well-respected businessman and a source of inspiration in Zanesville. This grant supports parking lot pavement and sidewalk installation at the house and advancing the development of the property into a historical, educational, cultural and charitable facility.

OH WOW! CENTER FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

This grant is funding supplies and equipment for four programs that provide STEM learning opportunities to K-12 students and professional development to educators in Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull counties. This four-part approach aims to develop homegrown talent capable of filling the high-demand roles driving growth in Ohio's technologically advanced industries.



The OH WOW! Center for Science & Technology, which received a 2023 grant from AACF, is located in Youngstown and serves students and educators across seven school districts in Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull counties.

PUMP HOUSE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

This grant is supporting the Pump House Center for the Arts' 2024 Juneteenth Celebration. In its fourth year of hosting the event, the Ross County organization plans to expand the celebration to include authors, poets and ethnic dance groups.



An AACF grant is supporting the Pump House Center for the Arts' plans for Chillicothe's 2024 Juneteenth Celebration. The festivities include an art show with original artwork embracing the rich history of Freedom Day, a traveling quilt show designed in appreciation of the Underground Railroad, musical performances and poetry readings.

2023 GRANTS



An AACF grant is supporting the city of Portsmouth's first Black-led public art project, including a crosswalk mural that will be designed by a local Black artist and feature Black community, culture and histories of the North End neighborhood.

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH OF WARREN

Built in 1919, the Second Baptist Church Chapel is the oldest Black Baptist church in Trumbull County. This grant is helping to repair the chapel's stained-glass windows, window frames and ceiling – part of plans to restore the structure to be used for community meetings, special events, historical displays and heritage celebrations.

TRILLIUM PROJECT

Second Glance is a large public art project focused on transforming underserved areas of Portsmouth in Scioto County into areas of impact and opportunity. This grant is helping to fund the city's first Black-led public art project – crosswalk murals and sidewalk painting in the historically Black and previously segregated North End neighborhood.

WOMEN HELPING WOMEN

This grant is supporting crisis intervention and prevention services for survivors of gender-based violence and their children in Adams, Brown and Clermont counties. Women Helping Women expects to serve 30,000 survivors in 2024, providing everything from a 24-hour hotline and emergency financial assistance to support groups and court accompaniment.

YOUNGSTOWN LIFEGUARD ACADEMY

At the Youngstown Lifeguard Academy, young people gain skills that will help them make a living – and serve their community. This grant is funding scuba training and equipment for at-risk and underserved youth and young adults who have already successfully completed the lifeguard and/or swim instructor certification.

YMCA OF YOUNGSTOWN

This grant is supporting the YMCA of Youngstown's RESPECT League, a program for at-risk young men of color ages 11-17. A community mentoring collaboration, the program includes mentors, mandatory weekly classes on life skills, college and career readiness programming, community opportunities, leadership training and other mentor-focused activities.

YWCA OF GREATER CINCINNATI

The House of Peace Domestic Violence Shelter is the only domestic violence shelter in Clermont County and also serves Adams and Brown counties. This grant is supporting the shelter and its programs, including emergency services for domestic and sexual violence survivors, a 24-hour crisis hotline, mental health care and court advocacy.

INVESTING IN OUR YOUNG LEADERS

In 2023, FAO partnered with its affiliate foundations to support projects developed and implemented by local youth under age 18. The goal of this funding is to empower young leaders and inspire them to embrace greater roles in their communities. AACF awarded youth-led project grant funding to:

HUBBARD HOUSE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MUSEUM

Ashtabula County's Hubbard House Underground Railroad Museum preserves a home that served as one of Ohio's northernmost stops on the Underground Railroad. This grant is supporting a program that will train local youth, ages 11-18, to become docents at the museum – investing in the preservation of history and passing it on to the next generation.

SIMON KENTON COUNCIL BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

The ScoutReach program aims to make the Boy Scout experience accessible to all. This grant is helping the Simon Kenton Council bring the program to underserved and hard-to-reach areas in Adams, Athens, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton counties by providing funding for supplies and outreach activities to recruit youth and adult volunteer leaders.



