



2025
Impact Report

From our CEO

As we close 2025, I'm reflecting on a year that revealed both deepening challenges our communities face and the strength of the people we serve. Housing, transportation, food, and utilities continue to remain the most pressing barriers.

This work matters because every person we help is facing tough choices: pay rent or fix the car, buy groceries or keep the lights on. Thank you for standing with us as we support people when they need it most, make asking for help feel easier, and help families find stability. Together, we're building a community where reaching out is a strength.

Looking ahead to 2026, I'm excited to continue to grow our footprint across Michigan. This means more families can get help before things get worse, more employers can support their workers, and more communities can benefit from our approach. What we've learned this year—that early support matters and that we need to remove shame from asking for help—will guide us as we grow. I'm looking forward to the difference we'll make together in the year ahead.



Alison Freas
President and CEO

The SOURCE Staff

Lisa Brown
Resource Navigator

Milly Chavez
DHHS Caseworker

Sophie Chen
Resource Navigator

Erika Gonzalez
Managing Director

Erica Harris
Resource Navigator

Andres Hernandez
Resource Navigator

Clementina Floyd
Sr Resource Navigator

Lourdes Jordan
Program Manager

Vanessa Lopez
Resource Navigator

Abigail Medina
Resource Navigator

Angela Rincones
Sr Program Manager

Leticia Rodriguez
Project Coordinator

Joyce Rohrer
Dir Bus & Comm Engagement

Carly Shereda
Resource Navigator

Jacqueline VanDyke
Resource Navigator

Sonia Velasquez
Administrative Assistant

Sarah Westoby
Project Lead

Who we are

Our vision

The SOURCE will be a champion for the workforce and a lead voice in advocating for programs and policies that create pathways to economic and personal well-being to improve the lives of working families across the state of Michigan.

Our mission

The SOURCE brings together the people, systems, and supports required to stabilize households and strengthen our community by eliminating systemic barriers to employment.

Our values

The Whole Person



We provide holistic support

We know work is only one aspect of life. We focus on the big picture and seek to understand the interconnectedness of all parts of our client's lives so we can provide comprehensive support to help them achieve their personal and professional goals

Collaboration



We believe in the power of collaboration

Our organization was founded through intentional and innovative partnerships. We remain committed to building unique connections to best serve our clients, strengthen the workforce, and improve outcomes for our communities

Dignity



We treat everyone with dignity

Whether you engage with us as a client, business member, community partner, or member of our team, we value your unique perspective, and treat you with respect and kindness in every interaction

Advocacy



We use our voices to advocate

In our neighborhoods and across the country, we bring awareness to the struggles of the workforce and challenge the status quo as we fight for greater systems change.

Our Board of Directors

Governing Board

Becky Ploeg
President
Comfort Research

Gina Triick
Treasurer
Spectrum Industries

Stephanie Schoenherr
Secretary
Cascade Engineering

Rene Buggs
Director
Butterball Farms

Matthew Wehrmeyer
Director
Wolverine Coil Spring

Advisory Board

Arianna Hovey
Lake Michigan Credit Union

TaRita Johnson
The Right Place

Laura Longstreet
Royal Technologies

John VanElst
Grand Rapids Community College

Our Board of Directors consists of representatives of our employer network and community leaders, all of whom are committed to the mission of The SOURCE.

“The SOURCE’s impact continues to deepen and expand, and it is an honor to support this mission as part of the Governing Board. This year, we reached a significant milestone with our expansion into Southeast Michigan—an exciting advancement that strengthens our ability to serve employers and support families across a broader region. The organization’s steady, intentional growth is a direct reflection of Alison’s leadership and the dedication of a deeply skilled and passionate team. I am grateful to be part of an organization that continues to innovate, evolve, and meet the changing needs of our communities.”



