ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES

Annual Impact Report

You are deeply engaged in transforming our community!

Thank you to our friends and supporters

With the support and partnership of thousands of people who embrace the mission of Associated Ministries, we are doing the hard work of ending poverty and homelessness in our community.

Each person of faith and goodwill offers passion and commitment that brings "love of neighbor" alive among us. It is the kind of love that walks alongside in the journey families and individuals take without dictating their path forward.

The pages of this report represent only a small glimpse of the impact made through your donations, the hours of volunteer time you contributed, the deep dialogue and spirited action you took. We are meant to do this work together!

Thank you for caring deeply about our common good and for joining a cause that's bigger than any one of us can do alone.

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"When the Japanese mend broken objects, they aggrandize the damage by filling the cracks with gold. They believe that when something's suffered damage and has a history it becomes more beautiful."

This description by poet Billie Mobayad of an ancient Japanese art form is full of hope to those of us meeting people in desperate need. Every day, we witness those who come to our doors be transfigured; from woundedness, from angry despair to beauty and confident strength. It's a wonderful thing to read some of the stories in this report and imagine the gold glistening in the cracks and around the scars in the lives of people who shared themselves with us. We are committed to encountering and valuing their wholeness.

Associated Ministries has a long, fascinating and important history in our community. Over the years, many cracks have been filled with the love and faith of our staff and supporters. 2014 was a year of many success stories with our clients and community partners, but we also met some of our own challenges. We continued living into the vision of being a fully interfaith organization and keeping our long-standing partners fully engaged. We struggled to have the capacity to do all the work in front of us. These trials occasionally lead to cracks in our vessel, but this is how we grow, too.

As you read this Impact Report, which features our results from 2014, see the beauty that is emerging from the work we've done together. You are making a difference through the programs you support. People who thought society had discarded them are touched by your kindness.

We hope you see yourself in the stories and impact and are proud to proclaim, **"I AM Associated Ministries!"**

Margaret Brown
2014 Board President

Molly Archer
Interim Executive Director

John Herem, Volunteer
Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful

My wife, Mary, and I have coordinated **Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful** paint crews for over 20 years. In 2015, our church, Spanaway Lutheran, celebrates 25 years of painting homes for the program.

Does it take work? Yes. Do we find it fulfilling and enjoyable? Absolutely!

Our team has a small group of dedicated volunteers that sees a project through from beginning to end over the course of about three Saturdays. The first Saturday we pressure wash, scrape and make repairs. Priming bare wood and caulking joints usually takes a half day. A dozen volunteers can completely paint the body and trim in one full day.

Each project brings new memories and stories to share.

One elderly homeowner surprised our group with a barbeque on paint day. Another elderly widow cooked delicious Filipino Pancit for the group when her home was painted.

Expressions on homeowners' faces as they watch their homes transform makes being part of **Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful** worth every minute. Homeowners often get emotional, weep with joy, and give us hugs as we leave.

Neighbors love seeing their neighborhood improved. Our work inspires them to start sprucing up their own property.

When you discover the satisfaction of belonging to **Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful**, you may find yourself wandering around the paint aisle at a hardware store getting equipment for next year. Twenty years ago, I started with only a paint brush and a scraper. Now, I have a shed full of equipment.

I am a reason for hope in our community.

Since 1985, Associated Ministries' **Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful** program has organized volunteers each summer to paint the houses of low-income, senior, and disabled homeowners.

In 2014, over 600 volunteers painted 32 houses in Tacoma and Lakewood. Volunteers have painted 2,200 homes in Pierce County in the last three decades.

Tacoma Mayor Marilyn Strickland proclaimed August 26, 2014 to be **Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful Day** in celebration of 30 years of service to Tacoma residents.

600
Volunteers

94
Projects evaluated

32
Homes rejuvenated & lives changed

13,959
Total calls for assistance handled by the call center

10,551
Households screened by AP4H

2014
Assessments completed by AP4H

674
Number of openings in our community to house people experiencing homelessness

In 2014 our centralized intake for the Homeless Intervention System in Pierce County, **AP4H,** continued to demonstrate the enormous need people have for affordable housing. Solutions will come by supporting the strengths of people experiencing housing and ensuring that market-rate housing is affordable throughout Pierce County.

684
Referrals made to housing providers

275
Youth assessed

80
Youth referred to housing providers

381
Referrals made to HEN providers (Housing and Emergency Needs)

I am transformed by the people I serve.

