



# GOLDEN CARE *for* GOLDEN YEARS



DIRECTION HOME AKRON CANTON AREA ON AGING & DISABILITIES  
2024 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT



## I A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN

**Reflecting on 2024 brings into view just how important it is that new growth be built upon the success of the past.**

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Area Agencies on Aging and the aging network. We have evolved to reflect the demographics and changing needs of the 60+ population over these 50 years. We have provided home-based services and built a provider network using federal Older Americans Act dollars.

We have developed alternatives to nursing home placement as the administrators of the state's PASSPORT community-based Medicaid Waiver program. We have also used the expertise gained in PASSPORT, combined with our superior customer service approaches, to create a successful partnership baseline for the members joining in the implementation of Medicaid-managed care for dual eligibles in MyCare Ohio.

**We have used this history to position ourselves for continued growth.**

2024 was the first year for Abigail Morgan as the new President and CEO. At the beginning of her first year in this role, Ms. Morgan oversaw the implementation of new programs in three of our four counties using healthy aging grant funds from the State of Ohio; these programs were designed to provide digital and internet connections, home repair, and in-home services.

Under her leadership, the Agency also received \$4m in new funding for an expanded program offering in-home care coordination, internet access with tablets and training, and home modifications and repair that allowed elders to age in place. She built a new leadership team bringing together new talent and tenured executives. This team oversaw the transition of leadership and location of our headquarters to our new building in Green, Ohio.

**There were several significant goals for the coming years set by Ms. Morgan and her leadership team.**

Healthcare providers are now assessing for social needs that impact individual health, known as Health-Related Social Needs. These needs, like transportation, housing, and access to healthy foods impact the health and well-being of a patient and are the supports provided by Area Agencies on Aging for 50 years.

We are positioned to assist the medical community in adapting practices and approaches by combining their medical knowledge with Direction Home's proven approach to community-based supports, all built around our comprehensive assessments.

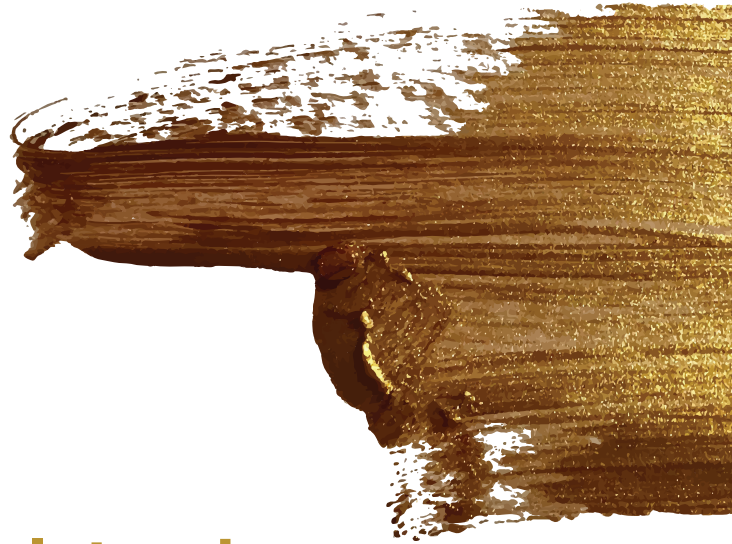
Closer to home, we have started to reframe the purpose and practices of our fundraising arm, the Direction Home Foundation.



Abigail Morgan  
PRESIDENT & CEO



Dr. David B. Reynolds  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



# We are thankful to have had 50 golden years and look forward to 50 more with you joining us in our efforts.

We spent 2024 envisioning and planning for a new way to raise and distribute funds that emphasize the aging experience so that individuals are empowered to achieve the positive future they envision for themselves. We must expand our target to provide for these individuals in ways that allow them to achieve what positive aging means to them.

We will develop the next generation of older adult solutions by creating resources, innovation, and implementation of grants and programs that can make a difference to thousands of adults in our area.

We are proud to look back 50 years on the history of our network and see all the good accomplished, the lives positively impacted, the relationships built with stakeholders, and the value provided to those wishing to remain in the community.

Our current situation is one of the strengths borne from this history combined with a passionate vision for what our future holds as we each age. We are thankful to have had 50 golden years and looking forward to 50 more with you joining us in our efforts.

