

READY, SET, GROW!

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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As of May 2024

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**Deceased*

OUR VISION

Youth who suffer trauma
can become our future leaders.



DEAR STAKEHOLDERS, DONORS AND FRIENDS,

As we reflect on the past year and chart our course for the future, we are pleased to present this year’s annual report themed, “Ready, Set, Grow!” This theme not only captures the spirit of our collective efforts but also sets the stage for the exciting journey ahead.

This year has been a remarkable one for UCAN, characterized by significant growth and resilience. Our team has expanded impressively, growing to nearly 600 dedicated staff members. This increase in our workforce is a testament to our commitment to extending the reach and enhancing the effectiveness of our programs. We have also broadened our program offerings, responding adeptly to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

We continue to navigate this time of unique opportunities to innovate and strengthen our resolve. As we supported our communities through these trying times, we adapted to new work styles and welcomed new leadership. These changes have been instrumental in reinvigorating our organization and enhancing our operational capabilities.

Looking forward, UCAN is poised to enter a phase of strategic planning that will define our trajectory for the next five years. Our focus will be on scaling the impact of our high-quality programs to reach more people in more places. Our strategic planning sessions are designed to harness the insights, experience and energy of our entire team, ensuring that we are not only prepared but also proactive in our growth strategy.

We are gearing up to expand our footprint and influence and deliver measurable improvements in the lives of those we serve. This strategy will require continued dedication, innovation, and collaboration from all corners of our organization.

We are profoundly grateful to each member of the UCAN team for their hard work and commitment. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our partners, donors, and all stakeholders for your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Together, we are setting the foundations for a future that promises greater growth, impact, and success.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Let’s continue to be ready, set for growth, and poised to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Thank you,

Lourdes Gonzalez
Board Chair

Christa Hamilton
CEO & President

OUR IMPACT

WE ARE PROUD OF THE SUPPORT AND SERVICES OUR STAFF PROVIDED TO THE YOUTH AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY DURING FISCAL YEAR 2023.

9,173

participants were impacted and served by UCAN

86%

of participants would refer others to UCAN services

90%

of participants report overall satisfaction with UCAN and the services they received

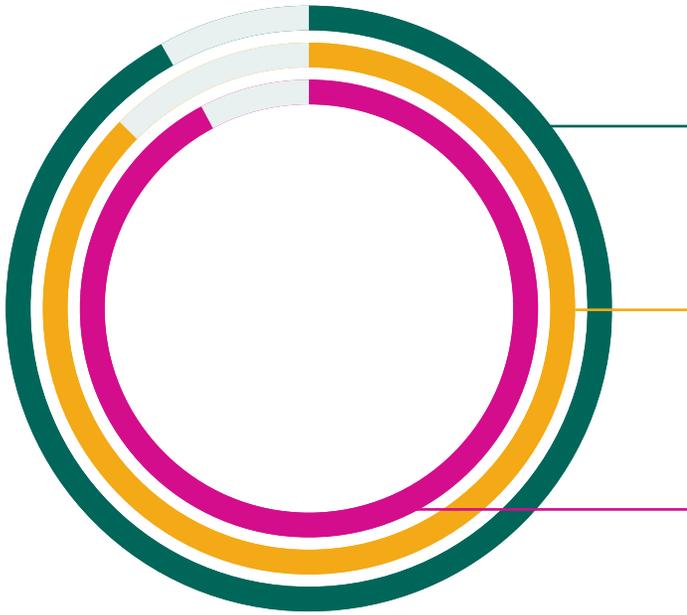
135

youth and adults were placed in jobs

91%

of Academy students said UCAN connected them and/or children in their care to supportive, caring adults who help us achieve our goals





93%
OF PARTICIPANTS SAID UCAN GAVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THEIR FUTURE AND HELPED THEM LEARN AND GROW

88%
OF PARTICIPANTS SAID UCAN HELPED THEM DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

94%
OF PARTICIPANTS SAID UCAN STAFF CARES ABOUT THEM

CHILD WELFARE

93%
 of youth in specialized foster care maintained the same placement for at least 12 months

