



# 2022 GIVING GUIDE

**GIVE WISELY.  
GIVE LOCALLY.**

# Table of Contents

<b>Page 2</b>	Give Locally
<b>3</b>	Give Wisely
<b>4</b>	How to Read This Report
<b>5</b>	Charity Categories
<b>6</b>	BBB Accredited Charities
<b>31</b>	Torch Awards for Ethics Winners
<b>35</b>	Online Charity Review Symbols
<b>36</b>	20 Standards for Charity Accountability

The BBB Serving Western Michigan Educational Foundation is your partner in the West Michigan philanthropic community. We are doing this by working with local nonprofit organizations to build an inclusive, accurate database of local organizations with important donor information.



# GIVE LOCALLY

If you want to see first-hand how your donations are making a positive impact in your community, give locally! This year Giving Tuesday, the World's Biggest day of Generosity, falls on Nov. 29, 2022. On this day, many charities partner with other organizations, with some even matching donations on that day.

It's important to keep in mind a few quick tips before giving donations, however.

Here are a few suggestions from your local BBB Serving Western Michigan on choosing a great cause to give to not only during the holiday season, but throughout the year:



*"It's a simple idea: whether it's making someone smile, helping a neighbor or stranger out, showing up for an issue or people we care about, or giving some of what we have to those who need our help, every act of generosity counts and everyone has something to give."*

-GivingTuesday



- 1 Make sure to get the organization's full name.** Many charity scams use names similar to other established organizations.
- 2 Check the organization is properly licensed on state and federal websites.** In Michigan, you can search for a charity at: [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov), [ag.state.mi.us](https://www.ag.state.mi.us), or [michigan.gov/lara](https://www.michigan.gov/lara).
- 3 Does the organization have a website?** If yes, look for an annual report, 990 and a privacy policy. If no, ask the organization to send you copies of these documents.
- 4 Ask for results.** Annual reports should include completed projects and a breakdown of expenses.
- 5 Don't be pressured.** Trustworthy organizations will not push you to donate now or pressure you to give bank information.
- 6 Check the organization's mission.** Does it align with your giving philosophy?
- 7 Check give.org.** The BBB publishes reports on local and national charities that are available for free to the public.

# GIVE WISELY

The Wise Giving Alliance is always looking for information to help charities understand how current and potential donors are thinking. It is important for nonprofits to adapt, adjust and plan for changes in the economy due to the challenges of a variety of stressors, such as the pandemic.

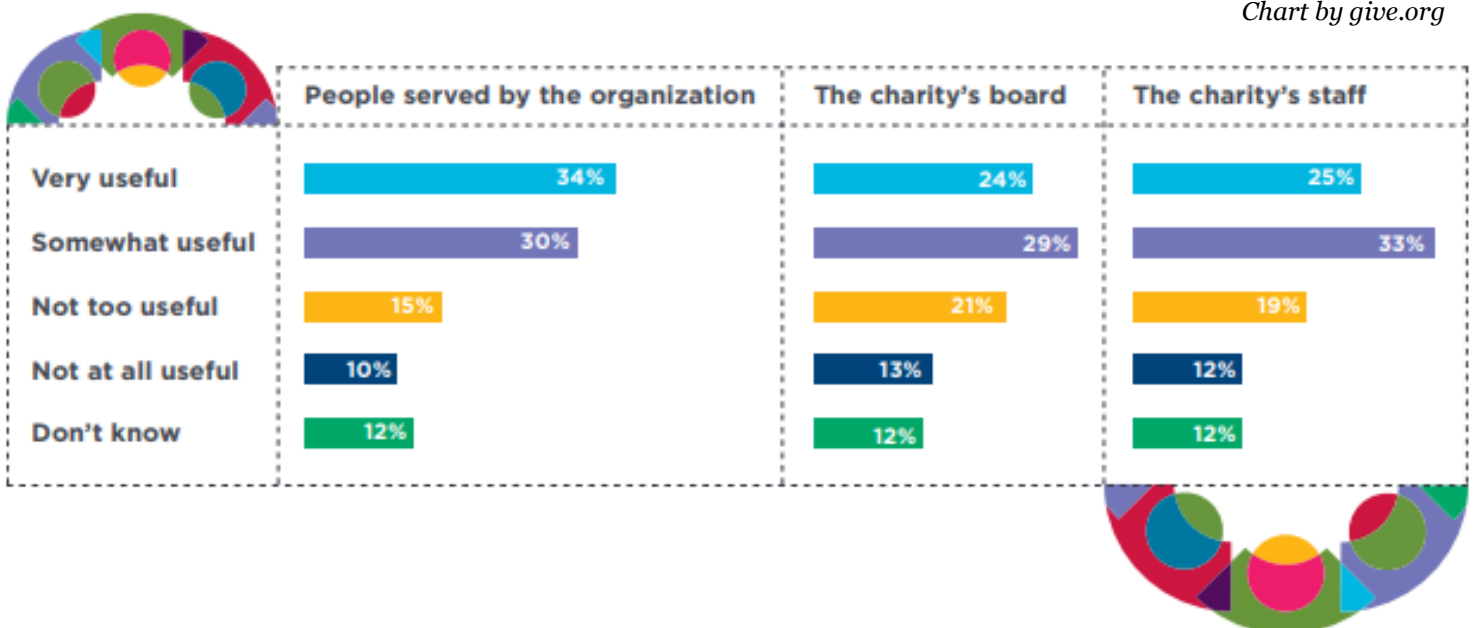
To be successful, charities must adapt to the desires of not only those they serve, but those who donate as well. Recent trends have indicated that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles are becoming increasingly important to donors.

