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OUR MISSION:
To employ and empower unhoused individuals to break the generational cycle of homelessness by producing a sleeping bag coat for those in need.

OUR VISION:
A world in which people impacted by homelessness have the tools and resources to be the architects of their own future.

OUR VALUES:
BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Toya Allen
Ford Motor Co.
Program Graduate

Sheilah Clay, Vice Chair
Community Leader

Tiffany Ford, Treasurer
University of Michigan
Credit Union

Robyn Glaser, Secretary*
The Kraft Group

Steve Hamp, Chairman
Michigan Education Excellence
Foundation (MEEF)

Chad Kilpatrick
Spreetail

Tim Melton
Jones Day

Peter Remington
The Remington Group

Veronika Scott, President
Empowerment Plan

Lori Wingerter*
General Motors

* No longer serving as an active Board Member
THE TEAM

Hannah Braun
Annual Giving Manager

Matuaka Brown
Senior Program Manager

Clatice Darden
Development & Administrative Specialist

Erika George
Chief Development Officer

Kelsey Grigal
Lead Case Manager

Lauren Knill
Director of Development & Community Relations

Coy Mosley
Director of HR

Hailey Nash
Director of Operations

Alissa Novoselick
VP, Finance and Operations

Vanita Sanders
Director of Programs & Workforce Development

Veronika Scott
Founder & CEO

Shaniece Threat
Office Admin

Jessica West
Production Manager
It felt very empowering to get promoted. It was an ego boost. I like that now I get to listen and help people by hearing their individual stories.”

- De’Asia Taylor, Training Specialist

At Empowerment Plan, our success is deeply rooted in the dedication and expertise of our support staff, a remarkable group composed entirely of former program participants who have risen to leadership roles within the organization. These individuals bring invaluable insight and passion to their positions, having once been recipients of the support and training they now help to provide.

Their unique perspectives and experiences empower them to oversee the entire coat production process with exceptional skill and commitment. From managing training and ensuring quality control to coordinating logistics and overseeing production timelines, these individuals ensure that every coat produced meets our standards of excellence and reaches those in need.

In addition to their vital role in production, our support staff also play a crucial part in keeping the administrative side of Empowerment Plan running smoothly. They manage a range of essential functions, including scheduling, inventory management, and office operations.

Their transition from program participants to key members of our staff represents the core values of Empowerment Plan. By promoting from within, we not only provide meaningful employment and growth opportunities, but also strengthen our organization with leaders who are deeply committed to our work and impact.
Dear Empowerment Plan Supporters,

As we reflect on our journey over the past year, it’s clear that our collective efforts have brought about meaningful change in the lives of those we serve. I am excited to share with you our annual report, a testament to the tireless dedication of our team and the unwavering support of our generous donors.

In the past year, Empowerment Plan has continued to innovate and expand our reach, supporting individuals experiencing homelessness achieve stability. Through our workforce development program last year, we provided employment opportunities to 68 individuals, equipping them with the skills and resources they need to rebuild their lives. By manufacturing our innovative EMPWR Coat, we offered warmth and protection to over 8,000 individuals in need and fostered a sense of dignity and purpose among our employees.

Despite these achievements, we recognize that our work is far from over, and we are not immune to the challenges that lie ahead. As we confront ongoing economic uncertainty, systemic barriers, and the persistent stigma surrounding homelessness, we must remain strong in our commitment to creating lasting change. There are more people experiencing homelessness this year than ever before. This steep global rise in the number of people displaced has exacerbated existing inequalities and heightened the urgency of our mission. Now, more than ever, we must adapt and innovate to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Looking ahead, we are committed to deepening our impact, expanding our programs, and advocating for systemic change. With your continued support, we will strive to build a future where every individual has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their circumstances.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering dedication to our cause. Together, we can create a more just and equitable society. As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, let us do so with courage, compassion, and a steadfast commitment to building a brighter future for all.

With deepest gratitude,

FROM OUR FOUNDER

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With deepest gratitude,
The Empowerment Plan just concluded its 2023/24 fiscal year and the board just held its annual meeting. The year was special in several ways and challenging in others and both frame our current year as we go forward. Over all, however, Empowerment Plan shone brightly all year, illuminating lives, strengthening families, manufacturing our life-saving sleeping bag coat and delivering a powerful curriculum of educational, financial, and life-enhancing programs for our employees.

