

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**HATW**  
HANDS ACROSS THE WATER



### ***OUR VISION***

We envision a community where every child is valued and has a safe home and loving family where they can thrive.

### ***OUR MISSION***

Hands Across The Water supports and empowers children and families through inclusive, strengths-based services.

### ***OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

Rick Modglin-Green, President  
Mary Gladstone-Highland, Vice President  
Belinda Needham, Secretary  
Darlene Helzerman, Treasurer  
Chris Westfall, Board Member  
Julie Roesch, Board Member  
Craig Fry, Board Member

Hands Across The Water (HATW) is proud to be part of the Michigan Federation for Children and Families, the National Council for Adoption, and to be Hague-accredited through the Intercountry Adoption Accreditation and Maintenance Entity. HATW has been annually recognized by the Human Rights Campaign for supporting and serving LGBTQ+ youth and families since 2011.





## ***Letter from the Executive Director***

As I reflect on the changes of 2022, I am immeasurably proud to report that, despite the continued challenges faced by our staff, clients and the non-profit sector as whole, Hands Across The Water has continued to make significant strides in our mission to empower and support children and families through inclusive, strengths-based services in our community.

In 2022, Hands Across The Water experienced, like many industries, significant turnover of staff across all programs and levels of the agency. Retirements, relocations, babies, higher education pursuits, and new opportunities for our highly skilled staff converged to leave those staff who remained to pull together in ways beyond our typical culture of collaboration. We raised salaries and mileage reimbursement as inflation skyrocketed and pinched our hardworking staff, just at a time when agency costs increased and our revenue dropped. We welcomed new faces and new perspectives to our board of directors. We kept putting one foot in front of the other, continued to push forward with innovative programming and funding proposals, and one by one filled our positions with excellent candidates, dedicated to our crucial mission and vision. The families' needs didn't stop, so neither did we.

At the same time, 2022 marked a year of renewed commitment to caring for ourselves in service to others, encouraging each other to take breaks and seek help when things were overwhelming. Veteran staff were grateful to continue to use remote work/hybrid work schedules, when possible, to complete their work in the most efficient ways. We learned the lesson again in 2022 that we can't be present for those who need us if we are depleted ourselves. It is the perseverance and determination of our people that kept us moving forward in 2022.

As we look to the future, our agency remains committed to our mission of providing safety and support to vulnerable children and families in our community through inclusive, strengths-based services. We are excited to continue our work and make an even greater impact in the year to come with renewed energy and optimism.

Thank you for your continued support of the vital work that we do at Hands Across The Water.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Page Sander". The signature is fluid and cursive.

***Katie Page Sander, LMSW***  
***Executive Director***  
***Hands Across The Water***

# ***PROGRAM IMPACTS***

## ***BEHAVIORAL HEALTH***

63 clients served

## ***FOSTER CARE***

9 new homes licensed  
20 youth reunified with their  
families  
109 families caring for youth  
119 youth served

## ***ADOPTION***

2 infant adoptions  
7 international adoptions  
26 waiting child adoptions  
completed in 2022

## ***PREGNANCY OPTIONS COUNSELING***

13 clients served



# *PROGRAM IMPACTS*

## ***ONGOING ACTIVITIES***

54 home studies  
completed

46 International families  
served

33 International families used  
HATW as primary provider

39 Infant adoption families  
served



## ***TOTAL CLIENTS REACHED***

**1103**

Questions about any  
of HATW's programs  
and services?

734-477-0135

[info@hatw.org](mailto:info@hatw.org)

[hatw.org](http://hatw.org)

## CHANGES TO OUR BOARD AND STAFF



2022 was a year of shifts to our board and staff that was unlike any we've ever had and is unlikely to happen again in quite the same way!