According to the the WGA, their recent "Give.org Donor Trust Special Report [on] Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" explored how the donating public values DEI principles and how important these factors are in their giving process. The report provided results of a survey of more than 2,100 adults in the United States (as well as a separate survey of more than 1,100 adults in Canada) and explored how individual donors value DEI principles.

Donors indicated how useful information about the demographics of the people served by the organization, the charity's board, and the charity's staff would be in their giving decisions. The chart below details these results.

## By the numbers:

Chart by give.org



# How to Read this Report

*Please note the following explanations about the report:*

## **NAME INCLUSION:**

**Inclusion on this list should not be interpreted as approval or disapproval by the BBB of a charity. The information in this listing is intended to assist donors in exercising their own judgment.**

## **NAME OMISSION:**

**Omission from this list should not be interpreted as meaning a charity meets or does not meet standards. It simply means that the BBB has not requested the charity disclose due to no inquiries from the public, or the charity is less than a year old.**

## **LATEST RESULTS:**

**This list reflects the Accredited Charity report results as of November 1, 2022. Charity reports are available until their expiration dates, generally two years after their evaluation. All reports are based on the BBB Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charity Accountability. Visit [bbb.org](http://bbb.org) or [give.org](http://give.org) at any time for the most recent reports.**

**The following is a listing of the charities by category that have participated in the BBB Charity Evaluation Program throughout West Michigan. The list includes organizations that have requested to be evaluated, and those who uploaded their information after a request from the BBB. The BBB also receives inquiries about charities through the mail, phone, and e-mail from the general public.**

# CHARITY CATEGORIES

1

**Animal  
Protection**

*p. 6*

2

**Arts and  
Culture**

*pp. 6-8*

3

**Children &  
Youth**

*pp. 8-11*

4

**Education &  
Literature**

*pp. 11-12*

5

**Elderly**

*p. 12-13*

6

**Environment**

*p. 14*

7

**Food  
Banks**

*p. 15*

8

**Foundations**

*pp. 16-17*

9

**Health**

*pp. 18-19*

10

**Human  
Services**

*pp. 19-26*

11

**Ministries**

*pp. 27-29*

12

**Social  
Justice**

*p. 30*

Transparency is important in any donor's decision to give. That's why those of us at the BBB want to make it clear that our accredited nonprofits value this as much as you do. To make it easier for donors as they look for the perfect place to contribute this giving season, the BBB Serving Western Michigan has listed BBB Accredited Charities by category. We have also included each charity's purpose and website so you can get to know their mission and whether their goals and programs match your expectations. Whichever charity you select, they will be deeply grateful for your donation to help them achieve their mission.

# 1 Give Locally Giving Guide **ANIMAL PROTECTION**



Barry County Humane Society

*Photo: The BCHS working to get facility dogs in local schools*

## **BARRY COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY**

[barrycountyhumane.org](http://barrycountyhumane.org)

Purpose: To prevent cruelty and to promote humane treatment because all living creatures have the right to live free of suffering.

# 2 Give Locally Giving Guide **ARTS & CULTURE**

## **ARTS COUNCIL of GREATER KALAMAZOO**

[kalamazooarts.org](http://kalamazooarts.org)

Purpose: The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo exists to infuse arts and culture into the commercial, educational, and creative economies of our region.



# 2 Give Locally Giving Guide

## ARTS & CULTURE



### ARTS COUNCIL of GREATER LANSING

*lansingarts.org*

Purpose: The Arts Council of Greater Lansing exists to support, strengthen and promote arts, culture and creativity in the capital region.

### CEREAL CITY CONCERT BAND

*cerealcityconcertband.org*

Purpose: To provide Battle Creek and its surrounding communities with quality band music/performances, to further the cultural growth of the community and to enhance the many ongoing activities in the Calhoun County area.



### GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC MUSEUM

*grpm.org*

Purpose: Grand Rapids Public Museum exists to be a living monument of artifacts, ideas and stories told through exhibitions, events and educational programming designed to inspire, motivate and celebrate our human bond. They enrich the life of the community through experiences of a wider world in a uniquely Grand Rapids context.





# 2 Give Locally Giving Guide ARTS & CULTURE



## HOLLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

[hollandsymphony.org](http://hollandsymphony.org)

Purpose: The stated purpose of this organization is a commitment to engaging people in music, as well as enriching the cultural life of the community.

## RENAISSANCE ENTERPRISES

[visioncouncil.org/bobrowe](http://visioncouncil.org/bobrowe)

Purpose: To provide the highest quality arts and music programs in area nursing homes and other senior facilities through the use of the finest artists, artisans and performers.



