

St. Martin Center, Inc.



# 2022-2023 IMPACT REPORT



# FROM THE CEO

*David González*



**Moving forward...**

**We started moving forward with renewed energy as COVID-19 infections and restrictions were lifted.**

**We continued serving children and families while we slowly filled our various job openings**

**Here are some highlights of what we accomplished with your support:**

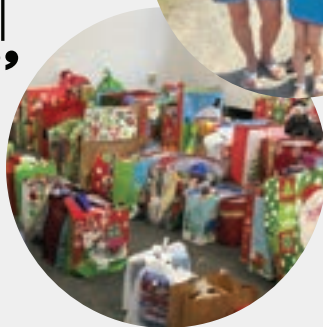
- A steady increase in our Food Pantry distributions. Thank you to our volunteers!**
- Best ever Erie's Best Coffee! Thank you to Millcreek Coffee and all the participants/attendees!**
- Restart of our financial literacy and homeownership classes. Thank you to PA Housing Finance Agency and our city and county funders!**
- Best ever Erie Gives! Thank you to all of you who made it possible!**

**David**

# Mission: Possible

## PICTURES AND TESTIMONIALS

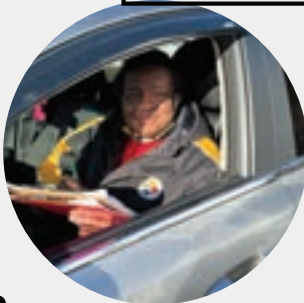
“  
The funding will help me & my son live better and not be worrying & struggling.  
- Andre  
”



“  
We are truly grateful for the help we are receiving. It saved our family from being kicked on to the streets with no where to go. We are truly appreciative for the help you gave us!”  
- Riley  
”



“  
From feeling like I'm going to lose everything to now having help and hope, I feel positive now about future living.  
- Anthony  
”



“  
This program has been such a great help with my son's learning. He absolutely adores [his teacher] and has made insane progress in a little amount of time.  
- Kiera, parent  
”



# St. Martin Early Learning Center

St. Martin Early Learning Center (SMELC) provides quality education for children ages 6 weeks through 13 years.

SMELC is a Keystone STAR 4-rated center. STARS is a rating system through the Pennsylvania Department of Education and addresses standards of quality in key areas. STAR-4 is the highest rating achievable!

We are the only Erie County center to use an innovative Continuity of Care model, which groups children together with the same students and teacher until they reach Pre-School age. The child then moves to a new class at a time that mimics the transition to school. Through this model, teachers and families build a bond that fosters child development and overall family care through supportive services.

We are proud to offer kindergarten-readiness programming through Pre-K Counts. Research has shown the impact of pre-Kindergarten education on the success of children in all aspects - health, social behaviors, employment, and more.



*your impact*

**213  
CHILDREN  
EDUCATED**

Our School-Age program provides before- and after-school care to students, including transportation to our building from their school.

We're proud to work with many community partners to provide our students with new experiences and support their growth and development.

*"We love how [the teachers] both offer unconditional love and support to the twins. They do an amazing job with providing them with the tools to excel and meet milestones. They both provide comfort and security that allow the twins to expand their knowledge and flourish into smarter, more confident children."  
- ELC parent*

*"It's great to have a place that you can drop your child off to that you do not have to worry about them. Leaving your children is already stressful enough; but I love that I know I am putting them in the care of people who truly love my children and are going to nurture them and teach them great things in life."  
- Whitney*





# Financial Assistance

Each day, we work with families who are still working through the impact of the pandemic; those who have begun a new job and need a helping hand to get into a new apartment; and some who are rebuilding their lives after a tragedy and just need a little bit of help to get back on their feet.

Because of our amazing, faithful supporters, we're able to help them. In FY 2022-23, we provided rent, mortgage, or utility assistance to 485 households. This prevented homelessness, provided new housing for families, and prevented utility shut-offs. We hope that the quotes below help you understand the impact of your support.

