



HATW

HANDS ACROSS THE WATER

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Rick Modglin-Green, President**
- Mary Gladstone-Highland, Vice President**
- Belinda Needham, Secretary**
- Darlene Helzerman, Treasurer**
- Julius Buzzard, Board Member**
- Julie Roesch, Board Member**
- William Grenawitzke, Board Member**
- Victor DiGiovanni, Board Member**

Hands Across The Water (HATW) is proud to 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 LGBT youth and families since 2011.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on 2024, the 25th anniversary since our founding in 1999, I am filled with awe for the bravery of HATW's founders, Kathi and Jim Nelson, who had a dream to support children and families like their own, and who I'm guessing might not have dared to imagine in 1999 what HATW might look like in 2024. This agency has not just survived, but thrived, despite all odds, growing and adapting time and time again.

I am filled with gratitude for the perseverance of Board members and staff who have held on tight through challenging times, the optimism of our newest staff members who seek to build a meaningful career connecting with families and children in our community, the sacrifices of our donors and volunteers, and most importantly, the resilience and courage of the people we serve, who allow us into their lives with vulnerability.

Approximately 12,000 individuals have been served by HATW since 1999. Many of these children and families are returning to HATW - as staff members, Board members, donors, and supporters. They are reaching out to tell us thank you, to brag about college graduations, new jobs, and new branches of their family trees. They are also reaching out to ask us for support and resources. It makes me so proud to know that families trust us to walk alongside them in both their best times and in their lowest times - and that they know that our dedication to them is lifelong.

In 2024 we served about 1400 individuals through foster care services, international and state adoption, behavioral health, kinship support services, and supportive programming and education to parents and children. But behind that number are real and complex individuals with unique stories.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Also in 2024, donors helped us serve over 100 Thanksgiving and Christmas meals to families in need, ensure that every child in our care received their full slate of holiday gift wishes, and got to go to camp this summer with their siblings. 2024 saw our first-ever golf outing fundraiser, our first annual drag queen bingo event, and our 25th anniversary “jubilee” celebration, not just as successful fundraisers, but celebratory occasions to gather in ways we hadn’t done since COVID. Finally, HATW was honored in 2024 to sponsor Ypsilanti’s Juneteenth event, was a charity partner for the Dexter-Ann Arbor Run and partnered with the LGBTQ community at several community PRIDE events.

Thank you to those who have supported us with your time, expertise, money, community connections and love. You pick us up in our hardest moments so that we can do the same with the people in our community who rely on us. Because of you, we can continue to leave a legacy for another 25 years.

With deep appreciation,



Katie Page Sander, LMSW
Executive Director



In 2024,
HATW served
1367 clients



FOSTER CARE

HATW began providing foster care services several years after its founding: today, foster care related services make up the largest part of the work we do. In 2024 foster care services were awarded specific support by the Speckhard-Knight Foundation, Blue Cross Complete, and the Ann Arbor Kiwanis Foundation.



11 Families licensed

24 Youth reunified with parents

97 Active foster families

167 Foster youth served

KINSHIP CARE

In 2024 HATW extended its work with families by partnering with Michigan State University's Kinship Care Resource Center. Kinship Care serves those who may or may not be involved with the family court system, but who are caregiving children to whom they are related or have close relationships with. In 2024, HATW served 46 kinship care clients.



ADOPTION

Adoption continues to play a large role in the work of bringing permanency to children in Michigan and across the globe. Hands Across The Water is the only remaining Michigan-based agency to offer Hague-accredited primary provider services, and served 79 families at various stages of their international adoption process in 2024. Waiting child adoptions through the State of Michigan also made up a large number of finalized adoptions this year, and we completed home studies and finalized a handful of adoptions of infants.

5 Infant adoptions

15 International adoptions

22 Waiting child adoptions



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Behavioral services for young people and adults kept our team of therapists and MSW interns busy in 2024, whether through individual sessions or in support groups. HATW strives to serve a broad range of clients, especially those who have limited access to mental health care because they are covered by Medicaid.



34 Support group participants
52 Therapy clients

BOARD MEMBER COMES FULL CIRCLE

In February 2024 we welcomed a new Board member to Hands Across The Water who represents a new era for HATW. Victor DiGiovanni not only has lived experience in the foster care and adoption system, but he was also adopted through Hands Across The Water, and our own Katie Page Sander was his social worker. Victor has himself gone into social work as a profession, saying that his experience had a profound impact on him. As someone with firsthand experience of not only the system but whose life was touched by our agency, his service on the board represents an important milestone, and a voice we need as part of our leadership team. Welcome, Victor--we couldn't be happier or more proud to have you.



