



Team Alexandria

Working Together to Uplift Our
Community

ACT for Alexandria 2021 Impact Report



About ACT for Alexandria

ACT for Alexandria is a community foundation dedicated to improving the lives of people in Alexandria, Virginia.

We are Alexandria's home for philanthropy and for individuals who want to make a difference.

- ACT is a convener. As a community foundation, we are uniquely positioned to connect many sectors within our community.
- ACT is a catalyst. We listen and collaborate with our partners to ignite rapid responses to needs in our community.
- ACT is an advocate. We bring the community together to amplify our voices and promote equity for all.



What does a thriving community look like?



Dear Friends,

ACT envisions a community where all residents can achieve their full potential and where the color of one's skin, ethnicity, or citizenship status does not determine their outcomes in life.

Our supporters, partners, and friends all play a role in making this vision a reality. That's why we are so proud of the clarity, creativity, and urgency that you—our community members and partners—have so consistently shown. You didn't close your eyes or your hearts as the pandemic continued on. Instead, you connected, you listened, and together we took action. For example:

- We continued to respond to urgent needs brought on by the pandemic and engaged community organizations to be trusted messengers for vaccine outreach.
- We sought new ways to help low-income Alexandrians establish stronger financial footing.
- We brought together local nonprofits with City government and Alexandria City Public Schools to strengthen the network of support for young people at risk of falling behind in school and life.

These efforts are grounded in ACT's commitment to a racially just and equitable community. We are exploring ways to share power and leverage our influence in service to community members who have been marginalized or discriminated against because of their race. And we're investing in neighborhoods most harmed by systemic racism. We remain passionate about continuing our learning journey and making changes that advance racial equity. (Read more about our racial equity commitment on our website: www.actforalexandria.org.)

As we continue to navigate and recover from the pandemic, we must harness our collective generosity, ingenuity, and compassion to build a better future. With Team Alexandria, we are confident and resolute. Together we will create an Alexandria where everyone thrives.

With gratitude,

Heather Peeler
President & CEO

2021 in Numbers

\$2,038,005

Grants made

500

Community members participated in trainings and workshops on racial equity

Spring2ACTion

\$2,578,122

Raised

8,591

Donors

150

Nonprofits

ACT's 2021 philanthropic assets

\$25M

"Over the past two extremely difficult years, ACT has been a leader in supporting organizations and Alexandrians through this ongoing pandemic. They have supported both direct service work as well as education efforts that improve people's understanding of the City and systems that impact their life, and this work has allowed us to promote equity and inclusion to ensure that the most impacted communities have a chance to speak out and have their meets met, both short term and long term."

Evelin Urrutia
Executive Director,
Tenants and Workers United



In 2021, ACT was honored to be awarded The Chamber ALX's Best in Business Nonprofit/Association. The award recognizes ACT's collaboration with donors, nonprofits, local businesses, government agencies, and other stakeholders in response to the pandemic.



"For years, ACT has been a leader, a supporter, and collaborator for our city. ACT for Alexandria was quick to act and quick to deploy much needed resources during the COVID pandemic. We are grateful for all that they do. "

Stephanie Beyer Kirby
2021 Chair, The Chamber ALX

COVID Response Efforts

Protecting the health and welfare of our community was a top priority in 2021. ACT saw an opportunity to enlist community organizations as trusted messengers regarding the COVID vaccine and launched two grantmaking efforts focused on vaccine outreach and information dissemination.

To increase vaccination rates, the Alexandria Resilience Fund provided mini-grants and we formalized a grantmaking partnership with the Alexandria Health Department. Both programs leveraged the knowledge and on-the-ground relationships of Alexandria's nonprofits in order to reach residents who are not vaccinated.

SLEEVES UP, ALX: COVID-19 VACCINE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Sleeves Up, ALX is a collaboration with ACT for Alexandria and the Alexandria Health Department to provide \$145,657 in grant funding to eight nonprofit organizations to assist with COVID-19 vaccine outreach initiatives and awareness building activities across communities in Alexandria.* Grantees created video peer testimonials, one-on-one outreach, and social media campaigns to address barriers and misinformation.