# MISSION MOMENTS

Our Mission Moments of 2024 continue to work towards fulfilling our mission— provide older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers long-term care choices and consumer protection so they can achieve the highest quality of life. Scan QR Codes to watch videos!

## 1.1.24

### Celebrating 50 Years of Aging Services

Celebrating 50 years of the 1973 Older Americans Act establishing Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) as the organizations responsible for helping older adults live independently in their home and communities.



**12**  
**Ohio**  
**AAAs**

**670**  
**national**  
**AAAs**

**Congregate meals,  
wellness classes, and  
so much more!**

## 2.23.24

### Advancing Age-Friendly Communities

#### **PORTAGE COUNTY:**

Movement formally introduced

#### **STARK COUNTY:**

Completes needs assessment in Phase 1

#### **SUMMIT COUNTY:**

Age Friendly Coordinating Council formed



## 3.13.24

### Advocating for Aging Services

Ohio aging advocates hard at work attended the USAging 2024 Aging Policy Briefing in Washington D.C., including several representatives from Direction Home Akron Canton who advocated on reauthorization and funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA). The OAA funds Area Agencies on Aging across the country, which have been the leading experts on providing aging services for over 50 years.



## 3.19.24

### Welcoming New Leadership



Abigail Morgan was announced as the new President & CEO of Direction Home following Gary Cook's retirement. Abby was formerly Direction Home's Chief Operating Officer.

## 4.1.24

### Expanding Support in Portage and Stark Counties

Healthy Aging grants in Portage and Stark Counties begin accepting referrals for home care, digital inclusion, home modifications, and legal services. The Healthy Aging grants are akin to Summit County's Aging in Place program, also aiming to address service gaps for individuals not qualifying for Medicaid but still unable to privately pay.



4.16.24

### Direction Home Celebrates New Headquarters with Ribbon Cutting

Direction Home hosts its ribbon cutting ceremony to open 1949 Town Park Boulevard to the public.



6.5.24

### Receiving Funding for Whole-Person Care

Direction Home becomes one of 20 organizations to be awarded funding through the USAgings Center of Excellence to Align Health and Social Care (COE). The COE is supported by the U.S. Administration for Community Living and will support community care hubs in their work to assess and address individuals' health-related social needs and promote whole-person care.



7.1.24

### Recognizing the Need

Call volume to the Aging & Disability Resource Center increased a dramatic 45%, marking an era of unprecedented need. A large portion of the increase was due to Summit County's Aging in Place program and other Non-Medicaid programs expanding services to greater amounts of people.

7.12.24

### Presenting Healthcare and Social Care Integration

Direction Home staff joined other Ohio AAAs (& 1,400 other professionals!) in Tampa, FL for the USAgings Conference. Direction Home, Bay Aging/VAAACares & WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging presented a workshop - Healthcare and Social Care Systems Integration: Technology Solutions & Critical System Capabilities.



6.26.24

### Enhancing Nursing Home Experiences

Direction Home hosted the Customer Service Quality Improvement Project closing event for 6 participating Summit County nursing facilities. Facility project teams engaged in an intense 2-year project led by Julie Esack, Quality Improvement Ombudsman, that focused on the admission process, dining experience, activity programming, direct care staff, and physical environment. Bob Pacanovsky facilitated trainings about leadership, excellence, hospitality, and strategies to improve the resident and family experience.



Mission Moments continued on page 6.

# MISSION MOMENTS

8.7.24

## Shaping the Future of Healthcare

Direction Home's annual conference welcomed 200 attendees.

### DISCUSSING:

Shifts in Health Care  
Social Drivers of Health  
Personhood  
Care Crisis



### IMPROVING OUTCOMES IN:

Physical Health  
Mental Health  
Behavioral Health  
Social Factors

10.23.24

## Leading the Future of Care

Chris Fagerstrom, Senior Vice President of Home & Community-Based Services, is awarded the Area Agency on Aging Staff Person of the Year Award at the o4a conference.

Congratulations, Chris!



- Focus on Direction Home
- Assistance and Collaboration with Ohio AAAs
- Transitioning to NextGeneration of MyCare in 2026
- Leading Groups and Advising Organizations



**12%**

increase in care managed individuals in one year at Direction Home.

