



Annual Report 2010



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

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www.vacmo.org

Who We Are

Mission Statement:

Voluntary Action Center (VAC) 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 2010, VAC assisted 9,831 persons with 46,283 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 24,519 phone or walk-in requests for information in 2010.
- **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 2010, a total of 10,067 persons were provided with volunteer services.

Board of Directors 2010

<i>President</i>	Alex George, The George Law Firm
<i>Vice President</i>	Shawn Barnes, Williams-Keepers LLC
<i>Secretary</i>	Andrea Benna, MU Intercollegiate Athletics
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rick Ravenhill, Boone County National Bank
<i>Past President</i>	John Dean, SCORE
Jason Becking	Millers Professional Imaging
Billy Borgmeyer	MU Student
Leigh Britt	City Office of Neighborhood Services
Will Chann	Rock Bridge Student
Lynn Cole	DHSS Child Care
Brian Cottle	KOMU TV 8
Ryanne DeSpain	Hickman Student
Robert Duncan	Social Security Administration
Kim England	Community Volunteer
Lea Evans	Longitude Health
Bob Fisher	Callaway Bank
Susan Gowin	Landmark Bank
Shatenita Horton	Boone County National Bank
Gwen Jones	VA Hospital Therapist
Rev. Raymond I. Massey	Trinity Presbyterian Church
Suzanne McDavid	Alpha Hart Lewis/Douglass High Nurse
Mark Monroe, M.D.	Advanced Radiology
Dianne Orton	MU School of Social Work
Molly Read	MU Student
Jolene Schulz	First Community State Bank
Cathy Scroggs	MU Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs
Andrea Shelton	Public Works Volunteer Program
Scott Sutherland	Forum Christian Church
Lin Teasley	Cottonwood Graphics
Llona Weiss	Missouri Employers Mutual

2010 Staff

<i>Executive Director</i>	Cindy Mustard
<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Nancy Duncan/Amy Myers
<i>Project Director</i>	Marissa Todd
<i>Social Services Specialist</i>	Ron Schmidt
<i>Social Services Specialist</i>	Christina Montgomery
<i>Christmas Volunteer Coordinator</i>	Sarah Dawson
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	Judi Bloss

Message from the Director

Dear Friends of VAC,

We are delighted to present you with the 2010 Annual Report of the Voluntary Action Center. It has certainly been a busy year!

Each day, Voluntary Action Center works to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate in our community. In 2010, VAC had another record year in the number of services provided to our clients, with the total units of service totaling over 46,000.

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 2010. 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 2010, 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:

- Back to School Health Fair
- Basic Needs Coalition
- Boone County Non-Profit Consortium
- Boone County Related Agencies
- Census Committee
- Columbia Volunteer Network
- Earth Day Coalition
- Interfaith Council
- Junior Achievement Advisory Board
- RSVP
- Youth Community Coalition – YC2

Volunteer Activities

Hero Awards

The HERO Awards are a collaborative effort with the Columbia Daily Tribune to recognize the value of volunteerism. The awards honor outstanding volunteers, who can be nominated by anyone in the community. HERO Awards are given in three categories: Individual, Group (two or more persons), and Youth (age 21 or younger). In 2010, Landmark Bank sponsored four additional HERO Awards for volunteers in Education or Literacy, Community Protection, Health Care, and Lifetime Achievement.

For the ninth annual HERO Awards, a panel of community leaders selected winners in each category. All 53 nominees were publicly recognized at a reception on April 20 at Stoney Creek Inn. Each first-place winner was presented with a \$400 check for the organization where they volunteer their time. Each of the nominees also received a keepsake award.

The following were the 2010 HERO Award winners:

- Jimmy Hunter, Youth Award (nominated by Special Olympics)
- Laura Jost, Individual Award (nominated by LDS Stake Relief Society)
- Great Rivers Council of BSA, Group Award (nominated by Boy Scouts of America)
- Stand By Me, Outstanding Volunteer in Education or Literacy (nominated by Columbia Public Schools)
- Kevin Carr, Outstanding Community Protection Volunteer (nominated by American Red Cross)
- P.A.C.E. cast of Window Pains, Outstanding Health Care Volunteer (nominated by P.A.C.E.)
- Virginia Bzdek, Lifetime Achievement (nominated by Interfaith Council of Churches)

New in 2010

New Location

VAC moved to a new location in January 2010. The new office space, located on Vandiver next to the DMV, provides more confidentiality for clients and more space for VAC to run its numerous programs. The new space also allowed VAC to add two new work stations, increasing our ability to utilize interns.

Donor Database

VAC purchased GiftWorks, a donor database that has allowed the agency to streamline its fundraising efforts. This database allows VAC to reach more donors in a targeted way and better track relationships with key constituents.

Website and Social Media

VAC moved its website to Tech 2 and purchased a content management system so that staff can maintain the website on a regular basis. VAC also branched out further into social media and started using Twitter.

