



# Possibilities.

## Made possible.



moka 

Annual Report 2020-2021

# Opportunities.

Made possible.



Dear Friends,

Each year I look forward to sharing a few stories of achievement and perseverance by the children and adults we are privileged to support. We have enjoyed working with exceptional partners in support of community building. This year we spent time learning how our work brings us joy by listening to each person's journey. I expect you will also experience joy in reading these stories.

In another year marked by a global pandemic, we continue to stay connected to each other and our community. The story about Kurt, Melissa, Marie, and Alisha developing confidence through learning to lead emphasizes the power of self-advocacy toward living a meaningful life. The story of Jeremiah reminds us that improved expression can lead to stronger engagement. The story about Brian and Kyren is a reminder of the power of employment as one way to gain meaningful connections and confidence.

The time we are living in reinforces the importance of community, collaboration, and connectedness. Please know that you are deeply appreciated for all your contributions. Rachel and Mei saw their confidence soar as a result of your contributions to our poetry project with the nonprofit The Diatribe. Your support and encouragement opens opportunities for learning skills and giving back to the community like the story of Margaret and Anjin volunteering with Feeding America.

Thank you to the children and adults who have chosen MOKA for services, to family members and supportive friends and advocates, to our funding partners, and to our many generous donors to the MOKA Foundation. Our work would not be possible without our incredibly dedicated employees and the leadership of our board of directors.

We remain grateful to all of you for your support.

*Tracey*  
Tracey Hamlet  
Executive Director



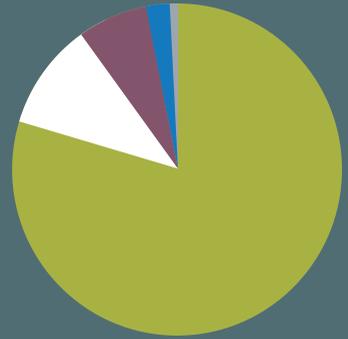
MOKA has been accredited by CARF in the following programs: Community Housing, Community Integration, Employment Services, Job Development, Employee Development Services, and Behavioral Consultation Services.

# Resources.

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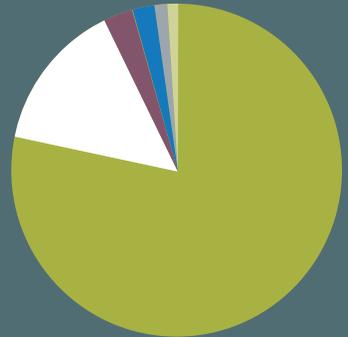
## Support & Revenue

● CMH Contracts	\$17,264,744
● Client Contributions	\$1,630,346
● Donations and Other	\$1,107,423
● Rental Revenue	\$442,212
● Grant Revenue	\$170,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,614,725</b>



## Expenses

● Wages and Fringes	\$13,544,029
● Operations	\$2,966,003
● Transportation	\$412,303
● Equipment	\$343,436
● Contractual Services	\$127,633
● Leases	\$97,541
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,490,945</b>



# Identity.

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## Taking Pride in Our Identity

Gathering together on tablets from the comfort of their own homes, a group of MOKA Leadership Development Opportunities (LDO) Fellows found friendship, fellowship, and fun.

Through a unique partnership with the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, six people in MOKA's residential homes participated in the year-long fellowship program. The group met virtually throughout 2021 to discuss issues around disability pride, advocacy, and inclusion. They also learned about self-awareness, self-advocacy, and self-care.

Kurt took to heart lessons on self-advocacy, self-efficacy, and speaking up to help and encourage others. Melissa discovered she is capable of doing things on her own, along with the importance of doing what is right.

All of the Fellows improved their technology skills. Alisha learned how to color and cook using her iPad. Marie enjoyed the art classes and pajama parties offered through the fellowship program. And Stacey and Deontae applied what they learned from LDO on the job and in real life.

