

**Voluntary
Action Center**
the heart of service
in Boone County



Annual Report 2009

 **Voluntary
Action Center**
the Heart of Service in Boone County

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Who We Are

Mission Statement:

Voluntary Action Center has a heart for service, providing a wide variety of resources and assistance through unique programs designed to address unmet needs, giving low-income people the opportunity to gain independence, overcome crises, meet their basic needs, and improve their quality of life. VAC also connects local agencies and volunteers with opportunities to respond to serious social problems and community issues.

Core Services

- **Family Assistance & Emergency Services:** VAC provides basic and emergency services to low-income individuals and families. Services include assistance with clothing, food, transportation, shelter, medication, and a variety of other needs. In 2009, VAC assisted 9,605 persons with 38,281 services.
- **Service Coordination & Enhanced Information:** VAC coordinates services, works to improve cooperation and awareness among providers, and educates our clients and the community about the social service programs available in our area. VAC responded to 26,492 phone or walk-in requests for information in 2009.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** VAC provides community-wide volunteer information, training, and recognition, which engages individuals in volunteer service to solve social problems and issues. VAC assists those seeking volunteer work in locating positions which will make use of their talents and skills. In 2009 a total of 7,822 persons were provided with volunteer services.

Board of Directors 2009

<i>President</i>	John Dean, SCORE
<i>Vice President</i>	Alex George, The George Law Firm
<i>Secretary</i>	Lynn Cole, Children Services Division
<i>Treasurer</i>	Robert Duncan, Social Security Administration
<i>Past President</i>	Cathy Scroggs, MU Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs
Steve Alexander	KOMU TV 8 – Mid Missouri CW
Shawn Barnes	Williams-Keepers
Jason Becking	Millers Professional Imaging
Andrea Benna	MU Intercollegiate Athletics
Billy Borgmeyer	Hickman High School
Leigh Britt	City Office of Volunteer Services
Brian Cottle	KOMU TV 8
Kim England	Community Volunteer
Lea Evans	Community Volunteer
Susan Gowin	Landmark Bank
Jackie Hawks	Center for Family Policy & Research
Gwen Jones	VA Hospital Therapist
Rev. Raymond I. Massey	Trinity Presbyterian Church
Suzanne McDavid	Field/Douglass High School Nurse
Susan D. McQuilkin	Eng & Woods
Mark Monroe, M.D.	Advanced Radiology
Rick Ravenhill	Boone County National Bank
Molly Read	MU Student
Jolene Schulz	Premier Bank
Andrea Shelton	Public Works Volunteer Program
Andrew Spaedy	Rock Bridge High School

2009 Staff

<i>Executive Director</i>	Cindy Mustard
<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Nancy Duncan
<i>Project Director</i>	Julia Treece/Marissa Todd
<i>Social Worker</i>	Ron Schmidt
<i>Social Worker</i>	Christina Montgomery
<i>Christmas Volunteer Coordinator</i>	Lea Evans
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	Amy Myers

Message from the Director

Dear Friends of VAC,

We are delighted to present you with the 2009 Annual Report of the Voluntary Action Center. It has certainly been a busy year as we celebrated our 40th anniversary!

Each day Voluntary Action Center works to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate in our community. In 2009, VAC had another record year in the number of services provided to our clients, with the total units of service totaling over 38,000.

Throughout the year, VAC staff, board of directors and volunteers have given their all to respond to those in need. Not only does VAC provide direct aid services to all populations in need here at our office, we are also dedicated to engaging citizens in volunteer service throughout our community, to meet critical local needs.

This report has been written to capture the successes and achievements of Voluntary Action Center during 2009. Our thanks go out to everyone in our community who has helped VAC meet our goals to make a difference in the lives of others. It is only through the continued support of volunteers and funders that VAC can continue to change lives through our many programs of service.



Cindy Mustard
Executive Director

Who We Are

Primary Goals

- Helping individuals and families living in poverty to survive
- Preventing people from slipping into poverty
- Moving people out of poverty

Populations Served

- People with economic disadvantages
- Underemployed and unemployed
- Homeless individuals and families
- Disadvantaged youth
- Elderly and disabled individuals
- Community-wide volunteer network

Collaborative Efforts

Collaboration between agencies is essential to providing successful programs that effectively serve the community, reducing service duplication, and identifying and addressing unmet needs. In 2009, VAC participated in 38 different collaborative groups. These partnerships enabled VAC to find innovative ways to meet the diverse needs of the community. These multi-agency efforts included:

- Basic Needs Coalition
- Boone Indicators Coalition
- Columbia Volunteer Network
- Back to School Health Fair
- Youth Community Coalition – YC2
- Boone County Related Agencies
- Interfaith Council
- Earth Day Coalition
- RSVP
- Neighborhood Leadership Planning
- Census Committee

Volunteer Activities

Hero Awards

The HERO Awards are a collaborative effort with the Columbia Daily Tribune to recognize the value of volunteerism. Specifically, the award honors outstanding volunteers, who can be nominated by anyone in the community. There are three HERO Award categories: Individual, Group (two or more persons), and Youth (age 21 or younger at the time of nomination).