# 3 Give Locally Giving Guide CHILDREN & YOUTH



## AYA YOUTH COLLECTIVE

[ayayouth.org](http://ayayouth.org)

Purpose: AYA creates a continuum of youth-specific services. At their drop-in center, they've served over 1600 youth where basic needs are met and trust is built with AYA staff, allowing youth the opportunity to engage in various supports like vital document recovery, education and employment resources, transportation, housing assessment and referral, and culturally appropriate therapy, health care, and wellness activities.

# 3 Give Locally Giving Guide

## CHILDREN & YOUTH



### BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS of SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

[bgcswmi.org](http://bgcswmi.org)

Purpose: to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

### CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

[cac-ottawa.org](http://cac-ottawa.org)

Purpose: To protect children by providing prevention and multi-disciplinary intervention in investigation, assessment and treatment of child sexual abuse in an environment that is child sensitive, supportive & safe.



### GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY ALLIANCE

[globalphilanthropyalliance.org](http://globalphilanthropyalliance.org)

Purpose: Global Philanthropy Alliance (GPA) develops young social entrepreneurs in Africa by funding youth-led or youth-engaged organizations that unleash the power of youth to advance the economic and social health of their families and communities.



# 3 Give Locally Giving Guide

## CHILDREN & YOUTH



### GRAND RAPIDS INITIATIVE for LEADERS

[grileadership.org](http://grileadership.org)

Purpose: GRIL's mission is to strengthen leaders to transform communities.

### JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT of the MICHIGAN GREAT LAKES, INC.

[michigangreatlakes.ja.org](http://michigangreatlakes.ja.org)

Purpose: To inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.



### MID MICHIGAN BIG BROTHERS & BIG SISTERS

[bbbsmitten.org](http://bbbsmitten.org)

Purpose: To provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.



# 3 Give Locally Giving Guide CHILDREN & YOUTH



## STARR COMMONWEALTH

[starr.org](http://starr.org)

Purpose: Starr Commonwealth's mission is to create positive environments where children flourish.

# 4 Give Locally Giving Guide EDUCATION & LITERATURE

## AFFINITY MENTORING

[affinitymentoring.org](http://affinitymentoring.org)

Purpose: Affinity Mentoring's mission is to facilitate equitable growth in academics, social emotional skills, and self-esteem through mutually beneficial mentoring relationships. We believe in cultivating a brave space that amplifies the voices of young agents of change in a diverse and inclusive community.



## THE REFUGEE EDUCATION CENTER

[refugeeeducationcenter.org](http://refugeeeducationcenter.org)

Purpose: We support refugees in their journey to become fully participating members of the West Michigan community. We envision a thriving, multicultural West Michigan community where all have an opportunity to pursue a better future!

# 4

## Give Locally Giving Guide

# EDUCATION & LITERATURE



### WEST MICHIGAN CENTER FOR ARTS + TECHNOLOGY (WMCAT)

[wmcats.org](http://wmcats.org)

Purpose: The West Michigan Center for Arts + Technology (WMCAT) provides a culture of opportunity for people to make social and economic progress in their lives and community. WMCAT fulfills their mission through visual arts and tech engagement, workforce development, and social enterprises.

# 5

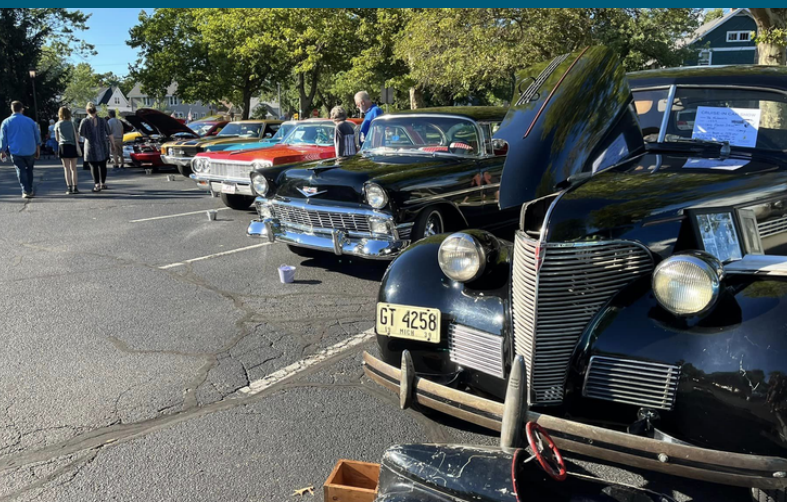
## Give Locally Giving Guide

# ELDERLY

### BUCHANAN AREA SENIOR CENTER

[thebasc.org](http://thebasc.org)

Purpose: To inspire older adults to live purposeful, active, and holistic lives, in their residence of choice, as fully as they are able. Also, to provide community support services and assisted care to older adults, with honor and respect.



### EVERGREEN COMMONS

[evergreencommons.org](http://evergreencommons.org)

Purpose: To inspire older adults to live purposeful, active, and holistic lives, in their residence of choice, as fully as they are able. Also, to provide community support services and assisted care to older adults, with honor and respect.