*Please note that as of FY 2023-24, we are no longer providing assistance with utility payments. We encourage those in need to call 814-SHELTER to be directed to an agency who can assist. We are continuing to focus on rent and mortgage assistance, our food pantry, and our financial education and home buying workshops.*

*"This will help me stay in my home and get back on my feet. This will also help get gas restored in my home. St. Martin's is definitely helping get me the things I need to get back on my feet." - Rachel*

*"We have a warm, peaceful place to call our own." - Katlynn, received a security deposit and first month's rent*

*"They gave my family a new start when we felt hopeless." -  
Natasha*

*your impact*  
**485  
HOUSEHOLDS  
RECEIVED  
FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE**

# Counseling and Education

Financial and homebuying counseling and education are staple programs that help people work toward goals. Pre-Covid, we conducted group classes and offered one-on-one counseling. While we continued to offer financial information virtually throughout the last few years, we were very excited to bring the classes back in April 2023.

What makes these classes so great? They're led by a housing counselor who is certified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This means that our counselor has taken the training that the federal government recommends for this work, and is now ready to pass along this knowledge and guide people to work toward financial and home buying goals.

Our classes are free of charge and open to all. Check out our website, social media, or call 814-452-6113 for details and registration. If you're not in City of Erie, look out for information on our partnerships with the Erie County Library System and other groups. These partners will broadcast our classes remotely in their areas so you can attend!



*"I was almost not going to make it to the class but I am so glad I did because now I am so confident in my knowledge of the home buying process!" - Tamika*



# Food Pantry

*your impact*

**48,020  
PEOPLE  
FED**

Our food pantry continues to be one of our most utilized services. This year, the number of food pantry distributions almost doubled while the number of individual people served by these distributions nearly tripled.

When people come to our food pantry, we have the chance to talk to them about our other programs that can help them to get back on their feet. We can learn their other needs and help them with financial assistance, child care, or referrals to other agencies as needed.

We continue to partner with several groups to serve families with additional food items. We receive donations from Country Fair, Panera Bread, Walmart, Sam's Club, Wegmans, and others.



*Cars lined up outside for the food pantry*

*"Thank you! I never thought at this age I would need help! [My caseworker] has helped me to understand that I will be good!"*

*- Marion*

*"Receiving assistance today relieves a great deal of stress and is replaced with gratitude and hope."*

*- Susan*



*A donation from Wegmans*





# Volunteers

Volunteers are crucial to our work. They complement our efforts and help us to expand to do even more to serve families.

We are incredibly grateful for the countless volunteers who serve in our food pantry, help at our early learning center, file paperwork, help us to plan our events, and so much more.

If you'd like to volunteer, check out our website to fill out our volunteer application. It'll ask questions about your interests and availability so that we can best match you with our work.



*Some of our Erie's Best Coffee planning committee volunteers*

*"I have witnessed the work done by this agency in providing the most basic of needs that many of us take for granted. Warm clothes, food, rent assistance, child care and a friendly ear as well. St Martin's is physically in the heart of where the recipients live. They are front and center in our community to assist and support." - Jackie*



*Volunteer training session*



*Volunteers in our food pantry*

# Operation: Gobble Gobble

Erie County families were still dealing with the effects of the pandemic, high grocery and gas prices, and other challenges. We wanted to do something extra to help during the holidays this year. Thus, "Operation: Gobble Gobble The Sequel" was born to provide Thanksgiving baskets.

Through a generous community of donors, volunteers, staff, and others, we assembled 261 Thanksgiving dinners. Big thanks to The Catholic Foundation Social Ministries grant and Polish Falcons Nest #610 for funding and supplies.

*"Without this, we wouldn't be doing Thanksgiving. Food stamps just get us by, so for holidays we just eat normal food because we can't afford the extras. We never invite people over because we can't feed them. [This year] I invited my brother over for the first time."*

- Michelle

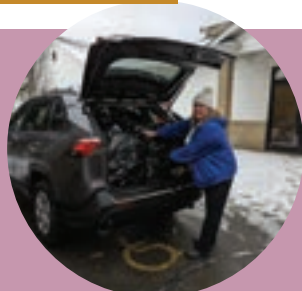


# Shining Star Program

Our Shining Star Program has been providing Christmas gifts for over 30 years. We're grateful for the many partners that make this program possible each year. Because of you, children have a wonderful Christmas.