96%
 of youth are in school or working

87%
 of youth's children in the Teen Parent Service Network (TPSN) program received a developmental screening

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

87%
 youth graduated from the Diermeier Future Leaders Now program (DFLN)

82%
 of counseling participants made progress in treatment

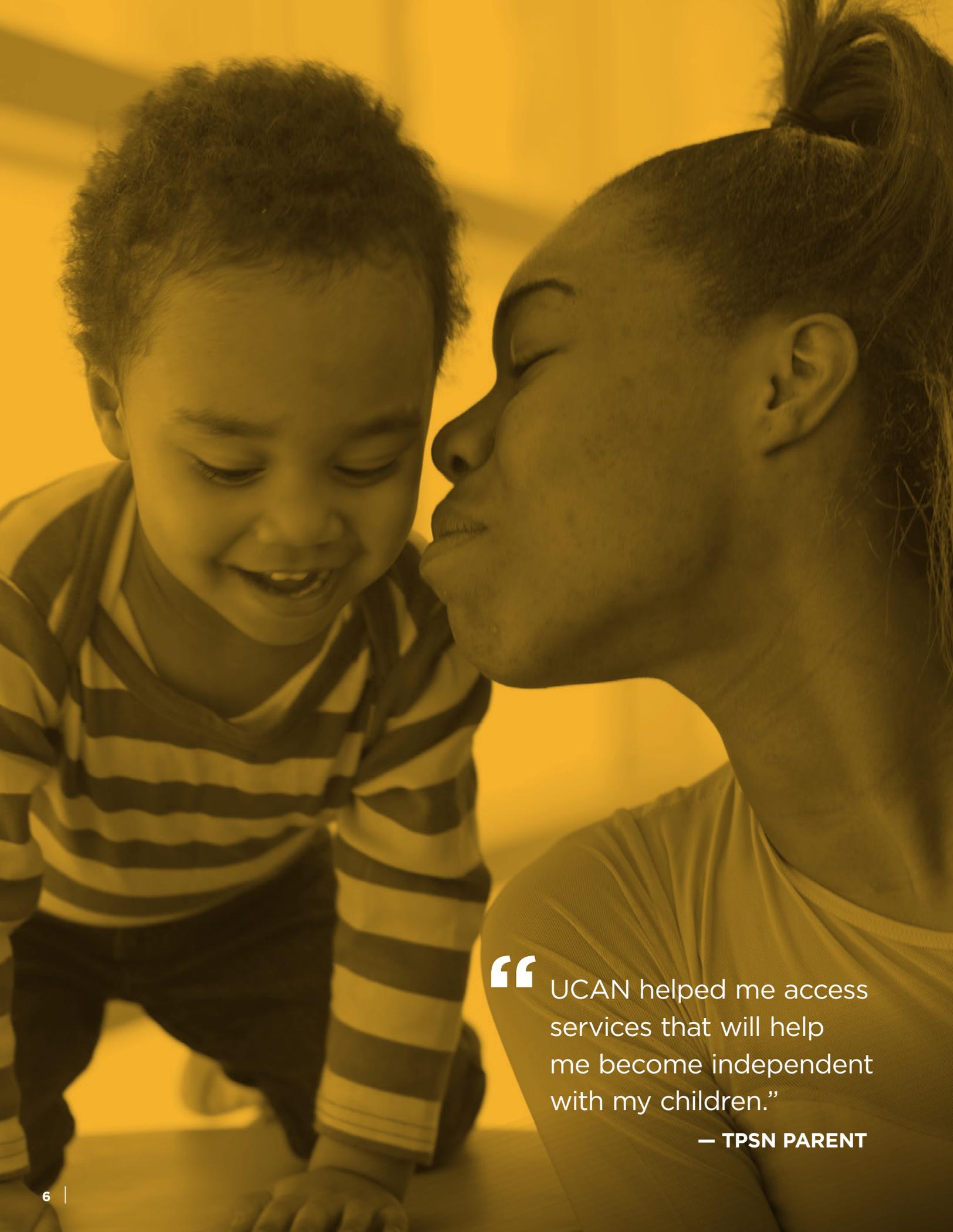
90%
 of youth in DFLN feel more empowered to advocate for themselves or others

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

100%
 of youth said UCAN staff cares about them

82%
 of counseling participants made progress in treatment

95%
 of youth said they feel comfortable to be or express themselves



“UCAN helped me access services that will help me become independent with my children.”

