HOW CAM HELPS - CLIENT EXPERIENCE:

As CAM celebrates 45 years of service in 2022, our commitment to acting as an emergency room of social services continues. This means we opened our doors to anyone in need with no appointment required representing any demographic. As we all strive to heal from the pandemic, and deal with the economic fallout, those we serve, who are already very vulnerable, need a place like CAM.

CAM services begin with an ease of accessibility and a personal interview. This is not just a pantry but rather we strive to listen, advise, and direct the client to what they may be able to get from CAM, but also what they may need and where to go in community for systemic help. This interview process, our ability to assess when something may be wrong, and even our awareness of clients in our area, allows us to provide very personal resources.

One such client was Bernard. He came to CAM because he needed an ID in order to get a job. He also shared that he had a stroke several years ago. Through our interview process, we learned that he had relatives who had been taking his disability money and he was trying to escape them and take care of himself. Our involvement with Bernard was longer than many because it took several steps to help him get an ID, refer him to work programs (he got a job), and provide him with a way to get into housing. Later, a doctor recommended that he not stay in such a hot climate. We learned that Bernard had a mother in Kansas and we helped him get back home to her. Sometimes those we help need a little help and others may need a daily sack lunch while we begin exploring their deeper issues. CAM’s personal model allows us to understand the critical needs of our city’s most vulnerable. “It’s What Love Does.”

THE BUDGET FOR 2022

- Cash Revenue: $1,812,694
- “In-kind” Revenue: 1 Million
- Total Revenue: $2,812,694
- CAM Paid Staff: 17
- CAM Volunteers: 200

SUPPORTED BY DIVERSIFIED REVENUE

- 85 Local Churches
- Foundations
- United Way of Bexar Country & San Antonio
- Individuals
- Annual Fundraisers
Christian Assistance Ministry (CAM) was founded in 1977 by 9 downtown churches and today is supported by close to 100. CAM services are located on the campus of Grace Lutheran Church downtown, and University United Methodist Church on the north side of San Antonio. CAM acts as sort of an emergency room of social services. There are no demographic requirements and no appointment is necessary. Individuals may seek help for basic needs and CAM provides what they can immediately (food, clothing, financial assistance). Each person gets to share their story and then they are connected to other long-term community resources. Our clients may be having a one-time emergency, may represent the working poor, may be struggling in poverty, have a home or may be living on the streets.

OUTCOMES
• CAM brings together those who have, to those who need, and can organize and disseminate this excess of clothing, food, time, and dollars; putting close to a million dollars worth of “in-kind” resources into the community annually.
• People are helped before having to turn to government support; saving the community important resources and dollars.
• People’s needs are met immediately with 70,000 served annually who may avoid crisis in the short-term, and are helped until they can gain access to programs and solutions.
• CAM provides daily services to the hardest to serve homeless by creating a space for entry that is free from barriers and demands. We then build trust, and a means for the homeless client to begin working out of their situation through incentives and resources. All CAM services, and requirements to be served, are intentional, and are meant to lead to self-sufficiency. CAM is able to get 25 people off the street per month and assist the police with 50 each month.
• Mercy to those that may never be able to help themselves due to mental and physical illness. Some simply need help with food and clothing.
• CAM has served over 1 million citizens in the past 45 years since opening in 1977.

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CAM’s wheat logo references the idea that we all have a harvest to share. Not just the things that are leftover but that we should also plan for sharing our harvest by not cutting the corners; giving part of our harvest to those in need. We hope that CAM’s Corner is just like the uncut corners of a wheat field; the visible display of our commitment to God’s commandment and a source of hope for those in need. This idea is based on a scripture in Leviticus.

“When you harvest the crops on your land, do not cut all the way to the corners of your field. Don’t pick up the grain that falls on the ground. Leave it for the poor...” Leviticus 23:22