A 2023 AACF grant is helping to make Boy Scout programming available to local youth in underserved and hard-to-reach areas in 10 Appalachian Ohio counties, providing them opportunities for personal and leadership development and fun outdoor experiences.

Our Growing Home Fellows

In 2023, FAO and its affiliate foundations welcomed the inaugural class of Growing Home Fellows, a program designed to recruit, retain and nurture our region's next generation of community builders. In exchange for committing to live, work and volunteer in their communities for five years, the fellows – active in 29 of Appalachian Ohio's 32 counties – receive a financial stipend and access to a leadership program that includes service, skill development and peer learning.



Ernie Bynum, co-founder of the African American Community Fund, shared his personal experiences with health and in leadership and how issues of health equity impact communities in Appalachian Ohio and beyond during a panel discussion at the August 2023 Growing Home Fellows retreat.



2023 CAPACITY-BUILDING GRANTS

With funding from the U.S. Bank Foundation, AACF also awarded 10 capacity-building grants to help Black-led and Black-serving organizations best meet the needs of those they serve by expanding services, enhancing program quality and/or improving operational efficiencies. A total of \$47,000 in capacity-building funding was awarded to:

- **Black By God** to expand the community-led news organization focused on the Black experience in the central Appalachian region
- **Calvary Missionary Baptist Church** to train teachers, support staff and volunteers for a career and educational development initiative serving Black and minority individuals in Zanesville's Putnam Historical District
- **Enterprise Muskingum** to train a staff member in data use, sources and visualization
- **Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church** to fund interim insurance payments while the church's preservation society is being organized, which will allow for the release of state-appropriated funding
- **Mount Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society** to support restoration of the historic church
- **OH WOW! Center for Science & Technology** to fund staff training, team development and professional development
- **Simon Kenton Council Boy Scouts** to help train adult volunteers, youth leaders and a diversity, equity and inclusion trainer
- **Women Helping Women** to support the influx of crisis hotline calls, to improve system response and to provide direct assistance to survivors of gender-based violence in Adams, Brown and Clermont counties
- **YMCA of Youngstown** for professional development and training for staff and mentors and technology and equipment upgrades to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the RESPECT League program
- **YWCA of Greater Cincinnati** to increase awareness of programs available in Adams, Brown and Clermont counties and to integrate back into those communities post pandemic

Learn more about AACF's work across the region by scanning the QR code or visiting us at www.AppalachianOhio.org/AACF.



Bringing community together to preserve Black history

Throughout the 20th century, Mount Zion Baptist Church in Athens served as a social and spiritual hub for the Black community of the Ohio River Valley.

The Mount Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society formed in 2013 to preserve this historic Black church – a National Register of Historic Places site – and transform it into a vibrant community center.

In 2022, AACF awarded a grant to the nonprofit organization to help fund a project that is preserving and telling the story of the church and other moments in Athens' Black history through the arts. After researching the church's founding and rendering drawings, members of the preservation society joined Athens artist Keith Wilde, Passion Works artists, local students and community volunteers in early 2024 to create faux stained-glass windows that will be installed over the church's windows while they are being restored.



Ada-Woodson Adams, president of the Mount Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society, joined Athens artist Keith Wilde and volunteers throughout the community at Passion Works Studios for a project that is preserving and writing the next chapter in Athens' Black history.

OUR IMPACT IN 2023



**\$802,933
IN ASSETS**

Under the AACF umbrella



**\$181,750
AWARDED**

Across AACF's family
of funds

5 FUNDS

Partnering with AACF in service to our community

1. African American Community Fund
2. Black Appalachian Regional Community Fund
3. Ernest E. Bynum Memorial Fund for African American Communities
4. Ken and Adele Mason Family Fund
5. Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church



African American
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An Affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

HELP SUPPORT THE PEOPLE, PLACES AND FUTURE OF APPALACHIAN OHIO'S AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

**Gifts to the African American Community Fund are
tax-deductible and can be made in a variety of ways.**

GIVE TO AACF

Gifts to the African American Community Fund's endowment fund permanently grow grant funding, with priorities locally determined, for nonprofit and public organizations working to increase quality of life in our communities. Your generosity supports efforts that improve health, create educational opportunities, advance economic development and environmental stewardship, and provide access to arts and cultural experiences.