Becky Ploeg
Board President
Vice President, People, Culture
Comfort Research

Employer Network

AGS Company Automotive Solutions - 2024

American Autocoat- 2013

Butterball Farms*- 2003

Cascade Engineering- 2010

Comfort Research- 2017

Corewell Health- 2016

The DECC Company*- 2003

Grand Rapids Foam Technologies- 2007

Haviland Enterprises- 2022

Jireh Metal- 2021

Joseph Jeup- 2024

Lumbermen's Inc.- 2018

MillerKnoll- 2018

NuCraft- 2022

R&R Mechanical Services- 2022

Richwood Industries- 2006

Rose Medical- 2024

Soundoff Signal- 2023

Spectrum E-Coat*- 2003

Trinity Health- 2022

Uniform Color Company- 2024

Wolverine Coil Spring- 2007

Women's Resource Center- 2024

2Gen Manufacturing- 2022

24

Total members

10

Average length of membership

331%

Average return on investment

18%

Average utilization rate

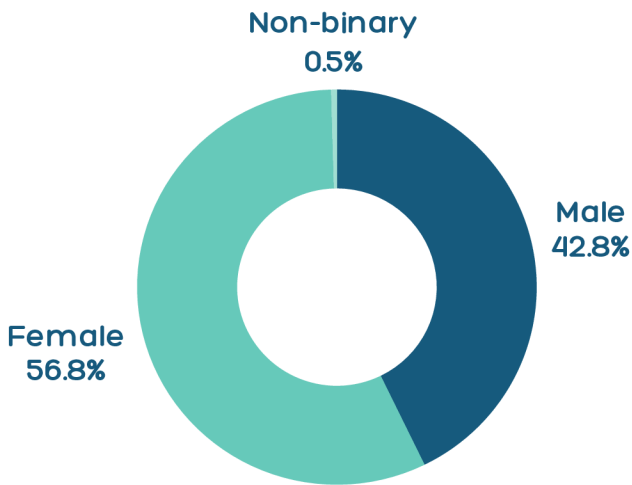
According to our National partners, the average utilization within an employer is 10-15%

*Founding Member

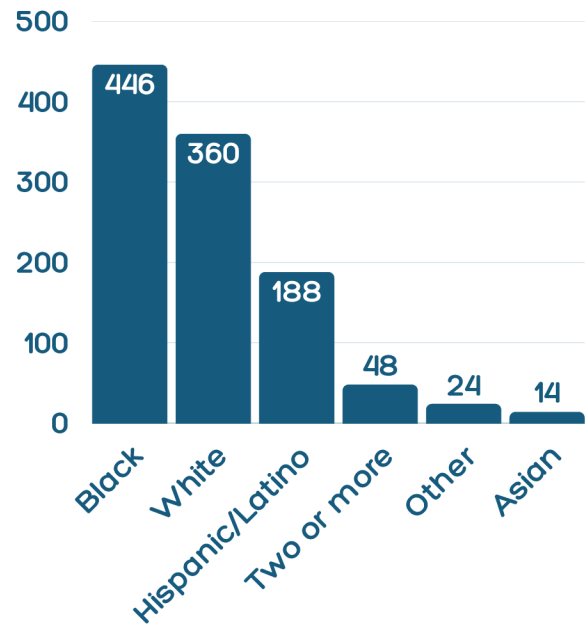
Who uses our services?

We serve any client who is employed at a member company, along with their family members who live in the same household

Gender identity



Race



More about who we help

\$20.65

Average hourly rate earned by our clients

399

Number of clients on DHHS assistance

159

Number of clients previously incarcerated

Client Demographics

Top 5 zipcodes served in 2025

Having staff who live and work in the communities they serve is fundamental to our effectiveness—they build authentic relationships with local organizations and know exactly which resources are available when clients need immediate help. This local presence builds trust and transforms abstract resources into real support, as clients work with people who truly understand their neighborhood's unique challenges and strengths.