Simply put: "LDO teaches us about who we are and what we are capable of doing," Kurt says.

The LDO Fellows explored their individual strengths and uniqueness and gained new skills while building relationships with peers, housemates, and disability advocates. Session topics included art and music, disability history and heroes, ableism and equal access, leadership strengths, self-determination, identity mapping, goal setting, and independent living.

Each Fellow also worked on an issue or goal that is important to them. Some wanted to find jobs or live independently. Kurt focused on shedding labels, fighting stigmas, and inspiring his peers. "I learned to advocate for



myself and my needs and my housemates,” Kurt says.

Kurt lives in the Lilly Home in Grand Rapids and participates in drumming and art programs through Artists Creating Together (ACT). Kurt learned how to download drumming apps so he could practice on his own. He also applied skills like preparation, collaboration, and active listening to other interests and hobbies.

Melissa, a resident of the Amanda Home in Kent County, became employed by the end of the program. Participating in LDO taught her more about independence and integrity, adding “if you know you’re going to do something wrong, then you know how to fix that problem.”

Marie and Alisha live in the Greenboro Home in Grand Rapids and enjoyed the connection with the other LDO Fellows. They graduated as tech-savvy Fellows who could download apps, send emails, and use social media and Siri. They also used their iPads to connect with friends and family.

Besides discussing serious issues around disability, the group joined together virtually for festive pajama parties and a spirited graduation ceremony. The LDO Fellows say they are grateful for the opportunity and miss seeing others in the program.

The Leadership Development Opportunities Fellowship Program is a program of the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition with funding from the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council. Aimee Sterk, Program Director at MDRC, developed the statewide program about five years ago.

Fellows gain the tools and resources to “take pride in our identity as people with disabilities and look for opportunities to build inclusion and to have our voices heard on issues that are important to us,” Sterk says.

# Confidence.

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## A Whole Lot of Pep in His Step

Brian has a pep in his steps these days, and he prides himself on arriving early to his job at Canteen so he can earn extra money.

With support from MOKA's Job Developers and Canteen staff, Brian has excelled as an order picker since joining Canteen in Norton Shores. He likes the job's perks, including higher wages, bonuses for being on time, and a free snack and drink after every shift.

Brian continues to take initiative to learn more about the machines and troubleshoot problems on the line. He lives independently and uses his paycheck to help care for his dog, Stella.

"I guess you could say it helped me with some independence," Brian says. "There are quite a few things I learned at the job simply because I was curious and decided to look into it."

Ready for a change, Brian stepped out of his comfort zone when he accepted the job at Canteen. Brian previously worked in food service and was looking for new employment last summer. Around the same time, Canteen reached out to MOKA about making a donation and hiring people in the Supported Employment program. Kyren, who is in the same program, started in November.

"Brian and Kyren are very punctual and reliable," says Tom Joppie, Canteen's Customer Service Manager. "They caught on quickly and they're doing a good job."

Job Developer Jamey Curtis worked with Brian and Kyren on their job search and the application and interview process. She stays in regular contact to provide job supports as needed.



“He’s got a whole lot of pep in his step because he’s getting challenged physically and mentally,” Jamey says of Brian.

Community Supports Supervisor Tasha Oltman says that Brian has started to “come out of his shell” at work and with MOKA staff. “He is learning valuable skills on the job as well as exploring how developing relationships can contribute to a positive work culture,” Tasha says.

Canteen, a nationwide vending and refreshment services company, is committed to diversity and inclusion as well as hiring veterans and people with disabilities. Tom Joppie worked with people from MOKA’s Jobs program in a previous role at a Muskegon grocery store and discussed the idea with Jeff Wisniewski, District Manager, who then reached out to MOKA.

Brian and Kyren work on the second-shift pick line, fulfilling orders for the route drivers and merchandisers. Brian was initially a little nervous but says “that is just something that happens when you try something for the first time.”