At the end of the first quarter of the year, and just prior to our learning that we had been reaccredited to continue providing international adoption services (more about that on page 10), a vacancy opened on our international team. Given the number of agencies that have stopped providing these services, HATW had a challenge recruiting candidates with the correct experience. At that time, our longtime board president, Melissa Daneshyar (pictured above top left), expressed her desire to step down from her service and reenter the workforce. Melissa worked for Hands Across The Water years ago, then stepped back from the workforce and joined the board while raising her children. While it took some additional steps to make this transition happen, HATW was thrilled to have Melissa step into the role of International Adoption Specialist. Her experience in this space not only as a social worker but as an adult adoptee is invaluable.

In June of 2022, HATW's longest-serving employee Julie Roesch (second from left) retired after 22 years of service, first as a social worker handling international adoptions, and at the end of her employment as the supervisor of the Behavioral Health department. Julie has an encyclopedic knowledge of HATW's growth over the years and was well-known and beloved to many of our clients. Spoiler alert for 2023: Julie returned to serve HATW as a member of the board.

At the end of 2022 HATW welcomed two new members to the board of directors. Mary Gladstone-Highland (second from right) and Christopher Westfall (far right), both former clients of HATW as adoptive parents! New perspectives and new voices are welcome additions to our board.

# INDIVIDUAL 2022 DONORS

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Anne Adams  
Mary Anglin  
Rebecca Belian  
Christopher Bierman  
Terry Branoff  
Jeanette Bridges  
Michelle Bules  
Michelle Campbell  
Christine Cox  
Jamie Crighton  
Melissa Daneshyar  
Robert Eisentrout  
Sarah Ellero  
Allie Faulkner  
Karolynn Fenton Schofield  
Dorothy Flattery  
Craig Fry  
Scott Garrity  
Angela Gearhart  
Bruce Geryk  
Maya Geryk  
Robert Geryk  
Heather Gilbert  
Mary Gladstone-Highland  
Matt Globke  
Linda Goerge  
Jorge Guzman De Branoff  
Megan Harris  
Ruby Harris  
Sheila Henderson  
Laura Hilburn  
Mary Hood  
Charles Hudson  
Rosemary Jackson  
Tammy Jeross

Tracy Kapusansky  
Christine Kelley  
Molly Kramer  
Amanda Krier-Jenkins  
Catherine Kurt  
Valerie Kushman  
Diane Levy  
Kimberly Lin  
Jens Loemker  
Linda Martinez  
William Mayer  
Michelle Merkel  
Jennifer Milliman  
Jennifer Miner  
Charles Mockridge  
Rick Modglin-Green  
Donna Nafziger  
Aakash Naik  
Belinda Needham  
Rob Needham  
Kathleen Nelson  
Garry Packard  
Gregg Packard  
Lynn Packard  
Leonard Page  
Katie Page Sander  
Vincent Parker  
Elizabeth Perpich  
William Phillips  
Steven Poling  
Ernie Poortinga  
Abby Rayi  
Janet Reynolds Snyder  
Diane Ritter  
Julie Roesch

# INDIVIDUAL 2022 SUPPORTERS

Susan Rosevelt  
James and Margaret Sander  
Janet Scott  
Janet Shea  
Diane and Edwin Smith  
Susan Smith  
Sarah Stone  
Jennifer Taylor  
Terry Taylor  
Brian Tetzler  
Kathleen Tetzler  
Clara Thiry  
Lauren Thormeier  
Sarah Tipton  
Janice Tribble  
Rama Tummala  
Jan Ulrich  
Colleen Van Lent  
Rochelle Vrsek  
Sara Weidmayer  
Lorien Wenger and Laura Jacobs  
Marla Westerhold  
Susan Westlake  
Jen Wrayno  
Rosemarie Wywrot  
Dr. Kay Wilson and Mr. Daniel Barry

## GRANTS AND CORPORATE GIFTS

Aldi, Inc.  
Altruic Advisors  
Blue Cross Complete  
Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan  
Faith Community Presbyterian Church - Novi  
First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham  
First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth  
Galens Medical Society  
Kapnick Insurance Group  
Kirk In the Hills Presbyterian  
Kiwanis Club of Ann Arbor Foundation, Inc.  
Level One Bank  
Michigan Healthcare Executive Student Association  
Speckhard Knight Charitable Foundation  
STUFD  
The Carls Foundation  
United Way of Midland County  
United Way of Washtenaw County  
Walton Insurance Group