Number of clients by top 5 Zip Codes served

- 49503 - 136
- 49507 - 121
- 49504 - 84
- 49508 - 55
- 49509 - 55



1,080

Total clients, across all member companies, used our services this past year

More about who we help

2,597

Barriers addressed

2.4 average barriers per client

12,031

Client interactions

11.1 average interactions per client

87%

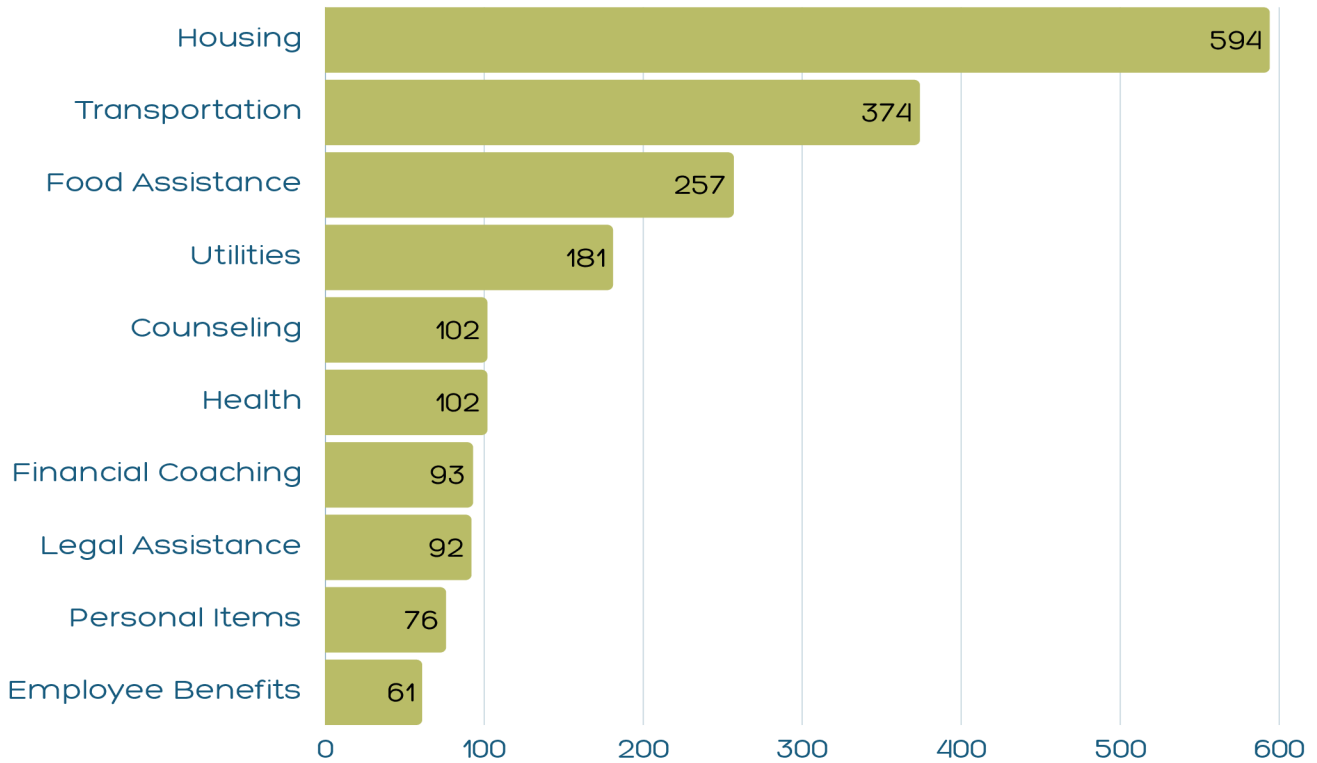
Retention rate

87% new clients
87% repeat clients

What types of barriers do we help clients overcome?

Individuals seek support for many different challenges they may be experiencing, both at work and at home

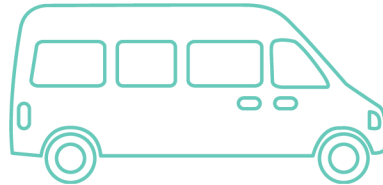
Top 10 Barriers in 2025



Other barriers addressed include:

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Adult/elder care | Debt | Garnishments | Student loans |
| Career coaching | Domestic violence | Immigration | Substance abuse |
| Child care | Education | Literacy | Taxes |
| Child support | Emergency | Medical finances | Transportation |
| Clothing | Employment | Parenting/pregnancy | Unemployment |
| Credit repair | Financial classes | Retirement | Vital documents |

Supporting employees at work and at home.



Shawn's story

The problem

Shawn**, a newly hired employee, shared how grateful they were to have found a job they enjoyed. However, they didn't have a car and relied on family for rides to work and the bus to get home. When rides became unreliable and the bus didn't run early enough for their morning shift, Shawn found themselves without a consistent way to get to work.

