

2017 ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

This report contains a succinct recap of Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry, Inc. (ECCCM's) impact on our community as the agency's mission is fulfilled. Information on agency programming, financial reports and a complete donor listing can be found on the agency website: www.ecccm.org.

MISSION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The mission of ECCCM is: To bring together the resources of the Christian community to serve the people in need of crisis assistance, support and education, in response to God's call.

This mission continues to guide all agency operations and programming for the welfare of the community. Clearly, ECCCM's founding biblical passage of Matthew 25:35-36 calls the agency to care for those less fortunate.

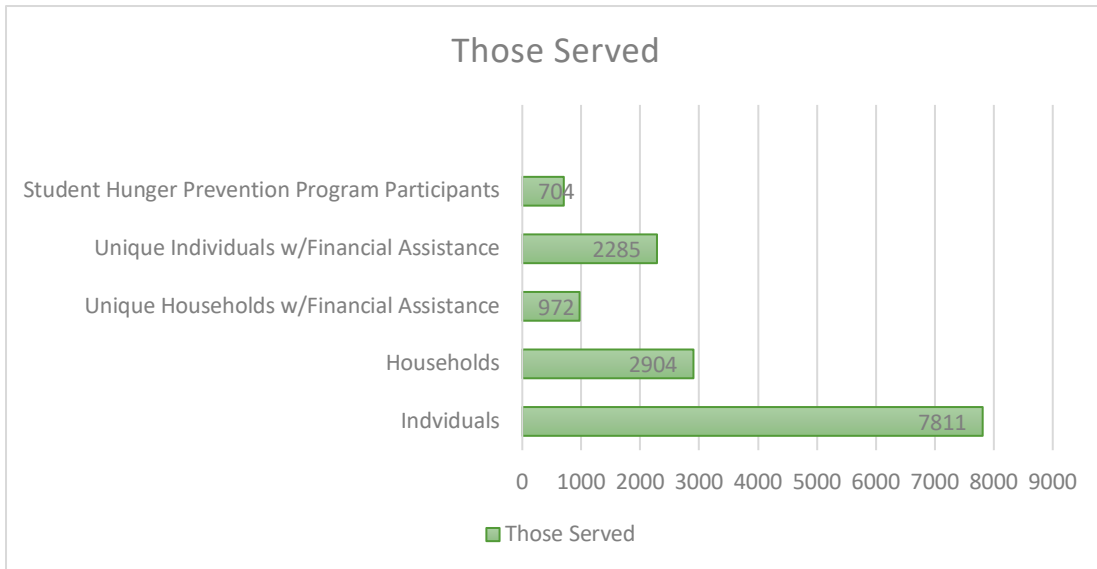
ECCCM's mission is achieved by providing emergency financial crisis assistance, hunger-relief programs, and the critically important Crisis Assistance Coaching Program that teaches one how to fish, leading to self-sufficiency.

RECAPPING 2017

The need for crisis ministry is real. In 2017, ECCCM worked with more than 7,800 people in need. Its large pool of volunteers logged over 15,500 hours of free help. ECCCM's food bank provided nearly 1.2 million pounds of food to hungry people in Catawba County, where 20 percent of the population lives with what is called Food Insecurity -- uncertainty about their next meal. ECCCM adjusts these donations to meet the needs of clients. There are programs tailored for school-aged children, as well as one for the homeless, who often don't have refrigerators or space to store food.

ECCCM serves all zip codes within Catawba County, with the exception of the two Hickory zip codes 28601 and 28602, with all ECCCM programs and services. In addition, ECCCM serves all of Catawba County with FEMA funds for shelter and Catawba County DSS funds for energy expenses. Moreover, ECCCM serves all Catawba County Schools and Newton-Conover City Schools, grades K-12, with a twelve-month Student Hunger Prevention Program that addresses food insecurity within the student's entire household.