10.25.24

## Helping a Vulnerable Population

SeniorSubstanceHelp.com, a new Direction Home website with resources for opioid and substance use in older populations, protects and equips a vulnerable population more susceptible to mental and behavioral influences.

**53%**

increase in older Ohioans seeking addiction treatment from 2009-2020.

**12%**

Of substance use treatment-admitted Ohioans are older adults.



11.14.24

## Bettering the Lives of Older Adults

The Foundation Raffle Campaign directs its proceeds to advocacy efforts bettering the lives of older adults through the influence of public policy.





11.19.24

### Making Medicare Simple

The last Medicare Made Simple seminar of the season takes place at Direction Home's new office building. Over 150 people attended seminars to get free, unbiased information during open enrollment.



12.6.24

### Awarding Care, Service, and Advocacy

Awardees are recognized for outstanding citizenship, home care, service, advocacy, and scholarship at the annual Direction Home Awards Ceremony held at The Venue, Tallmadge. Summit County Councilman Jeff Wilhite was recognized with the Harvey L. Sterns Lifetime Achievement Award.



12.31.24

### Accomplishments in Non-Medicaid Programming

Thanks to additional Non-Medicaid funding such as Aging in Place and Healthy Aging grants, an additional **3,800+ people received assorted services** from Direction Home in 2024.

#### Healthy Aging/ARPA

- 700 individuals received food box delivery
- 1,580 members of the Diners Club received over 4,250 restaurant meals
- 125 individuals received home-delivered meals and emergency response systems through Care Coordination Express
- 120 individuals received minor home modifications and/or chore services
- 175 tablet/hotspot devices distributed
- 122 digital workshop attendees

#### Summit County Aging in Place

- 294 enrolled in care coordination services
- 345 enrolled in Care Coordination Express
- 87,000 meal deliveries
- 10,433 personal care hours
- 429 emergency response system deliveries
- 1,139 Adult Day Service days
- 1,500 one-way transportation trips
- 38 home modifications
- 306 chore services
- 250 tech devices delivered
- 669 Internet service months provided
- 735 individuals trained to use tech devices

Scan QR code to watch stories on YouTube

Aging in Place  
Success Stories




Juli's Journey



William and Mary Ann's Story  
Digital Inclusion Program





# RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE FOUNDATION

2024 was a record year for our annual fundraising and raffle campaign. This success was a combination of the work on community events and sponsorships, the Raffle Campaign Team and everyone who supported the Foundation through ticket sales or donations. The Foundation has relied on campaign efforts to support vital advocacy since its inception, but with changing needs and changing environments, the Direction Home Akron Canton Foundation anticipates a similar transformation in years to come to better support local populations.

These changes will mold a newly visioned Foundation that optimizes aging through resource creation, and innovation. The vision will come to life via investment in new community services, innovations in the future of aging, and strengthening Direction Home Agency so we can continue being a leader in the golden standard of care in both local and widespread aging

services. With focus shifting to donor development, governance and allocations, and communication and awareness, there will be plenty of opportunity for the Foundation to continue connecting with equally passionate individuals aiming to enhance what aging looks like for individuals in our community.

Reshaping the future of the Foundation is a heavy undertaking, but Direction Home President & CEO Abigail Morgan has emphasized the capability of Direction Home's network: "We are fortunate to draw upon the expertise of local leaders and board members as we create a new vision of personal and optimized aging." Inspiration for the new Foundation future comes from an individualized approach.

"We have not only the opportunity, but also the responsibility alongside our community partners to shape the services, programs, and innovations that will support us all as we age."



Thank You, Steve and George!

We also want to honor and recognize the service of two long-standing Board members who retired from serving on the Direction Home Area Agency on Aging and Foundation Boards. Steve Colecchi joined Direction Home’s Agency Board in December of 1996, serving as President for several years.

George Sesock joined the Foundation Board in December, 1999, serving as Treasurer for over a decade. Both members have provided many years of guidance and support, raising our standards and vision for our role in the community. Heartfelt thanks to both Steve and George.

2024 FOUNDATION CAMPAIGN

Thank you to all our purchasers, donors, sponsors, and supporters of the Direction Home Akron Canton Foundation Raffle this year.