— TPSN PARENT

NURTURING PARENT PROGRAM

GROWTH IN COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES & TRAININGS

The Nurturing Parent Program (NPP) is an eight-session initiative for families caring for infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. It provides essential information on early development, the impacts of trauma, and managing foster parenting stress.

- NPP families benefited from services such as training, licensure, housing support, public assistance, and counseling, with additional support from DCFS Foster Parent Support Specialists.
- In Fiscal Year 2023, NPP graduated 27 caregivers of trauma-affected children ages 0-5.
- No placement disruptions or indicated families were reported during the eight-week course, highlighting the program's success.
- 99% of NPP graduates continue to successfully parent their children without any child abuse allegations.

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM

GROWTH IN ADAPTABILITY

UCAN's Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), a federally funded initiative, operates with more than 70 volunteers positively impacting children's lives. This program connects active seniors with children in daycare centers, schools, and special needs centers, providing crucial one-on-one attention.

- The program serves children from Head Start to 4th grade in various educational settings.

- Volunteers play a key role in school districts, supporting mental health and resilience through evidence-based programs.
- Despite challenges, volunteers adapt seamlessly, continuing to tutor, engage in expanded learning, and participate in after-school initiatives, summer camps, and township programs.





“UCAN helps me be more educated on how to take care of myself.”
— YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPANT

TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

GROWTH IN PROGRAM SUPPORT

UCAN's Transitional Living Program (TLP) operates in six locations on Chicago's South and West sides, serving youth ages 17-21 under the care of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The program provides a supervised, home-like setting to help youth develop healthy relationships and achieve self-sufficiency. Individualized services support education completion, self-advocacy, and financial and emotional sustainability as they prepare to exit DCFS care.

LIFESSET TLP PROGRAM EXPANSION

- **Case Support Specialists:** Increased from 0 to 2
- **Full-time Vocation Educator:** Added 1 position
- **Full-Time Therapist:** Added 1 position

IMPACT

- **Strengthened Support:** 4 new positions to bolster support services
- **Enhanced Service Quality:** Increased resources for comprehensive care
- **Improved Accessibility:** Greater availability of specialized assistance

SHERO

GROWTH IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT & AWARENESS

SheRo empowers women in North Lawndale involved in or at risk of violence who show potential for change. UCAN's team provides comprehensive support focused on mental, physical, and spiritual well-being, offering coaching, referrals, and tailored support to reduce community violence.

- SheRo linked 57% of participants to job opportunities, legal aid, healthcare, and higher education within a year.

- The *Chicago Tribune* highlighted SheRo for the "My Story My Glory" event, where participants shared their journeys of overcoming gun violence and positive transformations.
- Participant attendance in cohort programs rose to 53% over 90 days.



“

Staff is supportive of each other, and it feels like a safe place.” — **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPANT**



QUALIFIED RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM

GROWTH IN TRANSFORMATION

UCAN's Diermeier Therapeutic Youth Home offers a structured, stable, and therapeutic living environment for youth ages 7-18 in the care of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Serving children with severe trauma histories, the home provides a 24-hour-a-day treatment facility to address their behavioral and emotional needs.