# 5 Give Locally Giving Guide **ELDERLY**



## **MEALS ON WHEELS**

*seniormealsonwheels.org*

Purpose: Our mission is to provide quality nutrition services in a supportive environment to promote the health and independence of older adults.

## **SENIOR NEIGHBORS, INC.**

*seniorneighbors.org*

Purpose: Promote the well-being of older adults with services that promote self-sufficiency, especially to those with physical, social or economic needs living in Kent County.



"To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honors."

*- Tia Walker*

# 6 Give Locally Giving Guide

## ENVIRONMENT



### **BLANDFORD NATURE CENTER**

*[blandfordnaturecenter.org](http://blandfordnaturecenter.org)*

Purpose: To educate, engage, and empower our community to become stewards of the natural world that sustains us.

### **GRAND TRAVERSE REGIONAL LAND CONSERVANCY**

*[gtrlc.org](http://gtrlc.org)*

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is to protect significant natural, agricultural and scenic areas and to advance stewardship now and for all future generations.



### **NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

*[northcountrytrail.org](http://northcountrytrail.org)*

Purpose: The North Country Trail Association develops, maintains, protects, and promotes the North Country National Scenic Trail as the premier hiking path across the northern tier of the United States through a trail-wide coalition of volunteers and partners.



# 7

## Give Locally Giving Guide **FOOD BANKS**



### **FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN FOOD BANK**

*feedwm.org*

Purpose: To ensure food is available to the hungry in our community.

"Food is our common ground."

- James Beard

Did you know?

Millennials, on average, give the most annually, followed closely by Baby Boomers.





# 8 Give Locally Giving Guide

## FOUNDATIONS



### **BARRY COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

*barrycf.org*

Purpose: To serve as a leader, catalyst and resource seeking to improve the lives of people in the Barry County area by promoting charitable giving and the creation of permanently endowed funds, now and for future generations.

### **FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE FOUNDATION**

*fmgf.org*

Purpose: To build and maintain an endowment fund to support the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park.

FREDERIK  
*Meijer*  
GARDENS  
& SCULPTURE  
FOUNDATION



### **GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

*grfoundation.org*

Purpose: To build and manage our community's permanent endowment and lead the community to strengthen the lives of its people.

# 8 Give Locally Giving Guide

## FOUNDATIONS



### GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

[grpsf.org](http://grpsf.org)

Purpose: (To) raise, grow and steward funds and other community resources to support the Grand Rapids Public Schools for the benefit of its students.

### MICHIGAN GATEWAY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

[mgcf.org](http://mgcf.org)

Purpose: To foster a community of philanthropy, for good, forever.



### THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE HOLLAND/ZEELAND AREA

[cfhz.org](http://cfhz.org)

Purpose: The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area's mission is to create lasting positive change. We work to build a permanent community endowment that supports high impact charitable projects. We help donors achieve their charitable goals, and we lead and partner in community level initiatives.



# 9

## Give Locally Giving Guide

# HEALTH



### ALPHA GRAND RAPIDS

[alphagrandrapids.org](http://alphagrandrapids.org)

Purpose: Motivated by the love of Christ, we promote abundant life by providing holistic services to women and men affected by unplanned pregnancy.

### CATHERINE'S HEALTH CENTER

[catherineshc.org](http://catherineshc.org)

Purpose: Catherine's Health Center provides high quality, affordable and compassionate health care to under-served, uninsured, under-insured and newly insured people in our community.



### COMPREHENSIVE THERAPY CENTER

[therapycenter.org](http://therapycenter.org)

Purpose: To meet the therapeutic and educational needs of people in West Michigan with disabilities through skill building, academic enhancement and social emotional support.

# 9

## Give Locally Giving Guide

# HEALTH



### EXALTA HEALTH

[exaltahealth.org](http://exaltahealth.org)

Purpose: To reflect the spirit of Christ by providing compassionate, accessible healthcare.

### WINGS OF HOPE HOSPICE

[wingsofhopehospice.org](http://wingsofhopehospice.org)

Purpose: This organization provides compassionate care at the end of life and support through the grief experience for individuals and families in Allegan County and surrounding communities.



# 10

## Give Locally Giving Guide

# HUMAN SERVICES



### BARRY COUNTY UNITED WAY

[bcunitedway.org](http://bcunitedway.org)

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of Barry County communities.

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### **BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER**

*baxtercommunitycenter.org*

Purpose: Baxter Community Center exists to reveal God's love by responding to the human needs of the community it serves. Our programs address immediate basic needs as well as helping children, youth and families become productive, self-sufficient and contributing members of the community.

### **COMSTOCK COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.**

*comstockcc.com*

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is to develop resources and provide a setting for education, recreation, social events, human services and life-long activities to enhance the lives of community members and build a healthier community.



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

*- Mahatma Gandhi*

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### **CRISTO REY COMMUNITY CENTER**

*cristoreycommunity.org*

Purpose: To serve the vulnerable populations within our community by offering need-based programs with an emphasis on access to medical care, mental health services, food, and financial counseling.