For the eighth annual Columbia Tribune HERO Awards, a panel of community leaders selected winners in each category from a nomination list of 14 adults, 3 youth, and 10 groups. The nominees were publicly recognized at a reception on April 23, 2009 at Stoney Creek Inn. Each first-place winner was presented with a \$500 check for the organization where they volunteer their time. Each of the nominees also received a keepsake award.

The following were the 2009 HERO Award winners:

- Karis Ann Crosby, nominated by the TRYPs Children's Theater, received the Youth Award.
- Max Lewis received the Individual Award. He was nominated by Boone County Family Resources.
- The Aktion Club, nominated by City of Columbia Office of Volunteer Services, received the Group Award.

Helping Hand Catalog

VAC publishes the Helping Hand Catalog of volunteer opportunities in Boone County, which lists agencies that utilize volunteers, available positions, and contact information. Over 200 agencies are listed in the catalog, with a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. In 2009, VAC distributed 3,460 catalogs to potential volunteers.

New in 2009

40th Anniversary

Voluntary Action Center celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2009. To mark this event, VAC held a ribbon cutting at Christmas in July and launched a 40th anniversary fundraising initiative. This fundraising effort helped VAC exceed its fundraising goal. VAC also celebrated 15 years as a Partner in Education during 2009.

Enewsletter

Voluntary Action Center established a monthly newsletter to complement the bi-monthly newsletter. The newsletter contains information on VAC's services, upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. Approximately 25% of the recipients read the newsletter each month.

Project Homeless Connect

Voluntary Action Center participated in the first ever Project Homeless Connect. This event for homeless individuals and families brought together many agencies at Silverthorne Arena on the Stephens College campus. People received food, haircuts and numerous other services.

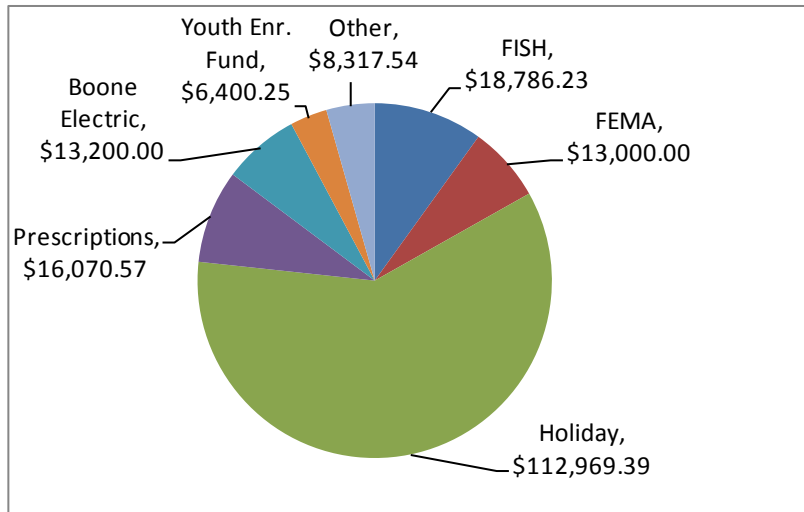
Technology Upgrades

Tech 2, a local technology firm, helped Voluntary Action Center move its email server to Google, which has made our email more efficient. Tech 2 also relocated the VAC website to their server and is helping the staff set up a system which will allow them to keep the website more current.

