



Coming in Hot!

Summer 2024 Newsletter

A Message from the Director:

Wonderful and exciting things have been going on at Cornerstone since our last newsletter!

We have hosted and participated in several community events that brought families in the neighborhood together in fun, positive ways. Beautification Day engaged student volunteers from the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati State in cleaning the streets and planting flowers. Our annual Community Day was held at Grant Park this year, attended by community partners and families who enjoyed games, music, food, and prizes. We also participated in a Summer Resource Fair, recruiting families to the Renter Equity Club.

Our fundraising efforts and partnerships are growing. We are one of seven local nonprofits that have been named a 2024 Impact 100 Finalist. Cornerstone was selected from a pool of 123 applicants, and has the chance to receive a \$100,000 grant to expand our Renter Equity Club. Read more about this amazing opportunity on page 2!

We are pleased to welcome Jarrod Hart from Vantage Financial, Shaqunna Sardin from First Commonwealth Bank, and Gina Regan from Corporation for Findlay Market to our Board of Directors. Cornerstone staff and board met in June to discuss the agency and our future. We are grateful to Melisse May and Lynn Hailey at Social Venture Partners for organizing and leading the meeting, which provided valuable insight on our work and the impact we continue to make in Over-the-Rhine.

Stay tuned for more great news! As always, thank you for your support and advocacy of Cornerstone and the families we serve.

Sincerely,

Executive Director





Member Spotlight: **Donielle & Wanda Get Wheels!**



Members Donielle Bailey (left) and Wanda Jones (right) are on a roll this summer, having bought cars with their equity and matched savings.

Transportation was becoming a serious issue for Donielle. She was spending \$200 a week on Uber. The stress and costs of getting around town, to and from work and her five year old daughter's school, were taking a toll on her mental health. Donielle's coach, Tameka Thomas, had previously helped her find an apartment. When Donielle shared her transportation issue, Tameka immediately helped her create a plan to secure a vehicle.

"I'm so grateful for my Coach, and for everything that Cornerstone has done for me," Donielle says. "I was really struggling and now I'm in a much better place."

Since buying her car, Donielle has been able to pick up more hours at work and take her daughter on fun excursions.

For Wanda, having a car has made it easier for her to take care of her 87 year old mother, and to conduct her snack and balloon businesses. With support from her coach, Tonya Riddick, she was able to use Matched Savings and Project Lift funds to buy a car.

"I am overjoyed that I have this to help take care of my mom," Wanda says. "Now that I have a car, she doesn't have to take the bus, which can be difficult for her, and I can be there when she needs me."

Wanda also says the car has been very convenient for her businesses, making it easier to transport the "yum-yum" snacks and balloons she sells.

Donielle and Wanda both say that Cornerstone has been a blessing in their lives. We are proud to make such an impact.

Cornerstone is a 2024 Impact 100 Finalist

We are one of seven nonprofits in the running for a \$100,000 Impact 100 grant.

In June, the women-led philanthropic group Impact 100 announced the finalists of its annual IMPACT grant program during a sold-out event at Kennedy Heights Arts Center. We are proud to be one of seven nonprofits chosen by the group.

"Impact 100 members invested many hours learning and evaluating over 120 applications to get to this point," says Reagan Smith, Grant Review Coordinator. "There are so many transformational projects happening in our city, the decision to choose the finalists was very difficult."

All seven finalists will present their proposals to the Impact 100 membership on September 19th, and four will receive a \$100,000 grant. Should Cornerstone receive a grant, funds would be used to expand membership in the Renter Equity Club through outreach and community events and increase member earnings.

To learn more about Impact 100 and the 2024 finalists visit www.impact100.org.



left to right: Peggy Zink, Impact 100 Outreach Coordinator, Mary O'Connell, Development & Marketing Director at Cornerstone, Alisa Berry, Executive Director at Cornerstone, Lauren Matus, Board Member at Cornerstone, Janet Collins, Impact 100 President



ALL ABOUT COMMUNITY

At Cornerstone, we believe that building a strong foundation and path to stability requires a strong and empowered community. Families in the Renter Equity Club demonstrate this time and again, making their voices heard at membership and community meetings, volunteering at events, cleaning and beautifying the block, sharing resources, and more.

Every year, we engage more than 1,000 people in community building activities and events. Over the past few months, we brought residents, volunteers, and agency partners together for a Beautification Day, our annual Community Day, a Block Party, and a Resource Fair, creating a positive environment for individuals and families to build and strengthen their community.



Cornerstone Renter Equity Board of Directors

Jonathan Bennie
Abby Crews
Bernice Cooper
Brendon Dunigan

John Hancock
Jarrod Hart
Kurt Hibbett
Jason Jones

Max Kilb
Lauren Matus
Andy Poltorak
Gina Regan

Gloria Samuel
Shaqunna Sardin
Joe Sunderman
Larry Williams

UPCOMING EVENTS

Back to School Kids Skate

September 7th

4-7pm at CRC

Skate party for kids and families

Communitygiving

November 20th

6-8pm at CRC

Our take on Thanksgiving - a community dinner and games for families

Holiday Kids Skate

December 6th

4-7pm at CRC

Gifts, games, giveaways, food and fun

Interested in volunteering/supporting our events? Email cornerstone@csequity.org with the subject line: *I'm interested!* and we will get in touch with you.

Donate

Donations directly support families in the Renter Equity Club, providing one-on-one coaching, financial counseling, healthy activities, community events, and other opportunities to earn money and build savings.

Scan QR code or visit renterequity.org/donate