### **DISABILITY ADVOCATES of KENT COUNTY**

*dakc.us*

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is to advocate, assist, educate and inform on independent living options for persons with disabilities and to create a barrier free society for all.



### **DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION of WEST MICHIGAN**

*dsawm.org*

Purpose: The DSAWM is a resource and advocacy organization, promoting public awareness and supporting lifelong opportunities for individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



Photo: The FSC receiving cribs for their C.R.I.B program

### FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER of BARRY COUNTY

[familysupportbarry.com](http://familysupportbarry.com)

Purpose: To prevent all forms of child abuse and neglect through awareness, advocacy and education.

### GOODWILL NORTHERN MICHIGAN

[goodwillnmi.org](http://goodwillnmi.org)

Purpose: Our Vision is a community where everyone has access to a safe and secure place to live, the nutritious food they need, and opportunities for empowering employment — so that everyone can thrive.



Did you know?

Nonprofits account for about one in ten jobs in the US private workforce.

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### **GOODWILL INDUSTRIES of WEST MICHIGAN, INC.**

[goodwillwm.org](http://goodwillwm.org)

Purpose: The primary purpose of Goodwill is to provide rehabilitation services, work training, employment, job placement, and other opportunities for personal growth for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaging conditions who cannot be readily absorbed in the competitive labor market.

### **HABITAT for HUMANITY of KENT COUNTY**

[habitatkent.org](http://habitatkent.org)

Purpose: Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity of Kent County brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope.



### **LAKESHORE PREGNANCY CENTER**

[lpcenters.com](http://lpcenters.com)

Purpose: To build a vibrant community where every life is valued, loved, protected and transformed because of the gospel of Jesus Christ.





# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### OAKDALE NEIGHBORS

[oakdaleneighbors.org](http://oakdaleneighbors.org)

Purpose: To help neighborhood residents improve their lives and create a neighborhood of vitality and grace by discovering, developing, and connecting skills and resources in Southeast Grand Rapids.

### PARKINSON'S ASSOCIATION of WEST MICHIGAN, INC.

[parkinsonswm.org](http://parkinsonswm.org)

Purpose: To provide the best information on opportunities, treatment, research, and care to people with Parkinson's and their families.



### RONALD McDONALD HOUSE of WESTERN MI

[rmhwesternmichigan.org](http://rmhwesternmichigan.org)

Purpose: To provide a home away from home for families of children and youth seeking medical or mental health treatment in our community.

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### **SOWHOPE**

*sowhope.org*

Purpose: To inspire women around the world by promoting wellness, education, and economic opportunities.

### **UNITED WAY of GRATIOT and ISABELLA COUNTIES**

*uwgic.org*

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is to engage citizens in community effort to support human services that improves lives.



### **UNITED WAY of the LAKESHORE**

*unitedwaylakeshore.org*

Purpose: Uniting to inspire change and build thriving communities.

# 10 Give Locally Giving Guide

## HUMAN SERVICES



### YMCA of GREATER GRAND RAPIDS

[grymca.org](http://grymca.org)

Purpose: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

### YWCA WEST CENTRAL MICHIGAN

[ywcawcmi.org](http://ywcawcmi.org)

Purpose: The YWCA West Central Michigan uniquely specializes where racism and sexism converge by addressing the inequities that exist at that intersection. Most dramatically these inequities manifest as domestic and dating abuse, sexual assault, stalking, child sexual abuse, and human trafficking.



“Giving does not only precede receiving; it is the reason for it. It is in giving that we receive.”

- *Israelmore Ayivor*

# 11

## Give Locally Giving Guide MINISTRIES



### REACH THE FORGOTTEN JAIL MINISTRY

[jailministry.org](http://jailministry.org)

Purpose: The stated purpose of the organization is the rehabilitation of inmates in Michigan jails and prisons using evangelism and discipleship by placing a trained and dedicated chaplain inside the county jail.

### JUBILEE MINISTRIES

[jubileeministriesinc.com](http://jubileeministriesinc.com)

Purpose: Strengthening neighborhoods in the greater Holland area through the development of attainable housing options, the stewardship of vital community assets, and collaboration with key community partners.



### LIFE MATTERS WORLDWIDE

[raiseupglobal.org](http://raiseupglobal.org)

Purpose: To help the Body of Christ articulate the Biblical pro-life message in word and deed.

# 11

## Give Locally Giving Guide MINISTRIES



### **MEL TROTTER MINISTRIES**

*meltrotter.org*

Purpose: Mel Trotter Ministries exists to demonstrate the compassion of Jesus Christ toward the hungry, homeless and hurting of the greater Grand Rapids area.

### **OASIS OF HOPE CENTER**

*ohcgr.org*

Purpose: Our mission is to provide hope through low-cost or free medical care and basic life-skills education to the economically disadvantaged and uninsured in the west side of Grand Rapids, in Jesus Name.



### **PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

*prts.edu*

Purpose: To train students to serve Christ and His Church through Biblical, experiential, and practical ministry.