We’ve exceeded our goal, raising \$209,839!

2024 Top Donors:

- Northeast Professional Caregivers
- Joseph L. Ruby
- Simply EZ
- Medical Mutual
- Family & Community Services in partnership with Axesspointe



Scan the QR code to make a donation to Direction Home Akron Canton Foundation

2024 Raffle Winners:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>GRAND PRIZE</b><br>Nyla Barrett       | <b>FIFTH PRIZE</b><br>Abbie Sigmon     |
| <b>FIRST PRIZE</b><br>Amanda Glenaman    | <b>SIXTH PRIZE</b><br>Katy Schuster    |
| <b>SECOND PRIZE</b><br>Elissa Barr       | <b>SEVENTH PRIZE</b><br>Denise Burgert |
| <b>THIRD PRIZE</b><br>Francine Chuchanis | <b>EIGHTH PRIZE</b><br>Roger Stewart   |
| <b>FOURTH PRIZE</b><br>Julie DiFrancesco | <b>NINTH PRIZE</b><br>Desiree Boldi    |

Direction Home Foundation Board of Directors



**Lee S. Walko**  
**FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR**  
Attorney,  
Brennan Manna & Diamond, LLC

**David B. Reynolds, M.D.**  
**VICE CHAIR**  
Retired Physician,  
Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
Wooster Regional Medical Campus

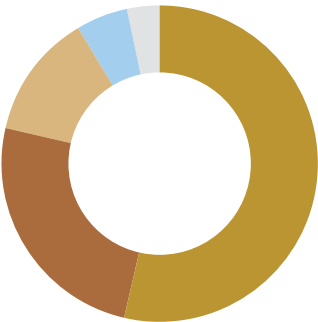
**Brandyn Neal**  
**SECRETARY**  
Client Advisor,  
Risk Management,  
Schauer Group, Inc.

**Lisa Hilling**  
**TREASURER**

- Directors**
- Natalie E. Lindsay-Smith**  
**DIRECTOR**  
Senior Paralegal,  
Law Dept., The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
- Margaret F. Medzie**  
**DIRECTOR**  
Retired VP and Chief Development Officer,  
Akron Community Foundation
- Fran Rice**  
**DIRECTOR**  
Community Liaison

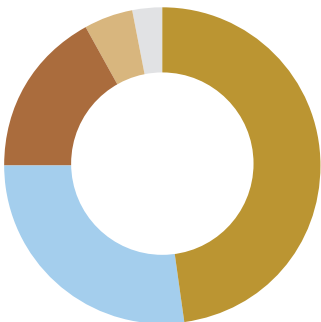
# Consolidated Statements Of Financial Position

## FY2024



TOTAL REVENUES BY SOURCE  
**\$82,275,731**

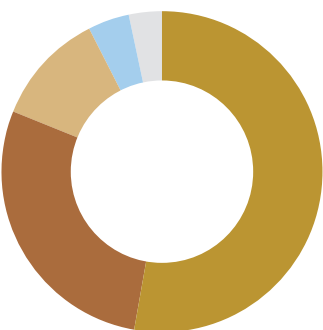
- 53% Medicaid
- 28% Non-government Revenue
- 10% Older Americans Act & Other Federal
- 4% State and Local
- 5% Other Revenue



TOTAL EXPENDITURES  
**\$78,394,726**

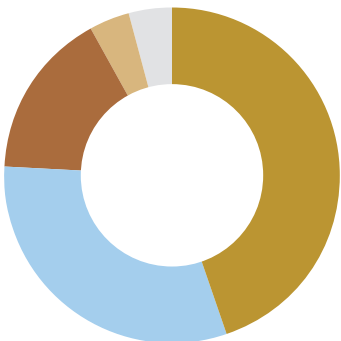
- 48% Care Management Services
- 27% Care Management
- 17% Information Assistance & Community Engagement
- 3% Elder Rights
- 5% Allocation to Community Agencies

## FY2023



TOTAL REVENUES BY SOURCE  
**\$64,056,116**

- 53% Medicaid
- 29% Non-government Revenue
- 11% Older Americans Act & Other Federal
- 3% State and Local
- 4% Other Revenue