Victor DiGiovanni, pictured far left with his siblings and Katie Page Sander around the time of his adoption, and his present-day Board head shot.

EVENTS

After several quiet post-COVID years, 2024 was a busy year for in-person events! HATW held a number of fundraising events, capped off by a celebratory jubilee honoring past, present and future.

DRAG QUEEN BINGO

March is HATW's official "birthday" month, marking the anniversary of our official 501c3 status, and we celebrated with a night of drag performances and bingo at the Sidetrack in Ypsilanti featuring performers from Boylesque. This sold-out event packed the room and provided a great start to our anniversary year!



DEXTER-ANN ARBOR RUN THE RIVER

HATW was a featured charity partner of the Ann Arbor-Dexter Run the River in 2024: fittingly, the 50th anniversary of the race the same year as HATW's 25th! Volunteers aided with various activities on both days of the race, from the kids' event to packet pickup to setup and food preparation, and had a great time meeting and greeting in the community!



GOLF OUTING AT BARTON HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

Our first-ever golf outing at the Barton Hills Country Club was held July 15: a stormy morning giving way to a beautiful sunny warm day just as our golfers took the course! Sponsors Walton Insurance, CMR Mechanical, Bellows Investments and Dynamic Edge helped provide a memorable experience for attendees!

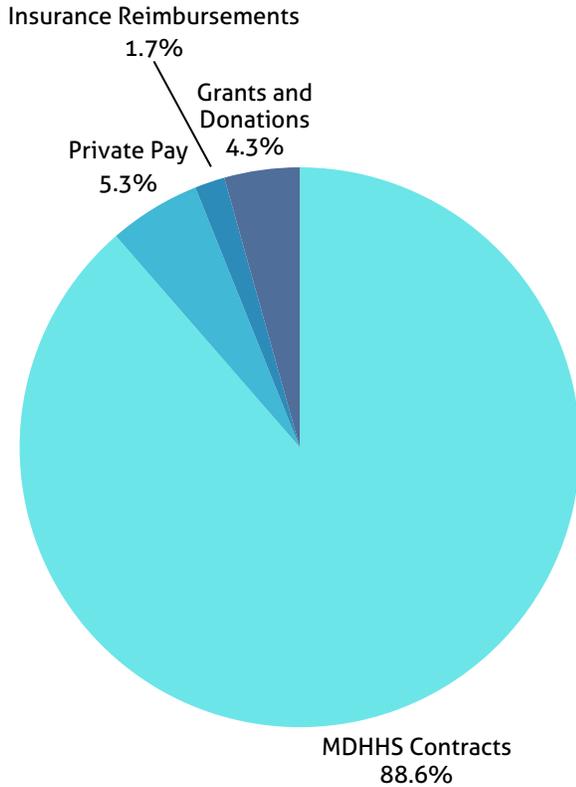


25TH ANNIVERSARY JUBILEE

HATW's Jubilee party at Sam Hill was a homecoming for many former employees and clients, and a time to reminisce about the past and look to the future. Board and guests enjoyed a warm evening moving between indoor and outdoor spaces and sharing stories together.