My journey with Associated Ministries began in the spring of 2013, shortly before my senior year of college. As a psychology major at the University of Puget Sound I wanted to serve people with real predicaments and affect actual change. I felt isolated in the North End of Tacoma, largely removed from the hardships and struggles of people from other parts of Pierce County. I sought to take steps outside my comfort zone.

Working in a social work setting in **Access Point 4 Housing** has brought me a barrage of experiences and lessons. Some have been downright painful to confront. My world view has opened up. The individuals and families served through Associated Ministries come not only in a state of need but with a level of trust that is humbling. Learning to see them as whole people rather than clients has become the cornerstone value that drives my work.

Growing up, I was always told that I was a good listener. The success stories that I hear and witness carry my hope and optimism. They combat the times when the people who come to me for services feel dejected and are on the edge of giving up. Such times not only test their resolve, but mine as well.

People do rise out of homelessness. They are resilient and resourceful and deserving of dignity. It is an honor for me to share part of the journey with them.

Will Bergstrom, AM Staff Member
Access Point 4 Housing

Sara, Resident of the Youth Advancement and Housing (YAH!) Program

I am reaching my dreams!

I grew up in a difficult home and let my parent's difficulties become my struggle. I contemplated something I never thought I would get to: how to live out of a car.

I started staying at a friend's place a few times, even asking if I could just park my car there and use their house every now and then. I began feeling like a burden. After a while of this deep struggle, I finally called **Access Point 4 Housing**.

If there is anything I remember clearly of that day, it was the consideration that I felt from the people in the office. I went in feeling completely defeated and helpless. I broke down when I was told that I would be entering **Youth Advancement and Housing (YAH)**. A staff member gave me a hug. This was a hug I will remember forever because of the compassion that I felt through it.

By living in the YAH house, I have felt empowered and hopeful; felt that I am not just a mess or a burden. Any problem that comes my way, I now look at it as something to make me stronger.

Before living in the YAH house, it seemed like nothing more than a fantasy to think about what I would do for the rest of my life. What was the point in thinking about 10 years from now, when I was barely able to think what one year would look like?

Would I be homeless? Would I be in school? Would I skip all my personal ambitions and just try to find a job to get me by?

I am very happy to say that I will leave this program as the YAH housing coordinator because people trust in my leadership ability and my desire to give back. I will also be transferring to UW Bothell starting Fall 2016, where I plan to major in Society, Ethics, and Human Behavior and minor in policy studies.

To this day and all the ones in my future, I will be forever grateful to what Associate Ministries has provided me. Think of the young men and women you are helping propel into their own success. Living in the YAH house, we are reminded every day that someone, somewhere in our own community, is giving a little of themselves to allow us to restore ourselves.

Moments of Blessing

Homicide. Horrific on all counts, including the wake it leaves behind. The impact it has on family, friends and community is devastating. How is the tear in the fabric of community ever repaired? How does a community begin to heal from the wounds? With time…and a **Moment of Blessing**.

A **Moment of Blessing** is an opportunity to reclaim space where homicides have occurred. We come together as community to pray for all involved in the particular homicide and to reclaim the space as sacred, a place of life. Just the act of compassionate human beings coming together in that bruised space is amazingly powerful. By setting the intention of reclaiming, praying and cleansing, people can bring about a positive shift in the space and in one another.

In 2014, AM conducted 23 **Moments of Blessing**: domestic violence victims, gunshot victims, even children killed by their own parents. But something so amazing happened at these sites. Family and friends gathered. People that didn't know the victims gathered. All in the name of honoring the victim and in reclaiming that space in their community. What a powerful, moving experience to move through together!

Associated Ministries conducts **Moments of Blessing** at all homicide sites in Pierce County. It is an important and necessary program for our communities during their healing process, in helping to mend that tear in the community fabric.

The 2014 Interfaith Thanskgiving Gathering of Gratitude, hosted by Temple Beth El.

I am uniting people of faith in compassion and understanding.

Muriel, Homeowner and Dia Nichols, Counselor
Foreclosure Housing Counseling

I was a basket-case when I came to Associated Ministries' Foreclosure Counseling office!

My problems started with a phone call. It came immediately after I had talked to my mortgage company. The man introduced himself as Vince and he knew **everything** about me--including my medical problems. He said he was working directly with Lisa at my mortgage company.

I was recovering from cancer. I had gotten behind in my mortgage when I was put on medicine that was $469 a month. It didn't take me too long to fall into the Medicare "donut-hole". At first my mortgage company accepted one back-payment at a time, then I got behind two payments. All of a sudden they wanted all of it at once. I had my house 14 years. Am I now going to live under a bridge? **I was beyond scared!**

355
Homeowners received foreclosure counseling services

I am helping homeowners keep their homes.