*Thanks to all our donors  
you make our work possible!*

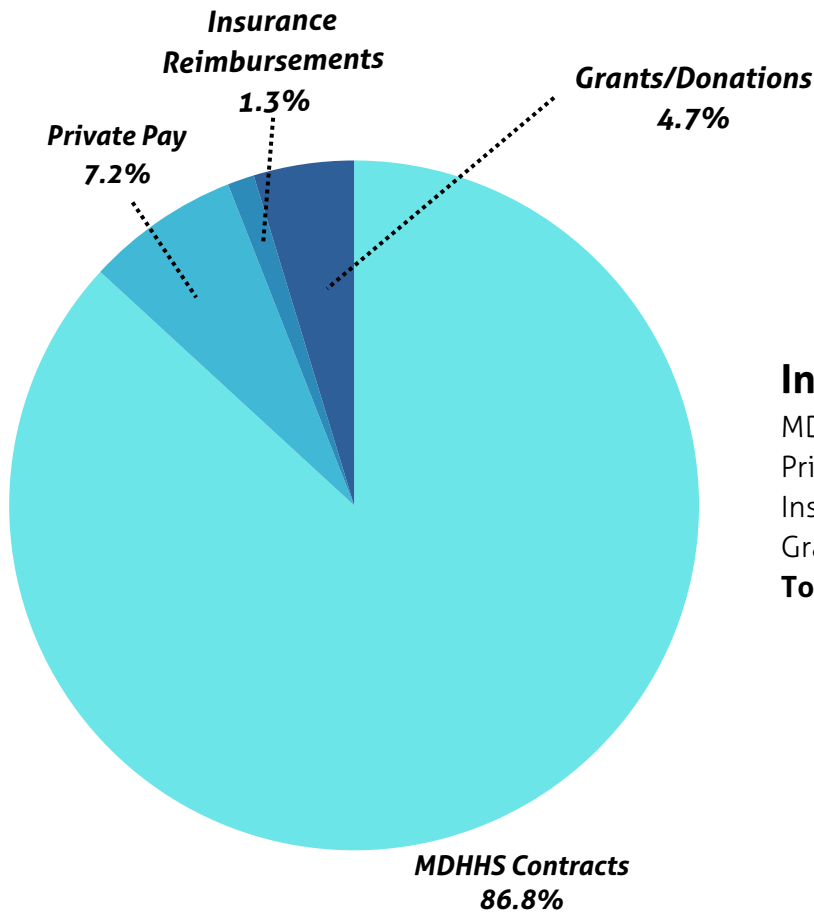
The Speckhard-Knight Foundation helps fund staff support for foster families, so they have the best chance at success.



In 2022, funding from the Galens Medical Society allowed us to fund portraits of foster children with their biological families. Many young people enter care with no photos of their families at all, let alone portraits many take for granted as a regular ritual of family life. Building these connections is critical to a sense of identity for youth in care.