Highlights for 23/24 are headed by a first for Empowerment Plan: a $700K grant awarded from the state LEO budget! This was our first foray into public funding and was driven by CEO/Founder Veronika Scott. She worked Lansing hard, crafted many relationships with our legislative delegation, and introduced our workforce development program to new friends. And it really paid off! We also added a talented and experienced new professional as Program Director, Vanita Sanders. She is in the process of upgrading and streamlining our entire program. Approximately 40% of each employees’ weekly time is devoted to specialized programming, helping each person create a solid work record and resume as they maneuver through EP for an average of two years before graduating into a full-time job with benefits. Our goal is to break the generational cycle of homelessness—and to date, after more than ten years, no one who has gone through EP has returned to an unhoused state. In addition, we distributed over 8,000 sleeping bag coats in 24 states and 3 countries, while serving 68 individuals right here in Detroit. Finally, we hosted our 10th Anniversary Event, raising more than $215,000, our most successful event yet!

The current year is promising for EP, especially as we roll out our renewed employee program curriculum. But we have challenges as well as opportunities. We are anticipating a tough fundraising climate in 2024, largely driven by a heated election year. Presidential and Congressional politics will pull lots of money out of the non-profit universe, effecting EP and many other organizations. In addition, we know of many poverty-facing organizations that want our EMPWR coat, but don’t have the funds to sponsor them. We will need to push hard on coat sponsorship fundraising this year to help elevate that situation. Our goal is to get a coat to every individual who seeks one. So fundraising and coat sponsorship are our big targets in 2024/25. And we are going after another round of state funds this budget cycle.

So, as you read this Annual Report, please consider how you can help us achieve our fundraising goals for 2024–25, either with a donation to our operating budget to help us provide life-improvement opportunities for our formerly homeless employees or a sponsorship gift ($150/coat) so we can get our coats into the hands of those that desperately need them. We so appreciate our many supporters and partners and non-profit colleagues. You help make EP great! And, with your help, we will keep getting greater!

Many thanks,
Steve Hamp
Board Chair
A YEAR IN REVIEW

68 Individuals Served

8 Program Graduates

19 Programs Offered

8,104 Coats Distributed
10TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

One night. 360 guests. $216,000 raised.

In honor of our 10th year of impact, we brought back our Annual Fundraiser in November, after not hosting a public event since 2019! It was an incredibly impactful evening filled with team members and their families, funders of all sizes, and community partners. We are so grateful to all of our sponsors that helped bring the event to life and can’t wait to host everyone again in 2025*.

* Empowerment Plan will be rotating hosting our annual event with Project 10 each year. This fall we will be hosting Project 10, a nation-wide day of impact held on World Homeless Day, in October. Stay tuned for more details!
Meet Breyana, a remarkable woman and a devoted mother of five who joined Empowerment Plan earlier in 2024. Breyana was left to navigate life as a single mother when her life partner was imprisoned a few years ago. Despite these hardships, she remains resilient and hopeful for her family’s future. Her children, aged 12, 9, 6, 4, and 9 months, are her greatest motivation and she hopes to move into their own home soon.

Despite the challenges she faces, Breyana has already achieved so much in her short time at EP, including successfully passing all four sections of her GED, which is no small feat! She accomplished this significant milestone not only for herself, but also in honor of her late sister, Brittney, who was tragically murdered in 2018. “Getting my GED was for me and Brittney because she didn’t get a chance to get hers,” Breyana shared.

Breyana’s determination to build a better future for her family is unwavering. She aspires to go back to school and become a Licensed Nurse Practitioner.

While Breyana’s journey with Empowerment Plan is just beginning, we are incredibly proud of her progress and dedication thus far. We look forward to continuing to cheer on Breyana and many others like her as they work towards brighter, more empowered futures!
OUR PAID-TO-LEARN SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT MODEL

Our innovative approach pairs full-time employment with a wide range of supportive services, addressing everything from housing and childcare to transportation, education and more. During a typical workweek, approximately 60% of paid time is dedicated to coat production and the remaining 40% is dedicated to program time. With our community of partners we have created an ecosystem of support that helps people achieve financial stability and independence for their whole family.