Vince told me not to worry about any of the payments. He had an attorney who was handling everything; anything I got from the mortgage company I was to send to him. Vince told me he could get my payment down to $400 a month. Oh my God, that would be wonderful! I believed everything he said.

Then he called me and said he needed $3,000 for the attorney fee. **I almost sent the money. I came so close to sending it.**

I just happened to see a Good Morning America segment about these kind of scams. I thought, his couldn't be a scam—he knows too much about me. So I called my mortgage company and asked if I could talk to Lisa. There was no Lisa.

I heard about Associated Ministries' **Foreclosure Counseling Program** at church from a woman whose daughter had been helped with some real big financial problems. By that time I was so far behind that I didn't think there was any hope for me at all. But I called and got help.

My counselor, Dia, knows how to talk to these mortgage people--I would have been so upset and so nervous. Dia was able to talk directly with my mortgage company and convinced them to work with me. She kept talking and talking and talking to them--I think they may have given me the modification because they were worn out by her persistence. The modification program is working out fine and it's a great burden off my shoulders.

$150,000 raised
875,000 meals served

HUNGER WALK

ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES | EMERGENCY FOOD NETWORK

I am walking so others can be fed.

Nearly 40% of people who go to emergency food services for help are employed but they still need food assistance to meet the needs of their families. Seniors and other households living on fixed incomes depend on food assistance. Each year, food banks, hot meal sites and meal delivery services provide food to one in seven Pierce County residents--more than 100,000 individuals. The money that is raised through the **Pierce County Hunger Walk** each year helps meet the needs of hungry Pierce County children and their families.

Save the Date: Sunday, October 2nd, 2016

Sagan, Volunteer
Community Resource Connections Center

A long time ago a friend told me about Associated Ministries. I had done internships at a couple of other places and then I came here to Associated Ministries. I happily come here every day. Gladly.

I got a tutorial of how to do things at the **Community Resource Connections Center** and I jumped right in. I love helping people get the things they need to get, to move them to the next level in their life, past the next hurdle, to get them through whatever they need to do in their life to be the person that they want to be. It's fulfilling.

This is the path that God has chosen for me and I'm just following it. When I first started school I was homeless. I had just gotten out of jail—just being with the wrong people at the wrong time—and I lost everything. Everything that God blessed me with, He took away from me. Everything, down to my car. I had my two children and our clothes in storage.

When I was in jail I cried a lot. I didn't understand and I started praying. At that moment, God just came to me. "Just do what you need to do…I will make sure that everything that you dream of will come true." When I got out, I stumbled a little bit but I got back into school and I got my GED. And then, I was standing there with a GED certificate. "OK, God, where do I go from here? What do I do now?" In the fall I'm going back to school to get my Bachelor's in psychology.

Working here with the homeless community has humbled me in so many different ways and it completely changed my life. I'm more patient with people. I don't lose my temper so quickly, I don't get frustrated easily. I try to look at the whole person and not just the problem.

I'm seeing that people from the homeless community can move ahead, they can make it out of whatever situation they're in. When you come into the relationship without being judgmental and just offer an open mind and an open heart, you really help people, and they're grateful. I've had people give me hugs and thank me for accepting them and their situation, for not pointing the finger. That's all they're asking is that somebody looks past what's going on in their life and look at them as a person.

I love working with people. Working with the homeless community has definitely opened my eyes to what's going on in the world. You do the work and you get your blessings. It keeps me happy, it keeps me sane, it keeps me level.

I am paying it forward because I needed help once.

Associated Ministries has provided **Payee Services** since 2002 for clients who receive funds from DSHS and Social Security. We are able to provide **financial management services and counseling** to families and individuals who have difficulty managing their own finances and are in danger of losing their welfare benefits. An adjunct service we offer is the **Community Resource Connections Center** (CRCC), a one-stop-shop that connects families to a broad array of resources. Volunteers are the heart and power of these programs!

Our objective is to help low-income families secure community resources and services that address their needs. A significant hurdle that stops many households from entering permanent, affordable housing is their inability to obtain necessary documents such as birth certificates, identification cards, and social security cards that are essential in any housing screening process, enrollment for educational services, and for obtaining employment.

The **Pierce County Asset Building Coalition (PCABC)** is a collaboration of 50 partners working to actively engage Pierce County residents in building prosperity through various programs, like **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**. Through this program, we train volunteers in current income tax law and preparation procedures in partnership with IRS. Volunteers then prepare returns and tax credits and file them electronically at no charge to low-income workers.