Jamey also coaches Brian with social skills and helps him problem solve other issues, like car problems. She encourages Brian to advocate for himself and ask questions when he doesn’t understand something. “He’s come a long way with that,” Jamey says. “He asks a lot of questions now, and it’s great to see.”

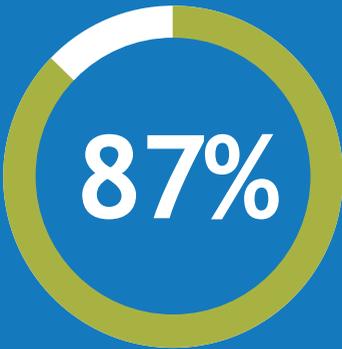
After working in retail, Kyren appreciates being out of customer service jobs and the extra support he receives from Jamey and his Canteen supervisor. “They give me good advice,” he says.

Tasha is thrilled Canteen reached out and says they have been a great partner. “We just want people to be able to get jobs in the community, be a fulfilled member of their community, and be able to make a nice wage doing it, too,” she says.

# Impact.

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## Volunteerism



of people served by MOKA in community based programs **were engaged in volunteer work.**

This exceeds the National Core Indicators that show 42% of people with I/DD in Michigan are engaged in volunteer work.

(NCI, 2018-19 MI Report)

## Empowerment

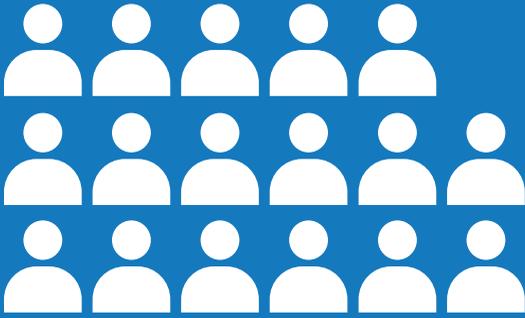
M O K A ' S

**Empowerment Fund**

provided scholarships totaling **\$3,000 to 14 people** we serve who participated in workshops put on by **The Diatribe.**



## Employment



**Seventeen people** achieved their goal of **employment** in MOKA's Supported Employment Program.

## Autism



of children working **on a goal of communication** made progress.

## Health

**20%** 

of people participating in the **Diabetes** Prevention Program **reduced at least one risk factor** for management of diabetes.

 **82%**

of their caregivers received education in **prevention and management of diabetes.**

# Empowerment.

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## Finding Their Voice

Rachel never knew she had poetry inside of her. But once the words started flowing, Rachel even surprised herself. Rachel joined others in MOKA's Community Supports program for a nine-week virtual poetry workshop offered through The Diatribe to learn more about creative writing and the power of spoken word poetry. "I never knew I had that much built up," Rachel says. "My creativity, I never thought I could go that deep and just let it out through writing."

The Diatribe is a Grand Rapids-based nonprofit that facilitates poetry and performance workshops in area schools. The collaboration with MOKA was the first time The Diatribe offered these sessions to adults with disabilities. Sitting in her living room, Rachel spoke her truth and shared her poetry during a virtual showcase to wrap up the workshop. "When she read them, I sat here and my jaw dropped," her mother Tami says. "It was just amazing what she did, and I had no idea she had that in her to do."

The Diatribe encourages vulnerability, authenticity, and creativity. The group met weekly over the summer and explored topics related to identity, self-care, and mental health. The participants learned about different types of poetry, discussed the work of other poets, and tapped into their own creative talents. The true reward is cultivating performers who then feel confident to express themselves and speak out in all sorts of ways, says Gleason Raphael, The Diatribe's Director of Education. "It's really about cultivating the idea of the power in your story and the power in your voice and that people are listening and people do want to hear what you have to say," Gleason says.

The MOKA Foundation's Empowerment Fund covered the cost of the program. The Empowerment Fund provides financial support to people served by MOKA to support them in reaching their goals.