On-site programming includes:

- **JOURNi**
  - Computer Training

- **Case Management**
  - Resource Navigation

- **Empowered Pantry**
  - On-site Food Pantry

- **King Literacy**
  - Literacy Assessments

- **School of Radical Healing**
  - Trauma-Informed Yoga

- **Wheel to Drive**
  - Driver’s Training

- **Direct Aid**
  - Barrier Mitigation

- **Gesher Human Services**
  - Financial Coaching
Empowerment Plan officially began our partnership with Community Financial Credit Union in August of 2023 with an experiential budgeting activity called Reality Fair. After the success of this pilot, their team was onsite nearly every other week talking with team members about important financial literacy topics ranging from Ten Facts About Credit Cards to Understanding Credit Scores to Fraud and Identity Theft.

After just a few sessions, Empowerment Plan team members were asking to stay after class for questions and to check credit scores. Before long, the CFCU team was being asked to help open member shares, savings accounts, credit cards, and even an auto loan!

This year, Community Financial will be onsite every other week alternating between financial literacy sessions and open office hours so team members can sign up to ask questions, get advice, and even get their banking done...right here onsite!

We are so grateful for partners like CFCU and thank them for their help in empowering our team to lead a more stable life!

Our partnership with Empowerment Plan was meant to be. We both exist to equip, resource, and support the people we serve. The more I’ve learned about EP and the lengths they go to ensure success for their team members, the more I see how deeply our values align. We never expected to bring banking to the corner of Kercheval and Baldwin St, but I’m confident EP’s model is why we found success together.”

- Matt Nahan, Executive Director, Relentless Care Foundation by Community Financial

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: CFCU
Shaniece came to Empowerment Plan in 2022 when she joined as a seamstress. Her determination, infectious personality, and exceptional work ethic made an immediate impact, and recently, Shaniece was promoted to our full time office assistant. Shaniece embraces the role and welcomes everyone who walks through the front door with a warmth and joy that makes them feel right at home.

But Shaniece’s journey at EP is not just about her work. Her personal growth and achievements in the past year are a direct result of her resiliency and determination to make a better life for her and her daughter despite challenging life circumstances. **Last year Shaniece earned her GED, secured housing, and purchased her first car!**

She shares, "**Sometimes life happens, but you’ve got to hold your head up and know that better will come. If you put in the effort, you will overcome those barriers, and then you will see that you can help other people overcome those barriers. And that’s my favorite part about working at Empowerment Plan.**"

We cannot wait to witness Shaniece’s continued success!
As part of Empowerment Plan’s supportive employment model, we hire exclusively from a network of shelters and housing agencies across the city of Detroit. At the heart of this success lies our enduring partnership with the Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS), our longest standing shelter ally. Since founding in 2012, we’ve worked together to provide pathways to stability for over 100 individuals experiencing homelessness.

"COTS appreciates collaborating with Empowerment Plan to create opportunities for our clients to succeed," adds Elaine Matthews, Director of Training and Employment at COTS.

Through collaborative initiatives and our unwavering commitment, Empowerment Plan and COTS continue to redefine what’s possible in addressing, and ending, generational homelessness.
COAT OUTREACH RECAP

8,104 Coats Distributed Worldwide

IMPACTED ORGANIZATIONS

Through partnerships with hundreds of outreach organizations around the globe, we are able to spread the warmth and empower communities near and far. Listed below are a handful of organizations impacted this year.

- Abby’s House
- Boston Medical Center
- Butzel Family Center
- City of Fresno
- Empire Harm Reduction
- HOPICS LA
- Manna Soup Kitchen
- Sidewalk Samaritan
- VA CRRC
- Access Independent
- Bridge Over Troubled Waters
- Central City Health
- Community Home Supports
- Families Against Narcotics
- Lemon Grove Homeless Outreach
- People Assisting The Homeless
- Thomas Merton Center
- Youth Assistance Coalition
In 2023, Rutgers University launched a pilot program to engage unhoused individuals in Newark who were experiencing substance abuse issues. Through the Department of Psychiatry, the program helped engage patients in finding mental health and substance abuse support, as well as connecting them with resources for shelter, insurance, and other supportive programming.

Through this program, Rutgers was able to distribute 110 EMPWR Coats to their clients. Of those 110 patients, 83 were unsheltered and 27 were in shelter but still in need of the coat. The program was so successful that the University ordered an additional 120 EMPWR Coats in February of 2024.