ECCCM's financial assistance is not offered as a one-time band-aid. It's the means to an end, the first step in giving our neighbors in need the tools to avoid future problems, to be self-sufficient. ECCCM has embedded these principles into its operating procedures through a rigorous and intensive program that marries compassion with personal responsibility to break the cycle of poverty. Under this system, the Ministry's caseworkers meet with clients, screen them carefully to identify their needs and then devise individual action plans with specific tasks that clients must complete to continue receiving help from ECCCM. This could include looking for a job, going back to school, or attending classes on household budgeting and avoiding unnecessary expenses.



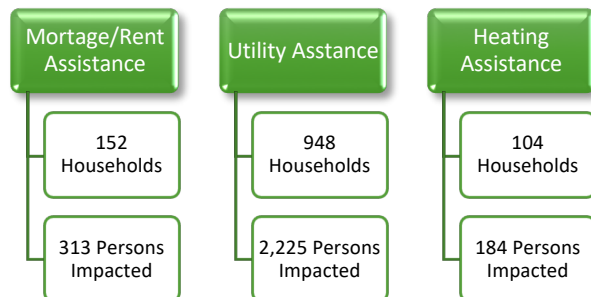
EMERGENCY FINANCIAL CRISIS ASSISTANCE

Poverty is insidious. Many jobs just don't pay enough to meet basic needs, much less to get ahead. What are obstacles and inconveniences for the middle class become full-fledged crises for the working poor. For example, a car breaks down. There is no money to fix it, and suddenly there is no transportation for work. So, a breadwinner loses her job, and then she can't pay her family's rent. Quickly, a life is in upheaval. These problems are real, and they exist in Catawba County, particularly among workers who don't have sufficient education or training.

The central core of ECCCM's work in the community begins with emergency financial crisis assistance. Catawba County United Way and other foundations help support this financial work. This singular focus of crisis assistance helps maintain the integrity of the family household with the basic human needs of housing, utilities, and heat. An emphasis is first placed on mortgage and rent assistance, keeping a family intact in their home and avoiding the danger of a homeless situation. Secondly, utilities and heat are addressed for the basic living.

Through vendor agreements with banks and landlords, families receiving mortgage and rent assistance are guaranteed another thirty days of occupancy while ECCCM case managers work with the family toward more permanent solutions.

Avoiding Homelessness and providing basic human needs.



“WE WEREN’T SURE WHERE TO TURN NEXT. ECCCM HELPED MY FAMILY STAY IN OUR HOME AND HELPED US BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT”

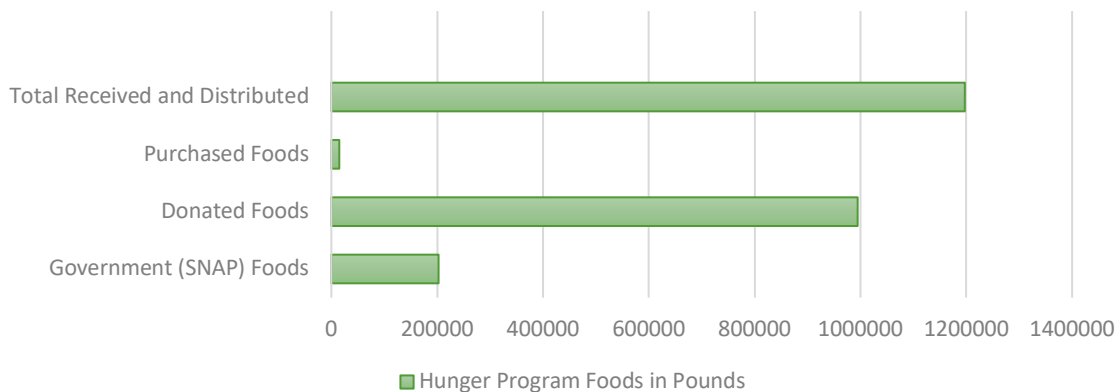
~ AN ECCCM CLIENT

HUNGER PROGRAMS

Food insecurity affects 20% of Catawba County residents. Common attribution is poverty of the working poor, those in crisis and unemployed, or many of our elderly residents who struggle on a very limited fixed income. All persons who come to ECCCM for assistance are placed on one of three available hunger-relief programs by their case manager who then shows them how to reallocate food dollars back into their budget. This is often a first step in helping families regain self-sufficiency while more involved and in depth case management occurs.