CREATE A FUND

Provide sustained support for the causes closest to your heart by establishing a named fund through the African American Community Fund. We can help you create endowments to support specific charitable organizations or schools; donor-advised funds for family giving; corporate funds for a company's charitable grantmaking; and more.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Include charitable giving in your estate planning, giving you the peace of mind of knowing the communities and causes closest to your heart will continue to receive your support beyond your lifetime. The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio can assist you and/or your advisors with charitable research, provide options and create necessary documents or language for your plan.

How to make a gift



Mail to:

African American Community Fund
c/o Foundation for Appalachian Ohio
35 Public Square, Nelsonville, OH 45764

or



Online:

www.AppalachianOhio.org/AACF
or www.tinyurl.com/GiveAACF

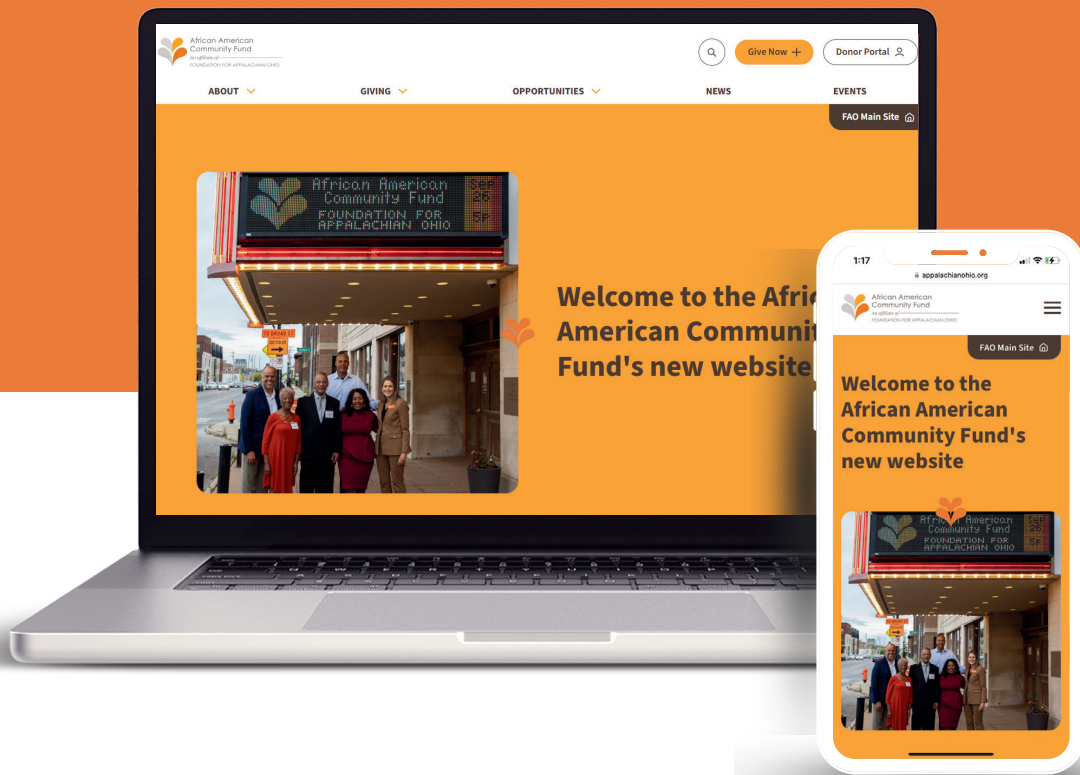
For information about establishing a named fund or planned gift, email AACF@fao.org or call 740.753.1111.

GIFTS OF ALL SIZES AND KINDS – CASH, STOCK, REAL ESTATE, ROYALTIES OR QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS FROM IRAS – MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Our new website!

LIVE NOW



www.AppalachianOhio.org/AACF



Featuring more impact stories, easier navigation — and a lot of inspiration! Check back often for updates.