# INCOME AND EXPENSE

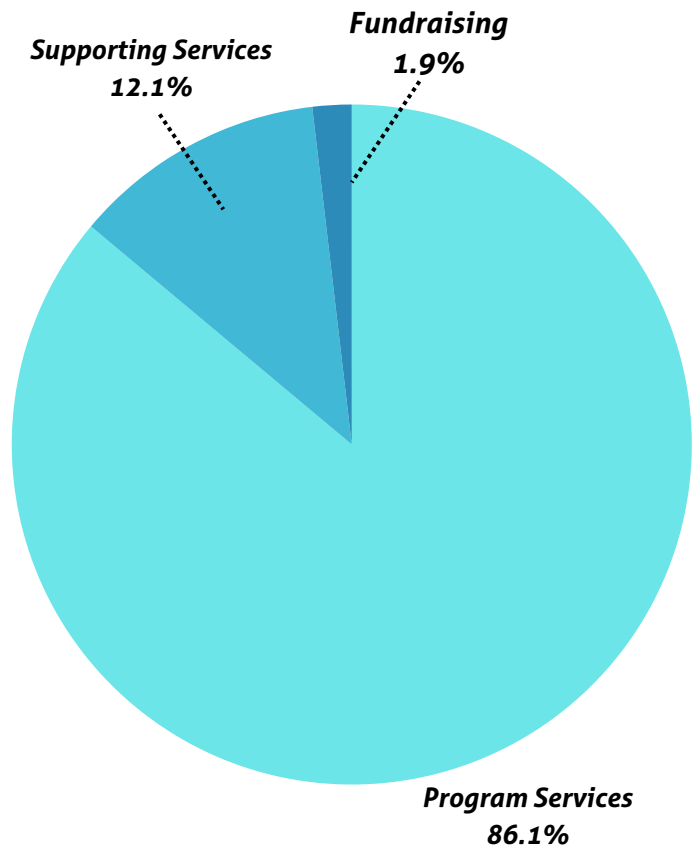


## Income

MDHHS Contracts	2,982,785.69
Private Pay	247,510.18
Insurance Reimbursements	43,130.13
Grants/Donations	161,522.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,434,948.00</b>

## Expenses

Program Services	3,034,126.00
Supporting Services	425,051.00
Fundraising	65,461.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,524,638.00</b>



# EVENTS

## HATW remains Hague-accredited

In late April of 2022, we learned that a year's worth of effort by our team to meet federal accreditation standards to continue providing international adoption services had been successfully met, and that our legacy of excellence in international adoption services would continue. While the number of agencies that continue to work in international adoption dwindles each year, HATW feels a strong conviction that there is a need for children and families to have a strong ethical advocate in their corner, and that our work is meeting a real need.



## Virtual 5K returns

Our second virtual 5K fundraiser was boosted by a donor who matched up to \$5K worth of donations. With that generous match and help from sponsors like Blue Cross Complete, Walton Insurance, Altruic Advisors and Level One Bank, the event raised more than \$12,000 to pay for things like for music and art lessons, sports fees and camp fees for young people in foster care.

## Back to School

HATW once again supported the efforts of the consortium of Washtenaw County agencies working to put together a Back to School event for young people in care, in partnership with the Michigan Foster Closet. In the pandemic era this event has continued to be a drive-up/drive-through gathering that supplies youth with not only a backpack full of supplies but new outfits and shoes to send them into the new academic year well-equipped and in style.





## Cocktails for a Cause

Friend of HATW Holly Rider welcomed us to her beautiful home in Dexter in September, where the weather allowed us to greet old friends and new outdoors in the garden, gathering in person to reflect on how meaningful face-to-face connection can be. Many attendees were not aware of HATW's work, or some only with certain programs, and it was wonderful to come together and share meaningful discussions about child welfare and its impact on our communities.

## Bigger than the Game Rematch

During National Adoption Awareness Month in November, HATW faced off against Columbus-based Caring for Kids once again to see who could sell more raffle tickets to benefit foster youth served by our agencies with the big prize of a pair of tickets to the UM/OSU game. HATW worked hard for victory, but Caring for Kids rallied in the final hours of the final day to outsell Michigan, causing HATW staff to pay off its bet with a ground photo showing our support for OSU.



## Holidays at HATW

The holiday season was a busy one: Blue Cross Complete helped us send families to the Detroit Zoo once again to enjoy Wild Lights. With help from many individual and corporate donors, Operation Good Cheer helped make wishes come true for our foster care clients. We also filled grocery carts to support families who have been recently reunified and relative caregiver families with stretched resources. Aldi made a generous donation to fill those carts, as did Faith Community Presbyterian Church - Novi, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth and Kirk in the Hills, all members of the Faith Communities Coalition on Foster Care.





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781 Avis Drive, Suite 200  
Ann Arbor, MI 48018

734-477-0135  
hatw.org  
@HATWfamilies