# 11 Give Locally Giving Guide

## MINISTRIES



### SAFE HAVEN MINISTRIES

[safehavenministries.org](http://safehavenministries.org)

Purpose: Safe Haven Ministries is a domestic violence agency offering comprehensive intervention and support services to women and children who have experienced abuse as well as prevention and education programming for the entire community. Motivated by Christ's love, our mission is to end domestic abuse.

### WORD AND DEED

[wordanddeed.org](http://wordanddeed.org)

Purpose: Our mission is to meet the spiritual and physical needs of people in the developing world in accordance with biblical principles for the glory of God.



### KEYS FOR KIDS MINISTRIES

[keysforkids.org](http://keysforkids.org)

Purpose: Promoting the religious education of children and families by providing daily devotionals for the purpose of teaching children and their families the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

# 12 Give Locally Giving Guide

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

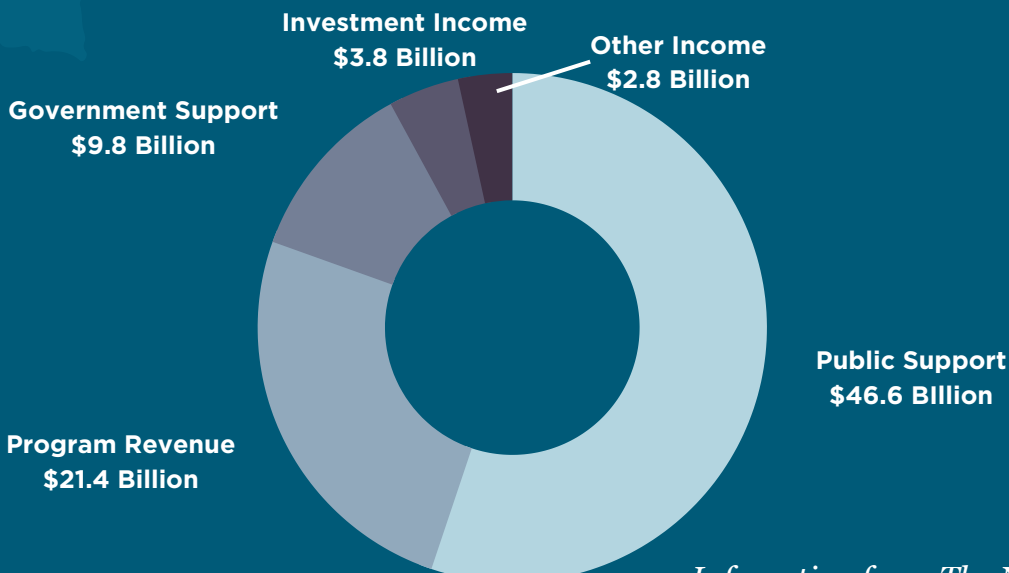


### ASSOCIATION FOR A MORE JUST SOCIETY-US

[asj-us.org](http://asj-us.org)

Purpose: To accomplish the vision, AJS invites others to join us in doing justice and mercy, enables others to work for justice in their own society, and inspires others to support the work of the association.

The BBB Serving Western Michigan thanks our accredited charities for upholding our values of transparency and honesty. We hope this guide helps you in your giving decisions this season.



Did you know?  
A survey of the Top 100 Nonprofits in the US showed that over 50% of their annual income came from public support from donors like you!

# 2022

## Torch Awards for Ethics

The Better Business Bureau Serving Western Michigan congratulates this year's nonprofit recipients of the 2022 Better Business Bureau Torch Awards for Ethics.



LAUREN VANKEULEN  
CEO, AYA YOUTH COLLECTIVE



**2022 WINNER**<sup>SM</sup>

Nonprofit with 20+ employees



“ To me the Torch Award for of Ethics celebrates two things. One, it celebrates the integrity that we are committed to having and two, the financial transparency that we're willing to have if anyone asks us. We have such a dedicated and diverse group of individuals that are committed to youth here. AYA is a product of the people who choose to come to work every single day and are willing to invest in the lives of young people. So I think for them to see this, it's a recognition of the work they do every single day, and I'm so grateful to them for that. I hope that this award communicates to our donors, our volunteers, and our funders, that we are a trustworthy organization. ”

~ Lauren VanKeulen



# 2022

## Torch Awards for Ethics

The Better Business Bureau Serving Western Michigan congratulates this year's nonprofit recipients of the 2022 Better Business Bureau Torch Awards for Ethics.



ELLEN SAWYER  
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMPREHENSIVE THERAPY CENTER



**2022 WINNER** SM

Nonprofit with under 20 employees



“

*People who have children with disabilities are under an enormous amount of stress. For us to ask them to trust us with their children is a huge ask, and we take that very seriously. So, to be able to be recognized as somebody who is trustworthy, who has integrity, who operates in a way that has earned that trust, really allows us to serve our community better. We are going to operate in a way that exemplifies trust and ethics and all of those things anyway, but for someone outside of our organization to come along and say, 'we see the hard work that you're doing' is phenomenal.*

*~ Ellen Sawyer*


”

# Explanation of online Charity Review Symbols

The Wise Giving Alliance has set *20 Standards for Charity Accountability*, which can be found on pages 22-24 of this publication. After charities are reviewed, they may meet all, or some of the standards. As you study the charities, you will see the symbols listed in the reports on the BBB Serving Western Michigan website. This explanation will help you as you make decisions on which charities you'd like to contribute to.