More than simply providing food to hungry persons, ECCCM continues to transition to healthier foods (fresh fruits, veggies, dairy) that help combat childhood obesity in the Student Hunger Prevention Program as well as healthier alternatives for all hunger programs. As ECCCM leverages strong buying power, donors are urged to support food drives financially, which furthers the ability to purchase healthy commodities in bulk and as needed for greater inventory control. Fresh produce and vegetables are a primary focus of purchased commodities.

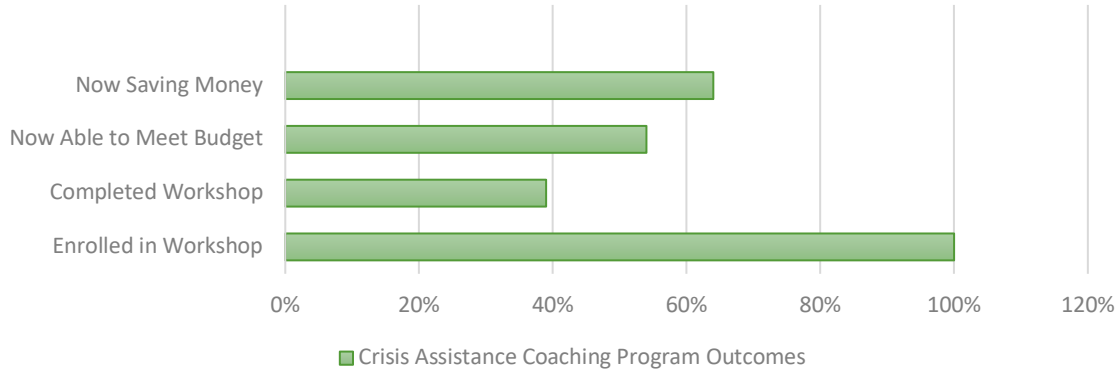
Hunger Program Foods in Pounds



CRISIS ASSISTANCE COACHING PROGRAM

The heart of ECCCM’s commitment to its clients is the Crisis Assistance Coaching Program, a four-hour class that combines financial planning, goal-setting and a commitment to lifestyle adjustments. The Catawba County United Way is an integral funding partner for this program. Using the emergency financial crisis assistances as a segue, clients are invited into this program, which helps them achieve self-sufficiency. Participants discover spending “leaks” where dollars disappear, create household budgets (sometimes for the first time), learn to reduce their cost of living and live within their means, as well as setting personal improvement goals. Career readiness certificates can be obtained, along with interview coaching that will help gain new or better employment.

Crisis Assistance Coaching Program Outcomes



“I CAME TO ECCCM ASKING FOR HELP WITH MY POWER BILL. MY CASE MANAGER ENROLLED ME IN THE CRISIS ASSISTANCE COACHING PROGRAM, THEN CONTINUED TO WORK WITH ME. NOW I AM SAVING \$5 A WEEK AND HAVE A SAVINGS OF \$50 FOR THE FIRST TIME.”
 ~ AN ECCCM CLIENT

ECCCM TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Eastern Catawba County is very rural, and public transportation is extremely limited. ECCCM’s clients frequently cite car repairs as the initial problem that snowballs into a crisis. Working with local mechanics, ECCCM pays for minor -- but critical -- repairs that allow people to keep working and keep their families together. Currently, this program is funded through the proceeds of the sale of vehicles donated to ECCCM. That can be hit or miss. The steadiness of donor-directed operating income would enable ECCCM to expand this program.

In 2017, twenty-eight lives were positively impacted by this program. These twenty-eight persons had the means to continue driving to work, eliminating the concern of job loss. Car repairs were provided either at or below cost by a partner auto mechanic. Car donations from the community are utilized to cover the expenses of the program.

THE COMMUNITY’S FINANCIAL SUPPORTIVE IMPACT



7,811 persons were positively impacted the many who financially support the good work accomplished by ECCCM.



ECCCM is a Catawba County United Way partner agency