Grantees:

- African Communities Together
- Capital Youth Empowerment Program
- Communities In Schools NOVA
- Edu-Futuro
- ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia
- Restoration Immigration Legal Aid
- Senior Services of Alexandria
- Tenants and Workers United

Community organizations have trusted relationships with residents and are effective public health partners.

*Sleeves Up, ALX is supported by the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$77,125,694 with 100 percent funded by the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The contents are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC or the U.S. Government.

VACCINE MINI-GRANTS

Generous supporters to the Alexandria Resilience Fund enabled ACT to meet urgent community needs resulting from the pandemic. In February, we awarded \$46,110 in mini-grants to 16 community-based organizations to support outreach and information sharing regarding the COVID vaccine. Grantees reached approximately 20,000 Alexandrians through their efforts.

Grantees:

African Communities Together, AHC Inc., Alexandria Library, Alexandria Soccer Association, Capital Caring Health, Casa Chirilagua, Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Friends of Guest House, Hearts of Empowerment, Inova Health Care Services, Live & Learn Wholistic Health Services, Senior Services of Alexandria, Tenants & Workers United, Volunteer Alexandria, and Wesley Housing

SERVICE NAVIGATION GRANTS

Many residents face significant barriers when accessing the programs and resources that will address the hardships brought on by the pandemic. ACT and the City of Alexandria launched a new pilot program: Service Navigation Grants. Grantees connected residents to eviction prevention services, food distribution, emergency financial assistance, and other state and federal programs.

ACT managed the grantee selection process and organized regular learning conversations to support alignment and collaboration. For example, during one meeting, grantees raised concerns about the mental health needs of residents. The City promptly responded by offering mental health first aid training for nonprofit staff and volunteers so that community partners could more easily identify needs and direct residents to supports.

This pilot informed a larger, more comprehensive program funded by the American Rescue Plan Act launching in 2022.

Grantees: ALIVE! Inc., Ethiopian Community Development Council, and Tenants and Workers United

1,000
Alexandrians
assisted



Promoting Economic

In the 1990s, Northern Virginia was recognized as a region where residents could successfully pursue the American dream, where families and their children could move up the economic ladder. However, economic success has largely depended on your neighborhood.⁽¹⁾ When COVID hit, poor and low-income families weathered a barrage of challenges – from lost income, to housing and food insecurity, to more deadly health outcomes. That's why ACT, in partnership with the City of Alexandria, donors, and nonprofit partners, took steps to support our neighbors hardest hit by the pandemic.

Fostering Learning

In 2021, ACT continued to work with our partners on innovative programs to invest in the resilience of low-income families as they secure greater financial stability and independence. The 2021 IMPACT Racial Equity Forum focused on a holistic approach to social and economic mobility, the damaging systems and narratives that perpetuate poverty, and the opportunities for poor and low-income people to shape new solutions.



"Guaranteed income will allow people like me to have just a little more security, a little more breathing room so we can survive common issues like a car accident or trip to the doctor. It shows that the community is here for one another, and we want to help each other succeed and thrive."

Rabaaeladawia Hassan,
Alexandria Resident

Security and Mobility

Connecting to Resources

ACT received a grant from the Community Outreach and Opportunity Fund of the EITC Funders Network to work with community partners to educate residents about the benefits of the federal Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit. ACT worked with five local nonprofits on innovative outreach efforts to help Alexandrians access resources that would help their families achieve greater financial security. ACT provided mini-grants to: Community Lodgings, Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria, Hopkins House, Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center, and Restoration Immigration Legal Aid.

Piloting New Solutions

ACT also worked closely with the City of Alexandria, the Bruhn-Morris Foundation, and community organizations to design a guaranteed income pilot program, ARISE, Alexandria's Recurring Income for Success and Equity. The program will launch in 2022 and provide 150 low-income households with \$500 per month over a two-year period to help them ease the financial ups and downs and take steps to move up the economic ladder. ACT hosted convenings for more than 300 residents to learn about the program and shape its design.