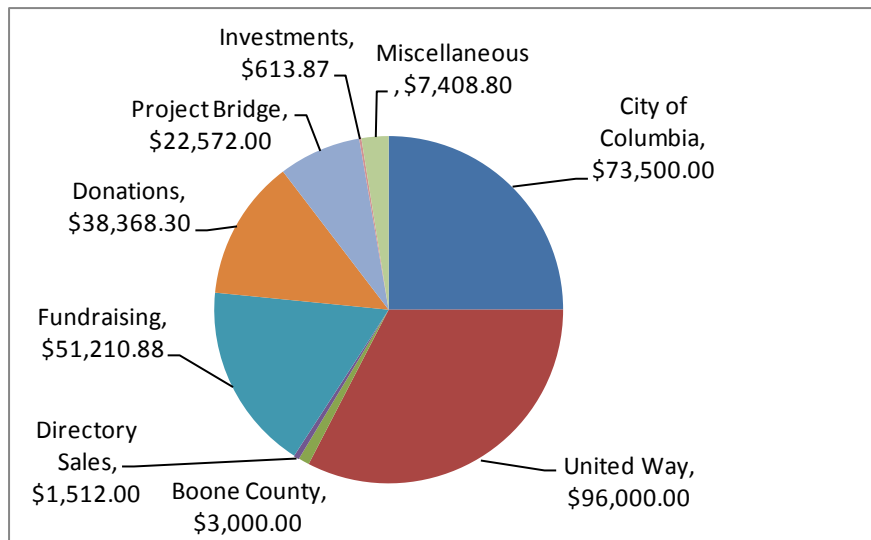
Financial Information

2009 Direct Aid Revenue

Total: \$188,743.98



2009 Operating Revenue



Volunteer Activities

Volunteer Coordination Efforts

VAC participates in volunteer fairs at numerous schools, including Hickman and Rock Bridge High Schools, Columbia College and the University of Missouri. VAC helps organize and participates in the Community Volunteer Fair, part of the Earth Day Festival and Street Fair held in MU's Peace Park and hosted by the Earth Day Coalition. In addition, VAC publicizes the volunteer needs of agencies and organizations through the *Helping Hand Catalog*; a weekly column called "Get Involved" in the *Columbia Daily Tribune*; and VAC's bi-monthly newsletter, which is available on our website at www.vacmo.org. VAC also maintains a volunteer database on our website where agencies can add their volunteer needs and potential volunteers can search available opportunities.

Volunteer Training

The Voluntary Action Center realizes the impact that volunteering can have, both for the individual and agencies in the community. To promote volunteerism, VAC provides volunteer training to local students, organizations and businesses. Topics for training can include board development, making a difference in your community, establishing a volunteer program for your agency and motivating students to volunteer.

Volunteer Count

VAC recently conducted an informal survey of local agencies to assess the contributions of volunteers to Boone County. 114 Boone County agencies responded, and reported a total of 93,586 volunteers at their agencies during 2009. Those volunteers contributed 2,294,769 total hours of service, for an estimated economic impact of \$46,469,072.25.

Annual Service Programs

Youth Enrichment Fund

The Youth Enrichment Fund provides scholarships for low-income youth to participate in extra-curricular activities that will enrich their lives. Youth are referred by schools and other social service agencies, or identified by the VAC staff. In 2009, grants and donations to this fund totaled \$6,400. A total of 331 youth received scholarships totaling \$13,368 to participate in sports programs, art or music lessons, educational programs, summer camps, and other youth programs.

Christmas Program

The adopt-a-family Christmas Program is VAC's largest single program. In October, low-income families, elderly, and disabled people sign up to receive gifts and food from the Christmas Program. In November, VAC recruits sponsors from the community. The sponsors are matched with a family and asked to provide food for the holidays and at least one new gift for each child, elderly person, or disabled person in the family. During December, the gifts and food are collected from the sponsors and distributed to the families.

In 2009 VAC collected and distributed food and gifts for 1,187 families (4,050 people). Contributions for this program totaled \$112,969.39, not including the value of the gifts and food provided by sponsors and delivered to VAC for distribution to the families. VAC estimates that the economic impact of this program to Boone County is approximately \$350,000.00.

Additional 2009 Fundraisers

Dining at Hemingway's

During the week of August 16, \$3 was donated to Voluntary Action Center for every entrée ordered. This small fundraiser raised a total of \$129.

Haircuts at Cost Cutters

In July Cost Cutters Salon allowed each person receiving a haircut to choose a non profit organization for Cost Cutters to donate \$5. VAC received \$165 from this event.

Tiger Treasures

This rummage sale held at the MU Football Stadium sold gently used and new items, and donated all the profits to local non-profits. Each non-profit received money based on how many volunteer hours they donated to the preparation of the sale. VAC staff, board members, and volunteers donated 110.875 hours to the sale, and in return, VAC received \$1,685 from the profits.

eScrip

Throughout 2009, customers at Schnucks could donate a percentage of their total purchase (at no extra cost to them) to VAC's Youth Enrichment Fund through the eScrip program. VAC received a total of \$63.85 from this effort.