*"You made our kids' Christmas. This year has been hard for everyone. Our family didn't know what we were going to do to be able to give the kids presents. Due to our youngest daughter's health issues and Covid causing loss of work, we couldn't pay bills and buy toys. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."*

- April





# Erie's Best Coffee

Erie's Best Coffee returned after a Covid-19 hiatus! Our signature coffee-sampling fundraiser has grown since it began in 2015. This year, we had over 700 people attend to support our programs and vote for their favorite coffees.

We are incredibly grateful to our fundraising Celebrity Judge panel for their hard work bringing in donations and sampling ALL that coffee!

Congratulations to Tippy Bean, who won the Judge's Choice award. Congratulations to Purrista Cat Cafe for winning Best Decaf, Best Flavored, Best Specialty drink, and Erie's Best Coffee.

Erie's Best Coffee takes place each February, and details can be found on our website and social media.



*St. Martin Center CEO David González with with Purrista Cat Cafe.*



*Our fabulous Celebrity Judge panel with CEO David González.*

# Community Support

We can't do what we do without amazing community partners. These photos and names are hardly comprehensive of the generosity we received this year, but merely a small glimpse of those who went above and beyond. To ALL of you: Thank you. We are here because of YOU.

- Catholic Charities
- Erie Federal Credit Union
- Erie Insurance
- Henry A. & Mary J. MacDonald Foundation
- Kern Family Foundation
- Marquette Savings Bank
- Northwest Bank
- PNC Bank
- PSN Labs
- Reed Manufacturing
- St. Patrick Church



*Toyota of Erie gave through their Community Support Program.*



*Coach's Sports Bar fed our hungry supporters during Erie Gives Day.*



*PNC Bank provided coats, hats, and gloves for our students.*



*St. Boniface Church collected toiletries for the families we serve.*

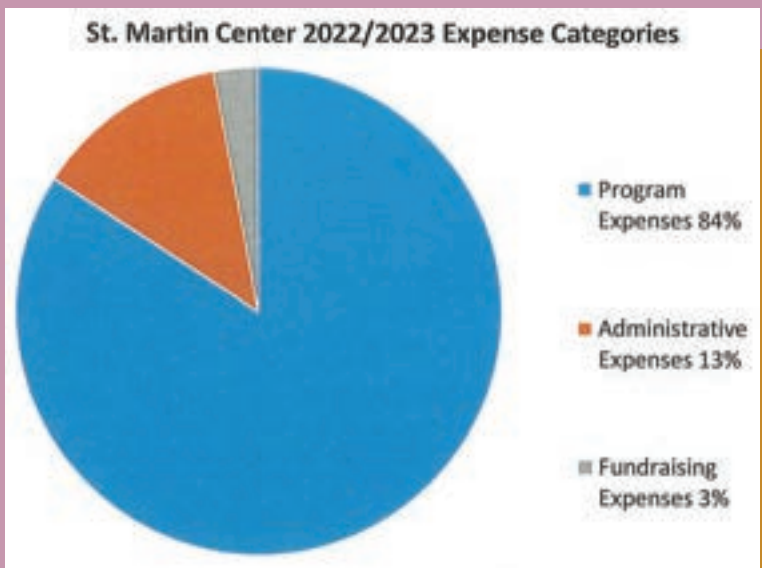
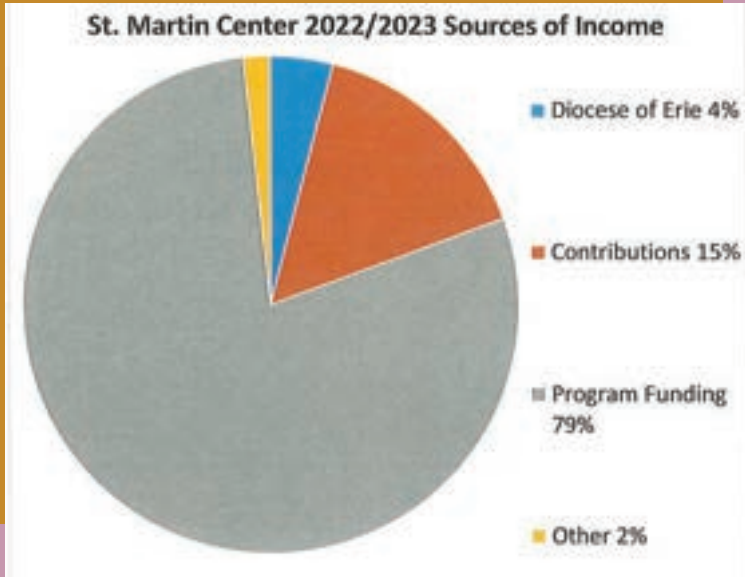