"We in the faith community have seen how hard the working people of Alexandria have had it during the pandemic. We need to ensure that recovery acknowledges the disparity in hardship faced among our city's diverse communities.

Guaranteed income will bring to the city of Alexandria a swift, effective, resilient, and just economic recovery while strengthening our local economy."

David Spinrad, Senior Rabbi
Beth El Hebrew Congregation

Quardricos Driskell, Senior Pastor
Beulah Baptist Church

This quote was excerpted from a July 5, 2021 co-authored letter to the editor in the *Alexandria Gazette Packet*

Investing in Alexandria's Youth

YOUTH SUPPORT NETWORK

The U.S. Department of Education found that the COVID-19 pandemic had a tragic impact on youth and their families and deepened divides in educational opportunity. (2) The Youth Support Network was launched in 2020 to address what we knew. To be successful, Alexandria's youth need supportive programs and services.

We partnered with the Frank & Betty Wright Foundation, Alexandria City Public Schools, the City of Alexandria Parks & Recreation Department, youth-serving community organizations and other stakeholders to coordinate and align work across the city.

Caitlin Brown, the YSN Network Manager, met with 90 youth program providers to learn about their needs, challenges and opportunities for collaboration. This work culminated with a gathering of more than 60 youth-serving organizations to share hopes and ideas to move the network forward.

VISION & MISSION

Every youth in the City of Alexandria thrives, regardless of circumstances, through equitable access and engagement in high-quality and meaningful out-of-school time and community-based programs.

We foster collaboration and provide coordinated supports to a network of community organizations, government agencies, schools, and other partners dedicated to improving the equity, quality, and continuous innovation of youth-serving programs in the City of Alexandria.



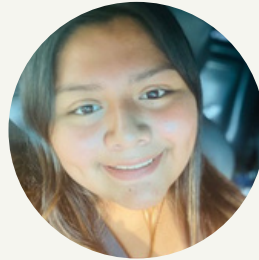
Youth Council

ACT's Youth Council is a program designed by youth for youth with the purpose of providing decision-making power and funding to address key issues within the community. Ten local high school students were selected for the 2022 cohort.

In 2022 Council members will play a key role in Spring2ACTion and research issues in the community that are important to them.



William Gomez-
Placios
Alexandria City
High School



Alessandra Guevara
Alexandria City High
School



Michaela Islas
Alexandria City
High School



Alyssa Lalluces
Alexandria City
High School



Amel Mohdali
Alexandria City
High School



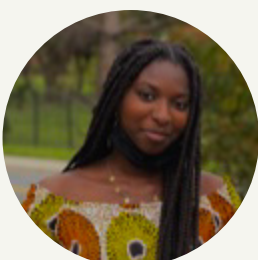
Danielle Pascale
St. Stephen's & St.
Agnes School



Kate Radt
Alexandria City
High School



Indigo Samson-
Bryant
Alexandria City
High School



Diarra Sangare
Alexandria City
High School



Isaiah Sitton
Word of Life
Christian
Academy

2022: The Year Ahead

In the year ahead, ACT will meet community needs in new ways by continuing to serve as a **convener, collaborator, and connector**. We will work with donors, nonprofits, civic leaders, and others to come together to realize big ideas. The challenges facing our community are long-standing and complex. Through our collective efforts, we can build upon our strengths, tap into our passions, and ignite innovation and creative solutions.

Efforts like Sleeves Up, ALX and the Youth Support Network will continue to support Alexandria's nonprofits on the frontlines. Our partnership with the City of Alexandria will grow and expand as we launch **groundbreaking grant programs** designed to help low-income families secure more stable financial footing and mitigate potential crises.

As we continue to deepen our commitment to a racially just community, engaging and **amplifying the voices of community members** will be a top priority. We're investing in our communications capacity and utilizing translation and interpretation services to ensure we can engage in meaningful, inclusive ways.