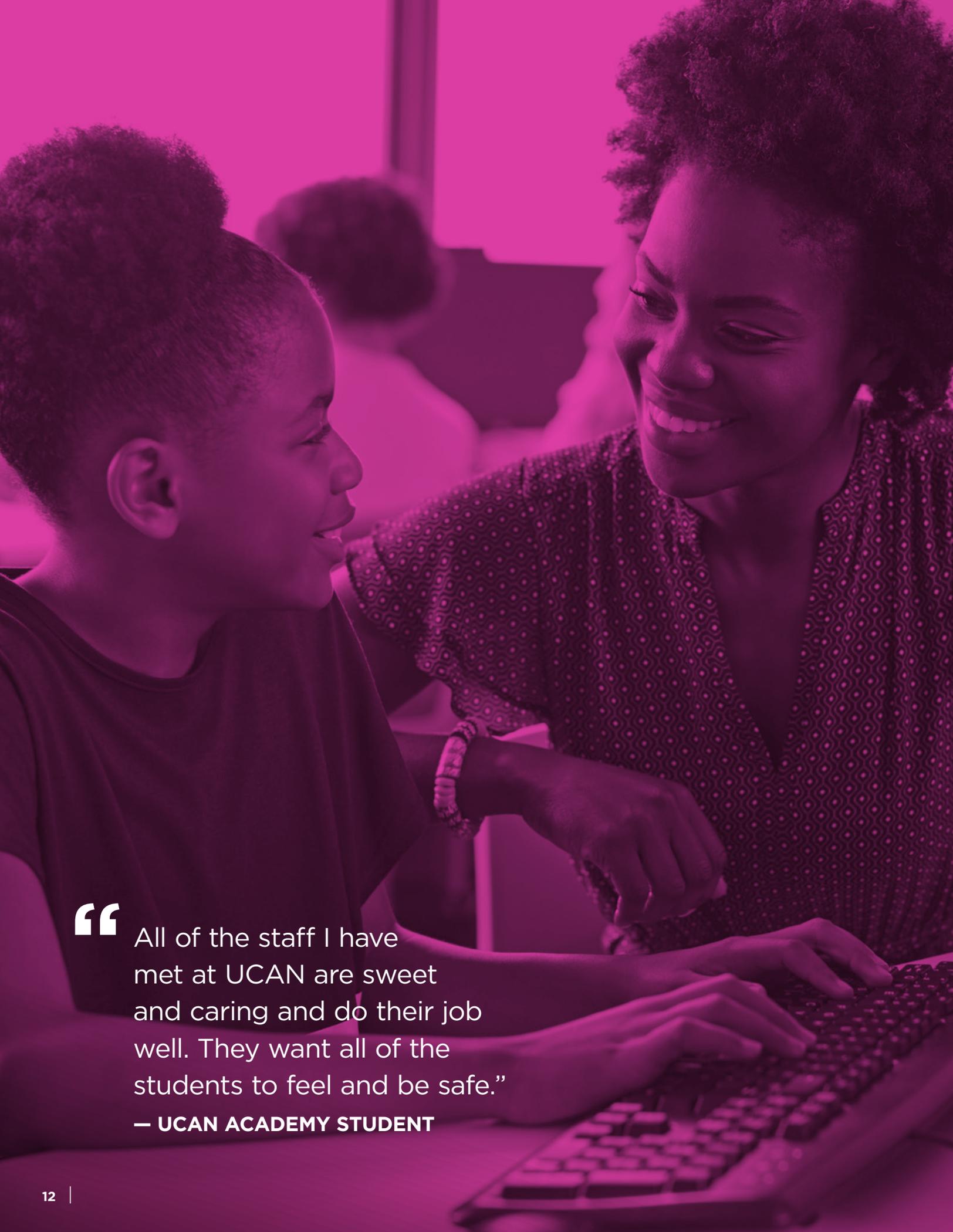
- Staff-to-youth ratios were increased through enhanced recruitment and training.
- Financial stability and expanded services were achieved via extensive Medicaid billing, enabling new therapeutic and extracurricular activities.
- A new tailored therapeutic model reduced AWOL incidents and hospitalizations, enhancing safety and well-being.
- Automated clinical documentation systems were implemented to ensure compliance with state regulations and improve service delivery.