1439
Tax returns prepared and filed electronically at no cost

$1,850,000
refunds and credits returned to low-income workers

8115
Protective Payee services delivered

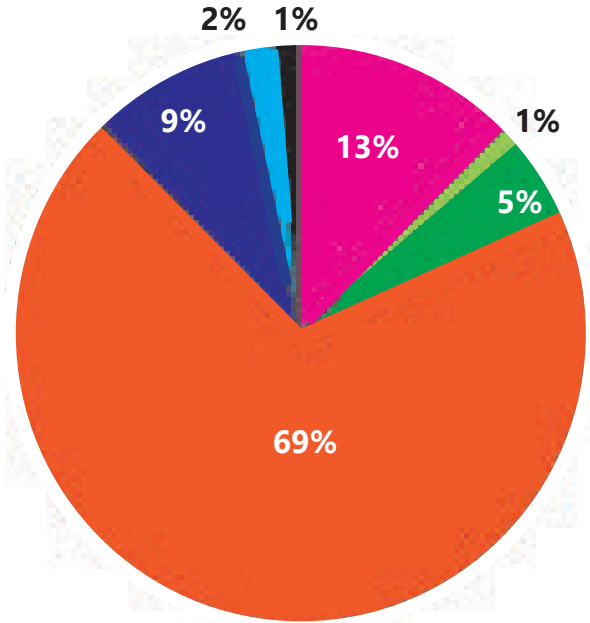
304
Households served through Family Emergency Fund

120
Vulnerable seniors assisted through the Senior Emergency Fund

3619
Homeless Mail individuals served

42,067
Pieces of mail processed

2014 Financials



Sources of Funds	2014	2013
Foundations	301,300	231,658
Churches	30,606	35,409
Individuals	112,068	113,944
Program Revenue - Government	1,648,952	1,434,110
Program Revenue - Other	215,700	212,653
Special Events	46,566	35,034
Other	26,972	84,740
Total Sources	**2,382,164**	**2,147,548**

Sources

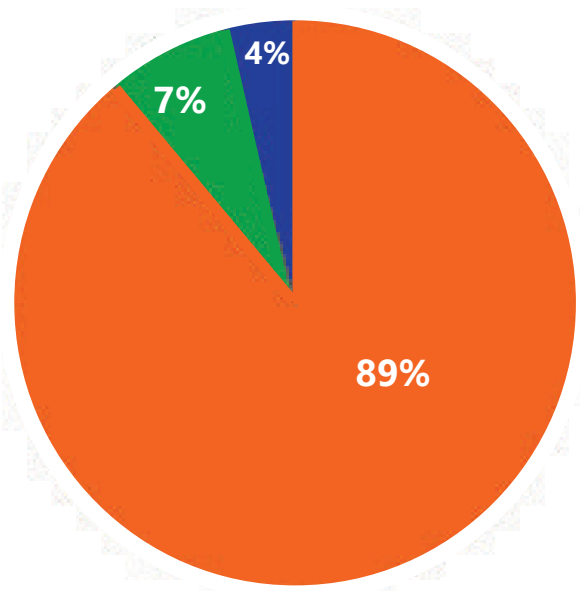
	2014	2013	2012
Increase(Decrease) in Net Assets	1	555	263,055
Cash **Reserves**			
Operating Cash and Reserves	150,040	59,948	178,908
Additional Reserve Funds	190,280	192,727	419,814
Total Reserves	340,320	252,675	598,722

Notes:

1 Amounts are based on audited financial statements. The firm of Mary Jane Dubbs CPA conducts an annual audit of Associated Ministries. The audit is available to the public upon request.

2 Thousands of dollars of in-kind donations and thousands of volunteer hours are not fully included in the financial statements, but these contributions are a vital element of the mission of Associated Ministries.

Uses of Funds	2014	2013
Access Point 4 Housing	937,799	726,993
Housing Assistance & Pass-throughs	154,495	164,364
Other housing & shelter services	304,913	390,010
Foreclosure Housing Counseling	196,944	
Hunger Walk	147,081	178,339
Payee & Mail Services	93,192	74,967
Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful	100,522	133,656
Asset Building Coalition	82,506	122,792
Congregational Relations	78,033	59,498
Other Programs	37,334	65,171
Management	164,768	148,491
General Fundraising	84,576	82,712
Total Uses	2,382,163	2,146,993



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Thank you!

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