# Giving.

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## Giving Back Sparks Connection, Friendship

It's Tuesday morning, the clock just hit 10 a.m. and Margaret is already at her station inside Feeding America West Michigan eager to begin the day's tasks. She grabs a clear bag and begins to fill it with pre-packaged food. Once the bag is full, she places it in a bin and reaches for the next bag, chatting with fellow volunteers from the MOKA Community Supports Life Skills program as she works.

This is a time Margaret looks forward to each week. It is a chance to not only give back to her community but to spend time engaging with others and building essential skills. "I have watched Margaret blossom from when she first started. The way she assists her fellow volunteers is incredible to watch. She is very proud of the work she does here," says Francesca Almonte, Reclamations Coordinator at Feeding America West Michigan.

Feeding America West Michigan distributes food to relieve hunger and increase food security in 40 counties throughout West Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. The volunteers from MOKA's Community Supports Life Skills program were named one of their top five volunteer groups in 2020 and assist in the processing of more than 200,000 pounds of products a month.

"The people we serve love volunteering and being a part of their community," says Supervisor of Community Supports Jenny Shumard. Natalie Visser, Specialized Assistant Supervisor, adds "They're developing their leadership and teambuilding skills. They work as a group the entire time they are here."

Francesca says, "The consistent hours they spend here, their dedication, and their stage presence make the volunteers from MOKA stand out. They give off an energy that makes people want to be here. Their impact is huge."

# Progress.

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## Early Intervention Leads to Blossoming Social Skills

Described as fun, outgoing, and a quick learner, Jeremiah has taken great strides since starting with MOKA's Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy program nearly two years ago.

Early on, Jeremiah's grandmother, Coretta, noticed that he was not hitting the developmental milestones that a toddler should at a year old. He was not making any sounds, did not respond to verbal cues, and wasn't interacting with toys. Coretta, a nurse, quickly realized that something was not right and started to do her own research on autism before reaching out to a neurologist for help.

At the age of 2, Jeremiah was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and referred to MOKA through Network180. "Once MOKA got involved, there was a huge difference," Coretta says. "What's impressed me the most is taking this child that was nonverbal and unhappy and seeing a big change where he's happier and can say words."

Jeremiah began individualized therapy sessions that are focused on motor imitation skills, listener responding, and echoics. His Youth Autism Specialist Candace Heinlein will say a word and he repeats it back. He also uses a picture exchange communication system (PECS), which allows him to communicate his wants and needs at home and when in session. Through these sessions, his social skills have blossomed.

"He is so sweet and fun to be around," Candace says. "I look forward to seeing him and the changes that he's made; he's starting to get excited when he sees he's expanding his skills."



Jeremiah's progress has been nothing short of a team effort. Candace and a MOKA Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) work with Coretta on parent education and training, a vital part of treatment. The team at MOKA shares what they are working on in-session, so the same consistency can be applied at home and in the community for the ABA therapy to have lasting effects. Coretta's advocacy for her grandson's needs has made a clear difference.

She works with Jeremiah's preschool, daycare, and MOKA to discuss what is being worked on so the skills he is learning in-session are being encouraged in all areas of his life. "It's just amazing," Coretta says. "He didn't interact with toys before and now he picks up right away what to do with them. He is absorbing everything and it carries over into school."

As his communication skills increase and his personality begins to shine through, Jeremiah continues to flourish into a social, charismatic, and bright child. "He catches on to things extremely quickly and he enjoys learning new things," Candace says, "his drive will keep pushing him forward."

*I look forward to seeing him and the changes that he's made; he's starting to get excited when he sees he's expanding his skills.*

*Candace Heinlein  
Youth Autism Specialist*

# MOKA.

Made possible by you.

This annual report highlights the courage, passion, and success stories of the people we serve and the dedicated staff that support them. The independence they gain and the light they bring to our community would not be possible without the generosity of our donors. The financial support our donors provide is pivotal to bringing new and life changing opportunities to the people we serve.