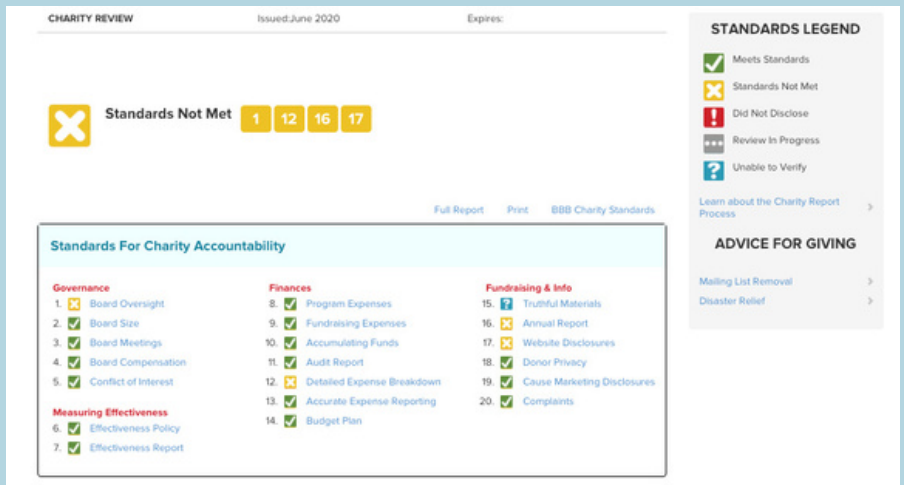
## Accredited (Met Standards) -

Charities with a green check box  have met the *20 Standards for Charity Accountability*. There is no charge to charities for the accreditation evaluation. Charities marked in bold are seal holders who financially support the BBB Foundation and may use the BBB Accredited Charity Seal.



## Standards Not Met -

If a charity has number codes marked by a yellow  (for example: 1, 12, 16, 17 that means the charity did not meet the standards as listed by the BBB Charity Standards listed on pages 22-24.




The screenshot shows a 'CHARITY REVIEW' page for 'Issued: June 2020'. It features a 'Standards Not Met' section with a yellow X icon and four numbered boxes: 1, 12, 16, and 17. Below this is a table titled 'Standards For Charity Accountability' with three columns: Governance, Finances, and Fundraising & Info. Each standard is listed with a number and a status icon (checkmark or X). A 'STANDARDS LEGEND' on the right explains the icons: green checkmark for 'Meets Standards', yellow X for 'Standards Not Met', red exclamation mark for 'Did Not Disclose', three dots for 'Review In Progress', and a question mark for 'Unable to Verify'. There is also a section for 'ADVICE FOR GIVING' with links for 'Mailing List Removal' and 'Disaster Relief'.


Category	Standard	Status
Governance	1. Board Oversight	Standards Not Met
	2. Board Size	Meets Standards
	3. Board Meetings	Meets Standards
	4. Board Compensation	Meets Standards
	5. Conflict of Interest	Meets Standards
Measuring Effectiveness	6. Effectiveness Policy	Meets Standards
	7. Effectiveness Report	Meets Standards
Finances	8. Program Expenses	Meets Standards
	9. Fundraising Expenses	Meets Standards
	10. Accumulating Funds	Meets Standards
	11. Audit Report	Meets Standards
	12. Detailed Expense Breakdown	Standards Not Met
	13. Accurate Expense Reporting	Meets Standards
	14. Budget Plan	Meets Standards
Fundraising & Info	15. Truthful Materials	Meets Standards
	16. Annual Report	Standards Not Met
	17. Website Disclosures	Standards Not Met
	18. Donor Privacy	Meets Standards
	19. Cause Marketing Disclosures	Meets Standards
	20. Complaints	Meets Standards



## Unable to Verify -

If a charity has a blue question mark  that means the BBB was unable to verify if the charity met the cited provision(s) of the *BBB Charity Standards* on pages 22-24. This designation indicates the charity either did not provide all of the requested information or the information provided was not sufficient to conclude that they met the cited standard(s).



**Review in Progress -** Charities with a  means that the BBB has a Review in Progress of that organization. They are being currently evaluated based on recently provided materials by the organization to the BBB. Check [bbb.org](http://bbb.org) or [give.org](http://give.org) at a later date for the results of the evaluation.



**Did Not Disclose -** the charitable organization either has not responded to written BBB requests for information or has declined to be evaluated in relation to the *BBB Standards for Charity Accountability*. Charity participation is voluntary. However, without the requested information, it is not possible to determine whether these charities adhere to all of the standards. The BBB encourages charities to disclose information beyond that typically included in financial statements and government filings, in order to demonstrate transparency and strengthen public trust in the charitable sector.

# 20 Standards for Charity Accountability

After a three-year period, drawing on independent research on donor expectations, professional and technical assistance from a variety of philanthropic experts, and numerous comments from donors and charities, the BBB Wise Giving Alliance issued the Standards for Charity Accountability used by BBBs across the country for evaluating local charities.