“

I liked that I was able to express myself and that I was never pressured to talk about something I didn't want to. I loved that I didn't ever feel judged or ignored.”

— COUNSELING PARTICIPANT



“

All of the staff I have met at UCAN are sweet and caring and do their job well. They want all of the students to feel and be safe.”

— UCAN ACADEMY STUDENT

UCAN ACADEMY

GROWTH IN EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT

Our two UCAN Academy schools for K-12 provide supportive instruction and resources to prepare students academically and as future leaders. We've integrated advanced educational tools, expanded computer literacy programs, and introduced art therapy to enrich our curriculum and cater to diverse learning styles.

- A structured mentorship program connects students with professionals and community leaders, fostering personal and professional development.
- Increased extracurricular activities, from sports to community service, promote student interaction and a well-rounded education.
- Focus on dietary health includes revised menu plans and regular nutritional audits to support students' physical and cognitive development.
- Comprehensive staff training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) and Think Trauma equips teachers to address student challenges effectively, ensuring a supportive learning environment.

BACK TO OUR FUTURE

GROWTH IN DISENGAGED YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The goal of Back to Our Future (B2OF) is to connect youth back to educational opportunities through engagement, support, and targeted outcomes.

- B2OF offers clinical services, mentoring, life skills, and career readiness support.
- Since July 2022, over 150 youth have joined B2OF, with 75% achieving successful outcomes like graduation, permanent employment, and re-entry to school.
- B2OF partners with Association House, SOAR, and employers to create individual service plans.
- Mentoring continues as needed after program completion, and also supports youth who don't complete the program to aid in re-engagement and employment.



“ UCAN has the best support team I have had.”

— YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPANT

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

GROWTH IN OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES

UCAN's Workforce Development initiative empowers youth, young adults, and families towards financial and social independence through support, including detailed case management, pre-employment skills training, and structured career pathways. Strategic job placement via strong employer partnerships leads to permanent job placements, while sustained engagement offers wraparound services and continuous support for up to three months post-employment. UCAN's commitment to community impact drives positive change through economic and social empowerment initiatives.

JOB PLACEMENT

FY23	302
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FY22	272
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AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE RANGE

FY23	\$16.34-\$18.00
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FY22	\$15.00-\$16.25
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REPEAT BUSINESS PARTNERS

FY23	91%
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FY22	90%
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TOTAL WORKFORCE PARTICIPANTS SERVED

FY23	729
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FY22	689
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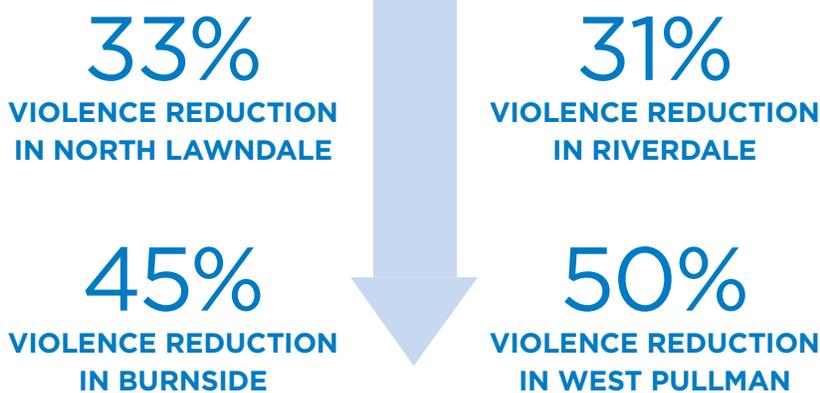
VIOLENCE INTERVENTION & PREVENTION SERVICES

GROWTH IN VIOLENCE REDUCTION EFFORTS

The goal of our Violence Intervention & Prevention Services (VIPS) is to build stronger and safer communities through community engagement, violence interruption, and victim services. We prioritize addressing violence at its core and providing support to those impacted by community violence.