INCOME AND EXPENSE



Income

\$4,136,069

MDHHS Contracts
\$247,844

Private Pay
\$81,084

Insurance
Reimbursements
\$202,694

Grants and Donations

\$4,667,691 TOTAL

Expense

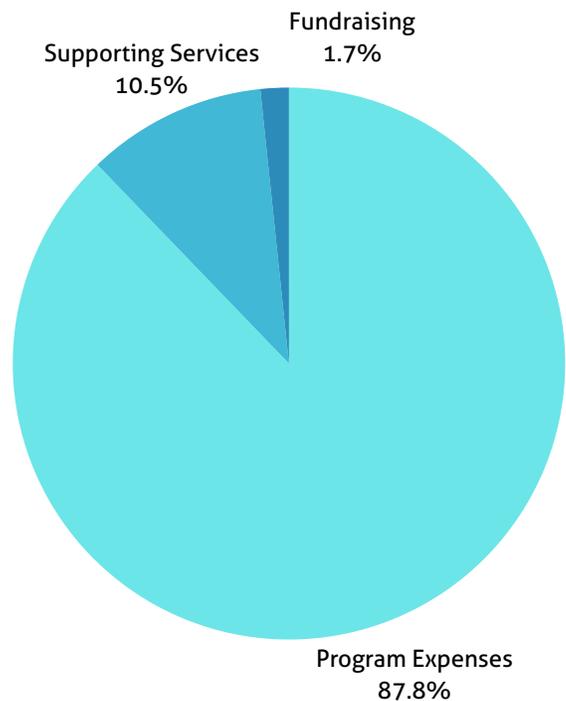
\$3,699,855

Program Services
\$444,204

Supporting Services
\$69,884

Fundraising

\$4,213,943 TOTAL



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Joel Abramson
Alanna Angell
Catherine Bartholomay
Julie Beckstein
Rebecca Belian
Lauren Belt
Katherine Bemish
Kerry Bowman
Vera Boychuck
Greg Boyd
Matt Boylan
Michele Bracy
Terry Branoff
Michelle Bules
Jessica Burnside
Julius Buzzard
Matthew Capaldi
Katherine Case
Elizabeth Caswell
Richard Chesney
Kenisha Coon
David Cox
Jennifer Crichton
Shelly Crundwell
Erica Curry Van Ee
Melissa Daneshyar
Anna Daoud
Kitu Dave
Beverly Davidson
H.J. Decker
Lubiq Dedvukaj
Jill & Oliver Dettman
Anthony DiGiovanni
James Eschman
Marilyn Fekety
Karolynn Fenton Schofield
Jesse Feyen
Sydney & Amy Finkenbine
Peggy Fisher-Kmieciak
Dorothy Flattery

Mark Foster
Julie Joseph Fox
Jamie Frech
Jane Renwick Fry
Emmie Fucinari
Karin Fujimoto
Andrew & Adam Gardner-Northrop
Maya Geryk
Rhys Gibson
David G Gladstone
Mary Gladstone-Highland
Kathryn Greening
Kimberly & William Grenawitzke
Jorge Guzman De Branoff
Jared Hare
Megan Harris
Ryan Harris
Darlene Helzerman
Richard Henderson
Heather Herrick
Laura Hilburn
Carol Hildebrandt
Jane Holland
Jane and Thomas Holland
Star Jennings
Adam & Melissa Jenovai
David & Tracy Kapusansky
Christine Kelley
Randy Kuckuck
Nathan Kurt
Baila Lakatos
Kristen Lang
Ann LaPointe
Maria Lessnau
Steven & Theresa Light
Jesse Lipson
Jens Loemker
Mary Mangum
Atl Martinez
Jon Mattis

Erica Melnykowycz
Holly Mierzejewski
Julie Miller
Rick Modglin-Green
Elizabeth Mott
Donna Nafziger
Belinda Needham
Rob Needham
Richard Ohye
Leyna Olson
Kyle O'Malley
Garry Packard
Lynn Packard
Leonard & Susan Page
Patsy Page
Peggy Page
Raymond Page
William Page
Daniela Page Sander
Katie Page Sander
Alison Paine
Marci Parks
Michelle Parra
Jennifer Pedley
Laurie Posner
Donna Preziotti
Clare Racine
Paul Rains
Anusha RK
Julia M Roesch
Juliet Rogers
Lisa Ruby
Cheryl Saam
James Sander
Loren Sanders
Meg Sawyer
Keith Schultz
Jennifer Schulz
Janet Scott
Kristen Seguin

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Jeffery Seitz
Chinmaya Shelgikar
Sujay Singh
Brandon Snider
Janet Snyder
Morgan Stanley
Gina Steffey
Sarah Stone
Ryan Szokola
Carolyn Szumski
Maria Tazzi
Nicole Tomaszewski
Stacy Townsend
Janice Tribble
Jen Trotter
Jan Ulrich
Monique Uzelac
Subhash Valanju
Jeanette Van Hukke
Colleen van Lent
Alina Verdiyan
Karen Vineyard
Lorien Wenger
Bethany Westrick
Liz Wilkinson
Kay Wilson
Jen Wrayno
Grace Wu
Joseph Wywrot
Nick J Zagar
Dianne Guilbault and Mark Zauel

Each of the people, companies and foundations named here played a pivotal role in our work throughout the year. If you have questions about how you can support HATW through planned giving or monthly giving, or if you would like to know more about programs or initiatives that would benefit from additional resources, please reach out to our development associate by calling our office at 734-477-0135.

GRANTS AND CORPORATE GIFTS

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
Ann Arbor Thrift Shop
Ann Arbor Track Club
Big Family of Michigan
Blue Cross Complete
Dynamic Edge
FAAC/Arotech
Galens Medical Society
Kiwanis Club of Ann Arbor Foundation, Inc.
Meijer
Mercedes-Benz Financial
Michigan Health Endowment Fund
Speckhard Knight Charitable Foundation
United Way of Midland County
United Way of Washtenaw County
United Way Southeast Michigan
Walton Insurance Group
Zingerman's



781 Avis Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48018
734-477-0135
hatw.org
info@hatw.org
@hatwfamilies
📷 📺 📧