“My client had gone through tragedy after tragedy. He went from homelessness to finding housing, to have been put out again due to water damage from a storm. As winter approached, he was in desperate need of a winter coat and was thrilled to have been able to have this essential need met. His gratitude is evident, and he shared this with me on many occasions.”

- Case Worker, Rutgers Medical School
"We’ve had some cold, cold nights this winter. I’m happy I got this coat, I just zip myself right on up."
- Coat Recipient, New Jersey

“This is the most popular street coat in NYC. A lot of guys have told us they use it through the hot weather, open it up to lay down and because it is not bulky to carry around, they keep it.”
- Emily Borghard, Sidewalk Samaritan

“Mannnnn, this empowerment coat keeps you warm for real blocks out all the cold air!”
- K.M., Coat Recipient
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
April 2023– March 2024 Contributions by Source*

CONTRIBUTIONS
$3,834,095

EXPENSES
$3,610,831

NET INCOME
$223,264

*Unaudited 23–24 Financials
OUR SUPPORTERS: Thank you to the following individuals, organizations and partners who contributed to our mission through sponsorship, grants, and donated services.

Anonymous Donor
Albert & Doris Pitt Foundation
Andrea L. & Lawrence A. Wolfe Philanthropic Fund
Apple
Applebaum Family Philanthropy
Barbara St. John
Barry & Ann Waldman
Benson & Edith Ford Fund
Brasscraft Manufacturing Company, Masco Corporation
Brian Urbanek
Bruce Carbonari
Canaan Christian Church
Carol Hermann
City of Fresno
Community Financial Credit Union
Coronis Health
Corporation for Skilled Workforce (CSW)
Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network
Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation
Domino’s Pizza
DTE Energy Foundation
Egner Family Fund
Emily & Henry Ford III
Fifth Third Bank
Foroulis Private Foundation
Friendship Place
Franklin Philanthropic Foundation
General Motors
Hamp Family Fund
Henry Ford II Fund on behalf of Cynthia & Edsel B. Ford II
Huntington Bank
Indiana University
Intelligent Seating Systems
Jeffrey Farber Family Foundation
Jennifer & Dan Gilbert
John & Lacy Williams Family Fund
Jones Day
Judith Dunn Charitable Fund
Karpus Family Foundation
KARMA jack LLC
Kellogg Foundation
Knights of Columbus Flint
Lear Corporation
Lineage Foundation for Good
Lineage Logistics
Lucky Duck Foundation
M&M
Mann Family Foundation
Marlene and Bill Emerson
Matt Simoncini
McGregor Fund
Melton Family Charitable Fund
Mckinsey
Molinello Family Foundation
Moore Family Charitable Fund
New England Patriots Foundation
New Hope Cadillac
Oberheide Family Fund
Pam Dawber
Patrick McInnis
Peter Remington & Peg Daitch
Phillip Wm. Fisher Fund
PNC Foundation
Rutgers University
S&P Global
Samuel Ulmer
Scott Jacobs
Sisters of Notre Dame
Stephanie & Matt Surowiec
State of Michigan
Tarsadia Foundation
The Brother’s Trust
The Cole Foundation
The Mejier Foundation
United Way of Southeast Michigan
University of Michigan Credit Union
Vera & Joseph Dresner Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Walters Family Foundation
Windsor Essex Community Health Center
Winky Foundation
Woodland Direct
Young Woman’s Home Association
Zatkoff Family Legacy Fund
“I love my experience at Empowerment Plan. You guys did a lot for me. You brought me from a dark space – everybody – with all the team work.”

-- Jennifer, Program Participant
There is so much happening this year that you won’t want to miss! Make sure you follow us on social media so you can learn more about:

- Project 10, our nation-wide day of impact to be held on October 10th, World Homeless Day
- current campaigns and opportunities to get involved with our mission
- programmatic updates and graduate success stories

STAY CONNECTED

info@empowermentplan.org
www.empowermentplan.org
JOIN US IN BREAKING THE CYCLE

Your support amplifies our efforts to continue building equitable opportunities for families in need through the jobs we create and the coats we make.

Click here to make a donation to our new campaign, “More than a Coat.”
THANK YOU!