- The VIPS department served over 700 high-risk participants, focusing on adults and families involved in gun violence.
- We facilitated over 100 community events, engaging more than 2,500 residents and promoting unity.
- Our Trauma Response conducted over 1,400 conflict mediations, promoting peaceful resolutions, and contributing to safer neighborhoods.

VIOLENCE REDUCTION STATISTICS BY COMMUNITIES WE SERVICED IN FISCAL YEAR 2023



A group of people's hands are clasped together in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The image is overlaid with a warm, golden-yellow filter. The text "UCAN AS A CONVENER" is centered over the hands in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

UCAN AS A CONVENER

With its inclusive approach and commitment to community organizing, UCAN plays a crucial role in Chicago's social justice landscape. UCAN regularly brings together diverse stakeholders—elected officials, activists, community leaders, policymakers, and business owners—to tackle pressing issues like affordable housing, community violence intervention, workforce development, and youth development. By uniting individuals and organizations in pursuit of a more just and equitable society, UCAN showcases the power of collective action in creating positive change.

NORTH LAWDALE ATHLETIC & RECREATION ASSOCIATION (NLARA)

The NLARA emerged from the North Lawndale community's shared vision to create a safer environment for youth through equitable sports and recreation opportunities. Committed to diverse opportunities, NLARA ensures participation in safe and nurturing sports and recreational activities.

- UCAN, as the fiscal agent for NLARA, manages grant disbursements and operations in collaboration with partners like the North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council, Old St. Patrick's Church, and Play Like a Champion Today.
- NLARA, founded in April 2017, believes in early engagement to combat negative influences and support youth towards a healthy and productive life.

MY CHI MY FUTURE (MCMF): ANCHORING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services provides funding to community-based organizations experienced in convening, planning, and youth development to execute the mission and vision of My CHI. My Future. (MCMF). UCAN serves as the primary anchor convener for the North Lawndale hub.

- In North Lawndale, UCAN engages with 20 stakeholders monthly—including religious leaders, educators, and business owners—to create a community plan based on a needs assessment. Youth participation and feedback are integral to these meetings.
- UCAN commits to implementing multiple events throughout the year, exposing youth to cultural, educational, and recreational activities. These events are vital for developing community plans through resident surveys.



PLAYING A CRUCIAL ROLE IN CHICAGO'S SOCIAL JUSTICE LANDSCAPE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of June 30, 2023

Total Assets	\$69,401,207
Total Liabilities	\$19,021,181
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$50,380,026
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$69,401,207

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023

Revenue

Program	\$48,466,769
Fundraising Unrestricted	\$1,330,142
Fundraising Restricted	\$1,417,579
Trust	\$525,873
Investment	\$1,420,115
(Net Assets Released from Restrictions \$821,272)	-
TOTAL REVENUE	\$53,160,478

Expense

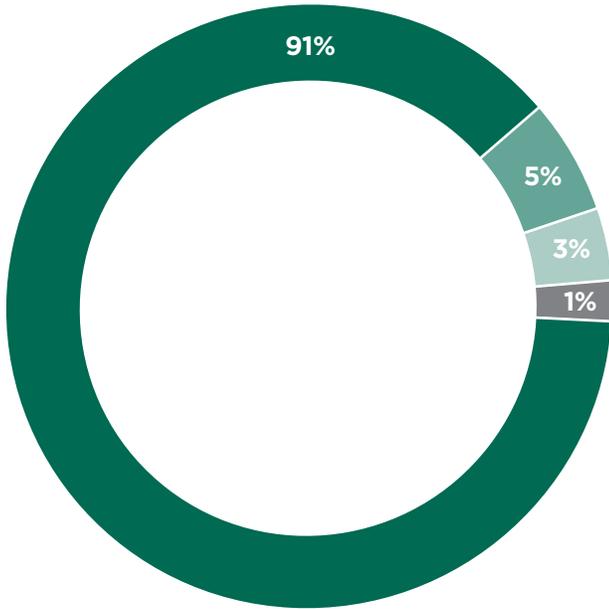
Program	\$42,762,714
Management & General, Support	\$8,625,846
Fundraising	\$1,106,094
Other	-
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$52,494,654
NET SURPLUS/LOSS	\$665,824