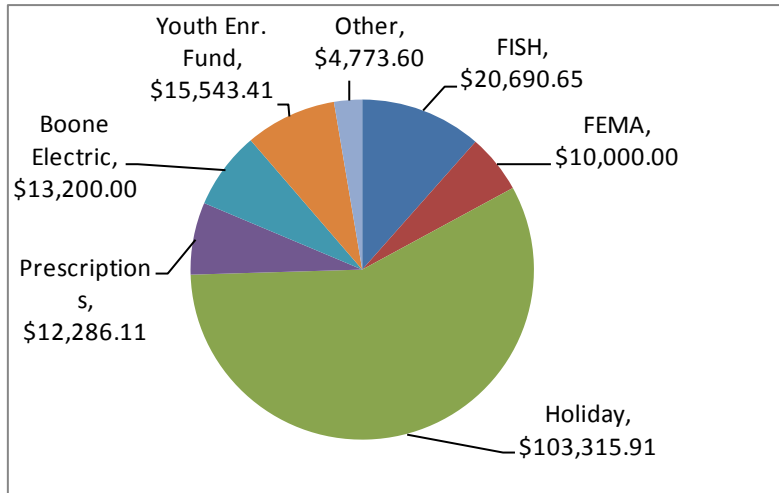
Staff Changes

After 24 years of service, Nancy Duncan retired from her position as finance administrator at VAC. Her knowledge of VAC and its processes was invaluable. A new finance administrator, Amy Myers, was hired.

Financial Information

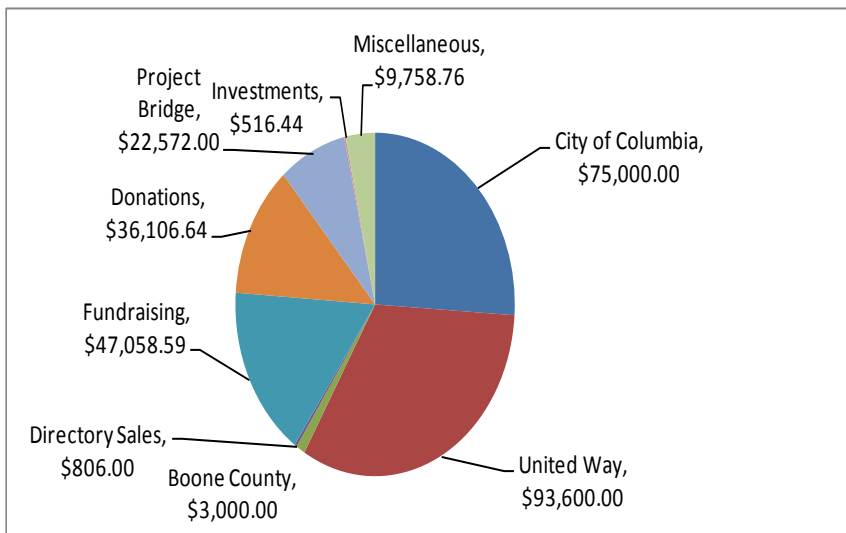
2010 Direct Aid Revenue

Total: \$179,809.93



2010 Operating Revenue

Total: \$288,418.43



Volunteer Activities

Volunteer Coordination Efforts

VAC participates in volunteer fairs at numerous schools, including Hickman and Rock Bridge High Schools, Columbia College, Stephens 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.

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 2010, VAC distributed 4,144 catalogs to potential volunteers.

Volunteer Count

VAC recently conducted an informal survey of local agencies to assess the contributions of volunteers to Boone County. **85** Boone County agencies responded, and reported a total of **101,952** volunteers at their agencies during 2010. Those volunteers contributed **2,268,377** total hours of service, for an estimated economic impact of **\$47,295,664.20**.

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 2010, grants and donations to this fund totaled \$15,543. A total of 406 youth received scholarships totaling \$16,315 to participate in sports programs, art or music lessons, educational programs, summer camps, and other youth programs. This was the largest number of youth to receive financial aid since the program began in 1999.

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 2010, VAC collected and distributed food and gifts for 1,175 families (3,932 people). Contributions for this program totaled \$103,315.91, 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 2010 Fundraisers

Houlihan's Fundraiser

Houlihan's donated 10% of total sales from November 30 to VAC. This generous event resulted in a donation of \$262.

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 time to the sale, and in return, VAC received \$650 from the profits.

eScrip

Throughout 2010, 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 \$89.97 from this effort.

August Mailing

In August, hundreds of letters were sent to local community members requesting support for VAC and its numerous programs. This mailing raised \$900.

40th Anniversary

Several donors to the 40th anniversary mailing made pledges that carried on into 2010. VAC received \$1,900 in gifts from these generous supporters.

Major Annual Fundraisers

Spring Into Action

The ninth annual Spring Into Action dinner, awards ceremony, and auction was held at the Club at Old Hawthorne on May 25, 2010. 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 Judy Carter. The Outstanding Community Service Award was presented to John and Karla DeSpain. The Heart of VAC Award was given to Billy Boyce, Jr., Travis Burnett, and Rob Christensen. Overall, the event was a huge success, raising \$20,829 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 2010, Christmas in July raised \$16,553, 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 sixth annual Warm Up Columbia coat and blanket drive. Twenty-two local churches, Commerce Bank, the Office of Development and Alumni Relations at MU, Frito Lay, and Candlelight Lodge joined in the 2010 effort to collect coats, blankets, hats, gloves, scarves, and other warm items for families in need. On October 16, almost 3,500 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, and Public Works Stream Teams. VAC volunteers served 4,763 lunches in 2010.

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. 2010 was the seventh year of the program, and was very successful, with 30 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 2010, VAC provided 46,283 units of these essential services to 9,831 persons in 3,814 households.