**The full text of each standard and how they're applied is accessible at [www.give.org](http://www.give.org).**

## Governance and Oversight

The governing board has ultimate oversight authority for any charitable organization. This section seeks to ensure the volunteer board is active, independent and free of self-dealing.

### **1. A board of directors that provides adequate oversight of the charity's operations and its staff.**

Adequate oversight includes, but is not limited to, regularly scheduled appraisals of the CEO's performance, evidence of disbursement controls such as board approval of the budget and fundraising practices, establishment of a conflict of interest policy, and establishment of accounting procedures to safeguard charity finances.

### **2. A board of directors with a minimum of five voting members.**

**3. A minimum of three evenly spaced meetings per year of the full governing body with a majority in attendance, with face-to-face participation.**

**4. Not more than one or 10% (whichever is greater) directly or indirectly compensated person(s) serving as a voting member(s) of the board. Compensated members shall not serve as the board's chair or treasurer.**

**5. No transaction(s) in which any board or staff members have material conflicting interests with the charity resulting from any relationship or business affiliation.**

Factors considered include, but are not limited to: any arm's length procedures established by the charity; the size of the transaction relative to like expense of the charity; whether the interested party participated in the board vote on the transaction; if competitive bids were sought and whether the transaction is one-time, recurring, or ongoing.

### **Measuring Effectiveness**

An organization should regularly assess its effectiveness in achieving its mission. This section seeks to ensure an organization has defined, measurable goals and objectives in place and a defined process to evaluate the success and impact of its program(s).

**6. Have a board policy of assessing, no less than every two years, the organization's performance and effectiveness and of determining future actions required to achieve its mission.**

**7. Submit to the organization's governing body, for its approval, a written report that outlines the results of the aforementioned performance and effectiveness assessment and recommendations for future actions.**

## Finances

This section of the standards seeks to ensure the charity spends its funds honestly, prudently, and in accordance with statements made in fundraising appeals.

**8. Spend at least 65% of its total expenses on program activities.**

**9. Spend no more than 35% of related contributions on fundraising. Related contributions include donations, legacies and other gifts received as a result of fundraising efforts.**

**10. Avoid accumulating funds that could be used for current program activities.**

The charity's unrestricted net assets available for use should not be more than three times the size of the past year's expenses or three times the size of the current year's budget, whichever is higher.

**11. Make available to all, on request, complete annual financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).**

When total annual gross income exceeds \$500,000, these statements should be audited in accordance with GAAP. When annual gross income is less than \$500,000, a review by a certified public accountant is sufficient to meet this standard. When annual gross income is less than \$250,000, an internally produced, complete financial statement is sufficient to meet this standard.

**12. Include in financial statements a breakdown of expenses (e.g., salaries, travel, postage, etc.) showing what portion of these expenses was allocated to program, fundraising, and administrative activities.**

**13. Accurately report the charity's expenses, including any joint cost allocations in its financial statements.**

Claiming zero fundraising expenses or otherwise understate the amount a charity spends on fundraising, and/or overstating the amount it spends on programs, will not meet this standard.

**14. Have a board-approved annual budget for its current fiscal year, outlining projected expenses for major program activities, fundraising, and administration.**

## Fundraising and Informational Materials

A fundraising appeal is often the only contact a donor has with a charity and may be the sole motivation for giving. This section of the standards seeks to ensure a charity's representations to the public are accurate, complete, and respectful.

**15. Have solicitations and informational materials, distributed by any means, that are accurate, truthful, and not misleading, both in whole and in part.**

**16. Have an annual report available to all on request that includes:**

- (a) the organization's mission statement,
- (b) a summary of past year's program service accomplishments,
- (c) a roster of the officers and members of the board of directors,
- (d) financial information that includes:
  - (i) total income in the past fiscal year,
  - (ii) expenses in the same program, fundraising, and administrative categories as in the financial statements, and
  - (iii) ending net assets.

**17. Include on any charity websites that solicit contributions, the same information that is recommended for annual reports, as well as the mailing address of the charity and electronic access to its most recent IRS Form 990.**

**18. Address privacy concerns of donors by:**

(a) providing in written appeals, at least annually, a means for both new and continuing donors to inform the charity if they do not want their name and address shared outside the organization, and  
(b) providing a clear, prominent and easily accessible privacy policy on any of its websites that tell visitors

(i) what information, if any, is being collected about them by the charity and how this information will be used,

(ii) how to contact the charity to review personal information collected and request corrections,

(iii) how to inform the charity the visitor does not wish his/her personal information to be shared outside the organization, and

(iv) what security measures the charity has in place to protect personal information.

**19. Clearly disclose how the charity benefits from the sale of products or services that state or imply a charity will benefit from a consumer sale or transaction.**

**20. Respond promptly to and act on complaints brought to its attention by the BBB about fundraising practices, privacy policy violations, and/or other issues.**

Ask us about a specific charity not included. Encourage local charities to contact us about enrolling (there's never a charge for evaluation). You can help expand the list and improve nonprofit transparency in West Michigan.

## CONTACT US

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