Finally, we are **committed to our partners' success**. Whether we are helping donors and fund holders realize their philanthropic goals, or helping nonprofits secure the resources they need to realize their missions, ACT is leveraging our relationships and fostering new connections.



Proud to be one of Citi Foundation's

COMMUNITY PROGRESS MAKERS

"Through the Community Progress Makers initiative, these social innovators and advocates can continue to look for new ways of addressing long-standing societal challenges at scale."

Brandee McHale, Head of Community Investing and Development and President of the Citi Foundation

ACT was selected by Citi Foundation as a recipient of the Community Progress Makers initiative, which supports visionary organizations across the U.S. that are working to connect low-income communities and communities of color to greater social and economic opportunity. As a Community Progress Maker, ACT will receive a multi-year, unrestricted grant of \$500,000 and access to technical assistance and a supportive learning community from 2022 – 2023.

2022 OBJECTIVES:

- Support the economic security & mobility of low-income Alexandrians
- Ensure that vulnerable youth have the supports they need to succeed in school and life
- Build capacity of nonprofit organizations and individuals to address racial inequities
- Change public perception about poverty and create opportunities for residents to influence community priorities and decision making
- Strengthening nonprofits by providing trainings and financial assistance

2022 GRANT PROGRAMS:

- Alexandria Resilience Fund
- Childcare Workforce Stabilization Grants
- Community Access & Emergency Support Grants
- Tax Prep and Earned Income Tax Credit Mini-Grants
- Racial Equity Fund

2022 INITIATIVES

- Allyship Workshops
- ARISE, Alexandria's Guaranteed Income Pilot
- Community Fellows
- Legacy Campaign
- Racial Equity Audit Cohort
- Spring2ACTion
- Youth Council
- Youth Support Network

Thank you Team Alexandria!



229

donors contributed
to ACT's year-end
campaign

70+

businesses
participated in
Spring2ACTion

15

donors established
new charitable
funds at ACT

Alexandria is a giving community. In 2021 local businesses, national and regional foundations and hundreds of individuals made an investment in ACT's work. Their support makes our vision for a thriving community possible.

ACT continued to serve as an anchor institution in Alexandria. Marquee initiatives like Spring2ACTion, the racial equity capacity building initiative, and the Youth Council are possible because Alexandrians come together to support ACT. The magnitude of support means our community is ready to do more to ensure a just, equitable community. Thanks to this support, we can meet the needs of our community with more readiness, determination, and impact in the city we love.

"I support ACT because it is helping to ensure that Alexandria remains a vibrant, supportive and welcoming community for people of all races, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds."

Ericka Miller, 2021 ACT Board Member

"ACT for Alexandria is a very important organization in the community. They support so many other nonprofits and do so much good in the community. "

Dave Hawkins, Chief Operations Officer,
McEneaney Associates

With Appreciation

ACT Staff

Sally Gardner
Aaliyah Kerr
Molly Klein
Leeann Napoleon
Heather Peeler
Tricia Ritchie
Brandi Yee

Partners:

Caitlin Brown
The City of Alexandria
Elizabeth Grimm
Brendan Huber-Wilker
Temi Songonuga

2021 Board Members

John Armstrong
Karen Avery
David Baker
Virginia Bennett
Molly Dahl
Scott Darling
Rose Dawson
Maureen Devine-Ahl
Sydney Etheredge
Laurie Flynn
Chris Foster
Kelly Grant
Lisa Guernsey
Charles Holt
Kurt Huffman
Joe LaMountain
Stephanie Landrum
Brian Lundeen
Peter Madigan
Lisa Martin
Ericka Miller
Lori Morris
Phyllis Patterson
Betsey Rosenbaum
Amy Rutherford
David Spinrad
Gene Steuerle
Rob Whittle

Photo Credits:

Alexandria City Public Schools
Rabaaeladawia Hassan
Regis Vogt

Footnotes:

1. "Spreading the Wealth; Sustaining Economic Mobility across Northern Virginia's Neighborhoods," Insight Region, The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia
2. Education in a Pandemic: The Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on America's Students, U.S. Department of Education, 2021

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