Net Operations

Others (Gain from NMTC Loan Forgiveness)	\$5,558,937
Gain on Payroll Protection Loan Forgiveness	\$282,175
TOTAL OTHER	\$5,841,112
NET SURPLUS/LOSS (CHANGE IN NET ASSETS)	\$6,506,936

CURRENT YEAR CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$6,506,936
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$43,873,090
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$50,380,026

Financials reflect UCAN Operations only. Title Holding Company information not included.

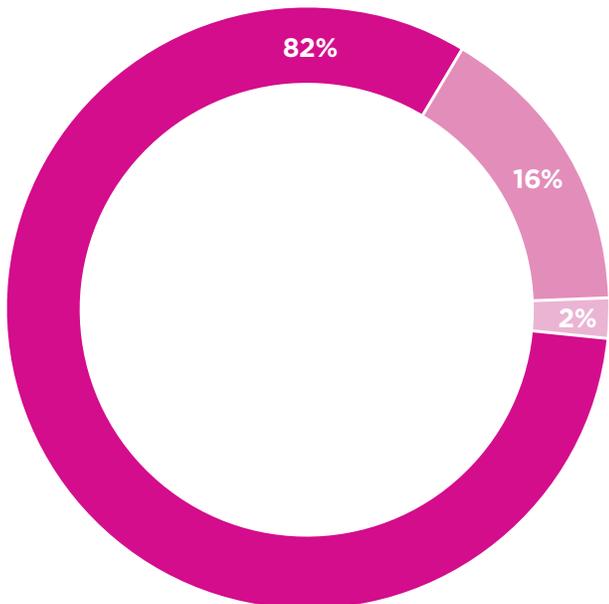
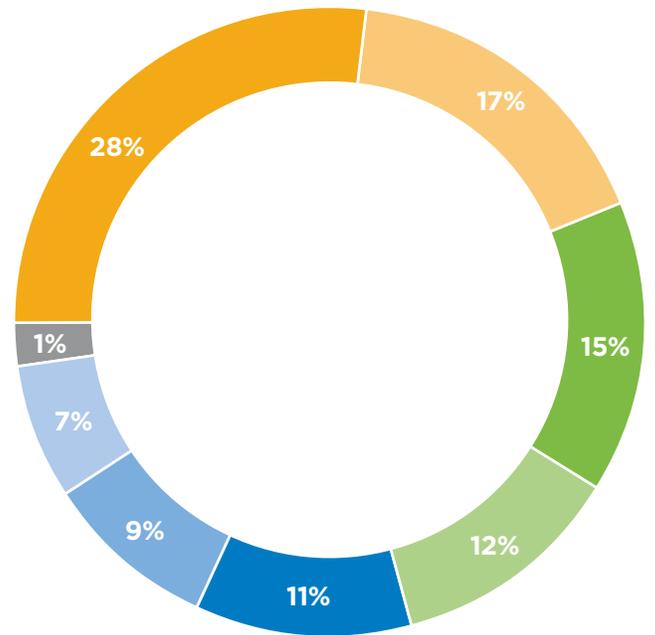


SUPPORT

- Government Grants & Contracts
- Fundraising Revenue
- Investment Income
- Trust Income

PROGRAM EXPENSES

- Therapeutic Youth Home
- Professional Foster Parenting
- Youth Development/Prevention Services/Other
- UCAN Academy
- Independent/Transitional Living
- Workforce Development
- Teen Parenting Service Network
- Counseling & Youth Development Services



EXPENSES

- Program Services
- Management & Support Services
- Fundraising

OUR DONORS

WE THANK OUR DONORS FOR THE FOLLOWING GIFTS GENEROUSLY MADE DURING FY 2022-2023.

\$100,000 +

Allstate Insurance Company
BMO Bank, N.A.
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JP Morgan Chase
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\$50,000 +

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United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
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