40th Anniversary Mailing

In August, hundreds of letters were sent to local community members requesting support for VAC in honor of its 40th anniversary. This mailing raised \$8,820.

Major Annual Fundraisers

Spring Into Action

The eighth annual Spring Into Action dinner, awards ceremony, and auction was held at the club at Old Hawthorne on May 26, 2009. This event presents three awards to outstanding community leaders, and encourages donations to support VAC's programs. The Hazel Riback Award, given to an outstanding VAC volunteer and named in honor of one of VAC's founders, was presented to Bob Duncan. The Outstanding Community Service Award was presented to Lynda Baumgartner and Bo Fraser. The Heart of VAC Award was given to David & Jackie Pittman and Gordon & Mickey Burnam. Overall, the event was a huge success, raising \$21,121 for VAC.

Christmas in July

This July event focuses on raising community awareness that low-income individuals need assistance throughout the year, not just over the holiday season. For every \$10 donation from a VAC supporter, a low-income VAC client is provided a place at a festive summer picnic, complete with Santa, candy canes, small gifts for children, holiday decorations and music. The donations also support the essential programs and services that VAC provides throughout the year. In 2009 Christmas in July raised \$15,573 and there were approximately 400 attendees at the picnic.

Annual Service Programs

Warm Up Columbia

This year VAC collaborated with Kathy Hull once again to organize the fifth annual Warm Up Columbia coat and blanket drive. 22 local churches, Commerce Bank, the Office of Development and Alumni Relations at MU, Frito Lay and Candlelight Lodge joined in the 2009 effort to collect coats, blankets, hats, gloves, scarves, and other warm items for families in need. On October 17, almost 2,500 donated items were distributed to local low-income families, elderly and disabled people, and nonprofit agencies.

Lunch in the Park

Every year VAC collaborates with the Columbia/Boone County Health Department and Columbia Parks and Recreation to provide free and nutritious lunches to low-income children during the summer. In addition to the meal, activities and entertainment are provided by groups such as the Library bookmobile, Girl Scouts, the Conservation Department, and the Humane Society. VAC volunteers served 4,589 lunches in 2009.

Homes For Computers

Every year the City of Columbia donates their surplus used computers and peripheral equipment to be distributed to eligible VAC clients. The Downtown Optimist Club provides space and assistance for the distribution. 2009 was the sixth year of the program, and was very successful, with 35 families receiving computers for their homes.

Family Assistance & Emergency Services

Voluntary Action Center provides assistance with a wide variety of basic and emergency services for low-income people in Boone County. The goal of these services is to ensure that low-income people's basic needs are met, so that they can overcome economic hardships and become self-sufficient, thus reducing poverty and homelessness in our community. Some of these services include:

- **Medical:**
 - prescription medications
 - small medical equipment
 - dental or medical co-payments
 - eyeglasses
 - over-the-counter medication by doctor's request
- **Food:**
 - bags of groceries from VAC's food pantry
- **Shelter:**
 - motel rooms for newly homeless families when local homeless shelters are full
 - rent payments in exceptional circumstances
- **Transportation:**
 - city bus passes
 - gasoline to get to a job or medical appointment
 - car repair so employed persons can get to work
- **Clothing:**
 - wardrobe referrals
 - uniform items for the newly employed, when required by the workplace to begin employment
- **Documentation:**
 - state id or driver's licenses
 - Missouri birth certificates

Family Assistance & Emergency Services

- **Baby Items:**
 - diapers for babies and toddlers
 - baby formula
- **Education:**
 - school supplies for children grades K-12
 - computers for families with children in school
 - college registration/application fees
 - GED testing fees
 - books for college classes
- **Miscellaneous:**
 - cleaning or personal hygiene products
 - household items
 - indigent burials
 - other needs are considered as they arise
- **Summer Fan Program:**
 - fans for summer heat relief for families, the disabled and elderly
- **Warm Up Columbia:**
 - coats, blankets, hats, and gloves
- **Christmas Program:**
 - food and gifts for the holidays
- **Youth Enrichment Fund:**
 - scholarships to participate in enriching extra-curricular activities for low-income children, such as summer camps, music lessons, art classes, sports programs, ACT testing fees, and more.

In 2009 VAC provided 38,281 units of these essential services to 9,605 persons in 3,753 households.