*Board Member Scott Barnes and the Polish Falcons collected Thanksgiving items.*



*Local author and TV Host Kathy Iorio provided her children's books for our students.*

# 2022-2023 Financials



*\*Numbers are not considered official until the final audit report in October 2023.*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## #iGiveCatholic

We are excited to be joining #iGiveCatholic again this Giving Tuesday (November 28, 2023). #iGiveCatholic is a wonderful day of giving to help drive donations for local Catholic churches, schools, and agencies. St. Martin Center is a proud Catholic Charities affiliate! Just go to [givecatholic.org](https://givecatholic.org) to join the fun and help us to raise dollars.

## Erie's Best Coffee



Erie's Best Coffee, our signature fundraiser, is Sunday, February 25th, 2024 at Ambassador Banquet & Conference Center (note the location change!). Sample coffee and goodies from several shops, purchase fun coffee-themed gifts, enjoy live music, and so much more. This event is family-friendly, and all money raised supports our programs. Details will be on our site and social media Fall 2023.

## Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community



Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community takes place each year at Presque Isle State Park and benefits many Erie County nonprofits. Highmark generously organizes the event and covers all expenses so that nonprofits can focus on raising dollars to benefit programs! We're excited to be participating again, and hope we can count on your support! Details available early 2024.

# HOW TO HELP

YOUR SUPPORT *WILL CHANGE LIVES* IN  
THE ERIE COMMUNITY!

## Donate

- This is the best way to help families. Your dollars allow us to do what we need to do to achieve our mission.  
We can:
  - provide financial assistance
  - provide financial and homebuying counseling
  - feed families
  - keep our lights and computers running
  - and more
- Give monthly! Your monthly dollars go to work immediately to keep our programs strong. Your generosity has a continued, lasting impact.
- How: use the included envelope; go to [smcerie.org](http://smcerie.org); or drop donations off at our building
- We cannot accept donations of clothing or household goods.

## Stay Informed

- Check out our website for the latest info ([smcerie.org](http://smcerie.org))
- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Linked In (@stmartincenter)
- Reach out! Call 814-452-6113 or contact us through our website if you have any questions.

# Our Mission

Strengthening lives and supporting our community by providing immediate assistance, education and long-term services consistent with our Catholic values.

# Our Vision

All people have access to the resources they need to reach their goals.

# 2022-2023 Board of Directors

We would like to extend a special thank you to our fantastic Board of Directors. They go above and beyond with their support, guidance, and leadership.

Daniel J. Schaaf, *Chair*

Atty. Art Martinucci, *Vice-Chair*

Carl "Chip" Shamburg, *Treasurer*

Cheryl Hirst, *Secretary*

Scott Barnes

Tom Brennan

Edmund A. Drexler

Brett Folga

Dan Giannelli

Darryl Lawton

Tim Nowakowski

Liliya Steblak



**@StMartinCenter**

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