We are so grateful to be able to recognize our donors and give our thanks for the incredible gifts of support they provide! **Your investment in the lives of those we serve is truly life changing, thank you.**

## Donors

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Heather Hill  
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Mary Haara  
Mary Mannes  
Mary Moore  
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Network For Good  
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Norman Moss  
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The TRU Group, LLC  
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Thomas and Lois Giles  
Thomas and Mary Zmolek  
Tony Maniscalco  
Tracey A. Hamlet  
Two Men and a Truck  
Vicki Broge  
Wendy Draves  
William Haug

## In Memory of John Haug

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Donna Pennington  
Friendship Ministries  
James Hudson  
Jane Curtis  
Jane E. Smith  
Joanne Warren  
John Hascher  
John O'Toole  
Karen O Toole  
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Milli Haug  
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Federal Credit Union  
Norman Moss

P.A.Z  
Richard Werner  
Robert Malenfant  
Systema Funeral Home  
Vicki Broge  
William Haug

## In Memory of G. Karstan

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Barbara Weesies  
Harold Mast  
Robert Vander Lugt

## In Memory of Thomas Steenwyk

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Lakeshore Memorial  
Services  
Mary Mannes

## In Memory of Deb Golliver

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Colleen Malcolm  
Edmund Kolikowski  
Stephan Workman

## In Memory of Mark Hendricks

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Lyndon Wood

## In Memory of Michael Boone

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Joanne Aileen Parker

## In Honor of Ben Boerema

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Claybanks United Methodist  
Church

## MOKA Corporation Board of Directors 2020-2021

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Daniel Holtrop, Vice President  
Patricia Draper, Secretary  
David Den Herder, Treasurer  
Rick Cornell  
Judi Kuiper  
Julie Lankes  
Mary Moore  
Mittie Den Herder  
Zachary Sietsema

## MOKA Foundation Board Members 2020-2021

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Mary Moore, President  
Mittie Den Herder, Vice President  
Zachary Sietsema, Secretary  
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Dale Rietberg  
Daniel Holtrop  
Patricia Draper  
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Julie Lankes

## Private Insurers

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Blue Cross Blue Shield  
of Michigan

## Funding Partners

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Bureau of Services for  
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of Ottawa County  
Community Shores Bank  
Federal Home Loan Bank  
of Indianapolis  
HealthWest  
Lakeshore Regional Entity  
Michigan Rehabilitation Services  
Network180  
OnPoint

## Community Collaborators

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GVSU School of  
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Michigan Disability  
Rights Coalition  
Michigan Rehabilitation Services  
Special Olympics  
The Diatribe  
The Wege Foundation  
WEAVE Project Partners  
HOPE Network  
Spectrum Community  
Services  
Thresholds  
YWCA West Central Michigan\*

\*Lead agency in project

We want to offer a huge thank you for your generous support this year! We are so grateful for the gifts you give and the compassion you have for the community we serve.

This includes a special thanks to:

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The Wege Foundation for  
a grant used for pivotal  
research and education  
about diabetes prevention.



All of those who supported our  
record-breaking, year-end fundraiser  
designated to Care Coordination,  
Community Supports Arts Inclusion,  
and Making a House a Home.

We could not continue to provide our services without the support of our dedicated donors. Thank you!

## Volunteer Sites

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Beer City Dog Biscuits  
Blandford Nature Center  
Celebration Community Church  
City on a Hill  
Crittter Barn  
Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding  
Feeding America  
Fellinlove Farm  
First Baptist Church  
Great Lakes Naval Memorial and Museum  
Harvest Stand Ministries  
Humane Society of West Michigan

Kent County Parks Volunteer Services  
Palmer & Millennium Park  
Kids Food Basket  
Meals on Wheels-AgeWell Services  
Meals on Wheels Grandville  
Meals On Wheels  
Michigan Ballet Academy  
North Ottawa County Council on Aging  
Ronald McDonald House  
Special Olympics



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