TOTAL EXPENDITURES  
**\$63,026,109**

- 44% Care Managed Services
- 30% Care Management
- 17% Information, Assessment, & Community Engagement
- 4% Elder Rights
- 5% Allocations to Community Agencies



# Board of Directors

**David B. Reynolds, M.D.**

**BOARD CHAIR**

Retired Physician,  
Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
Wooster Regional Medical  
Campus

**Charles L. Greene**

**VICE CHAIR**

Attorney at Law, Davison &  
Greene Law Offices

**James Masi**

**VICE CHAIR**

Attorney at Law

**Deborah Rutherford**

**VICE CHAIR**

Retired Administrator,  
Behavioral Health Services

**Jennifer Drost, D.O.**

**CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**

Director of Geriatric Medicine,  
Summa Health

**Julia T. DiFrancesco**

**TREASURER**

Vice President Government  
Navigation Solutions, Cloudmed

**Jack T. Diamond**

**SECRETARY**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Brennan Manna & Diamond, LLC

## Directors

**Julie M. Aultman, Ph.D.**

**DIRECTOR**

Dean, College of Graduate  
Studies and Professor,  
Department of Family and  
Community Medicine, Northeast  
Ohio Medical University

**Pamela S. Banchy**

**DIRECTOR**

Retired CIO/VP Clinical  
Informatics, Western Reserve  
Hospital

**Jodi Edmunds**

**DIRECTOR**

Executive Director Care  
Coordination Healthcare Delivery  
System, Aultman Hospital

**Jeannie Flossie**

**DIRECTOR**

Owner/Independent Consultant,  
Cognitive Concepts Counseling  
Services

**Iris E. Harvey**

**DIRECTOR**

Retired President & CEO, Planned  
Parenthood of Greater Ohio

**Horace Highland, Sr.**

**DIRECTOR**

Vice President Sales & Marketing,  
CommuniCare Advantage

**Tom Keathley**

**DIRECTOR**

Chief Creative Officer, Kagency

**Fran D. Rice**

**DIRECTOR**

Community Liaison

**Harvey L. Sterns, Ph.D.**

**DIRECTOR**

Professor Emeritus of Psychology,  
Director Emeritus, Institute for  
Life, Span Development and  
Gerontology The University of  
Akron, Research Professor of  
Family and Community Medicine,  
Northeast Ohio Medical University

**Karen L. Talbott**

**DIRECTOR**

President & CEO, Child Guidance  
& Family Solutions

**Charles R. Vignos, CPA**

**DIRECTOR**

Charles R. Vignos,  
Consulting

**Lee S. Walko**

**FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR**

Attorney,  
Brennan Manna & Diamond, LLC

**Lorrie A. Warren**

**DIRECTOR**

Court Investigator,  
Summit County Probate Court

## Board Member Emeritus

**Kyle R. Allen**

**Michael A. Bernatovicz**

**Charles E. Booth**

**Mercer F. Bratcher**

**Beatrice J. Gingery**

**William L. Luntz**

**D. Bruce Mansfield**

**Nancy McPeck**

**Anne T. Nixon**

**David J. Peter, M.D.**

**William A. Reynolds**

**Willard P. Roderick**

**Edwin P. Schrank**

**Helen I. Spitzer**

**Joseph J. Straw**

**John C. Weiser**





## Our Mission

Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities provides older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers long-term care choices and consumer protection so they can achieve the highest quality of life.

## Our Vision

Direction Home Akron Canton will be the central access point and the preferred long-term care management organization for all people with disabilities.



**DIRECTION HOME**  
AKRON CANTON AREA AGENCY ON AGING & DISABILITIES

1949 Town Park Boulevard

Uniontown, OH 44685

800.421.7277 | dhad.org

©2025 Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging



## DISCOVER MORE AND STAY IN TOUCH:



[x.com/DirectionHomeAC](https://x.com/DirectionHomeAC)



[linkedin.com/company/directionhomeac](https://linkedin.com/company/directionhomeac)



[facebook.com/DirectionHomeAgingandDisabilities](https://facebook.com/DirectionHomeAgingandDisabilities)



[youtube.com/@directionhomeakroncanton1162](https://youtube.com/@directionhomeakroncanton1162)