How The Source helped

Shawn reached out to The SOURCE for transportation support. A Resource Navigator helped them apply for the Wheels to Work program, and with assistance from grant funding, The SOURCE covered one week of morning rides in advance. These rides could be scheduled directly from Shawn's phone, giving them immediate, flexible access to work transportation.

The outcome

With reliable rides in place, Shawn was able to attend work consistently and save money from their first two paychecks. Within a short time, they purchased a dependable vehicle, gaining long-term transportation stability and greater independence.



Kayla's story

The problem

Kayla** was experiencing homelessness and other life challenges following a divorce. While staying at a women's shelter, Kayla's car broke down, and the cost of repairs was unaffordable. They relied on coworkers and public transportation to get to work and ensure their children made it to school. With a low credit score, Kayla knew they wouldn't qualify for traditional financing through a bank or dealership.

How The Source helped

The Resource Navigator referred Kayla to a community partner program and assisted with the application process. Together, they discussed Kayla's situation and selected a vehicle that fit both their needs and budget. The sales team approved Kayla for a shorter-term, simple interest loan designed to help rebuild credit more quickly. The SOURCE also provided \$1,000 in down payment support through grant funding.

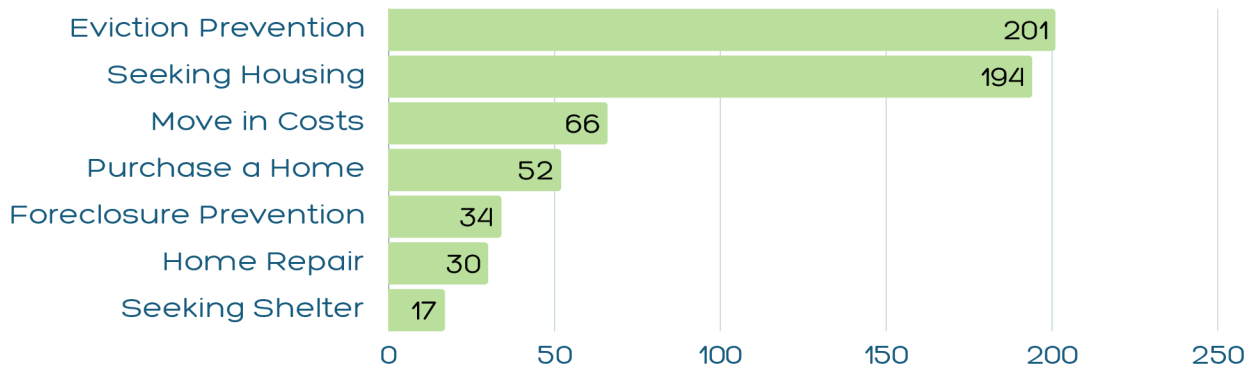
The outcome

Kayla was relieved to secure a reliable vehicle with manageable payments and fair financing. The support helped protect them from predatory lending and gave them the stability to focus on rebuilding life for themselves and their children without the added stress of transportation barriers.

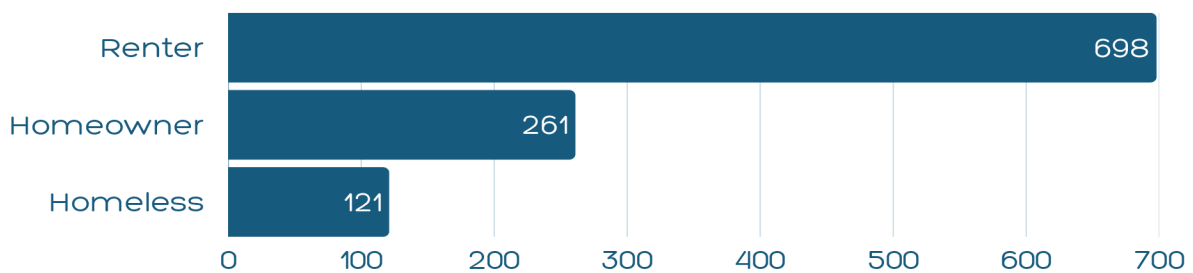
Housing is a major barrier for many of our clients

Whether they are looking to buy their first home or facing eviction, our resource navigators are there to help.

Housing related barriers



Housing status at point of interaction



Supporting others

51%

Have dependents

35%

Are single parents

Average cost of housing

\$1,005

Monthly to rent

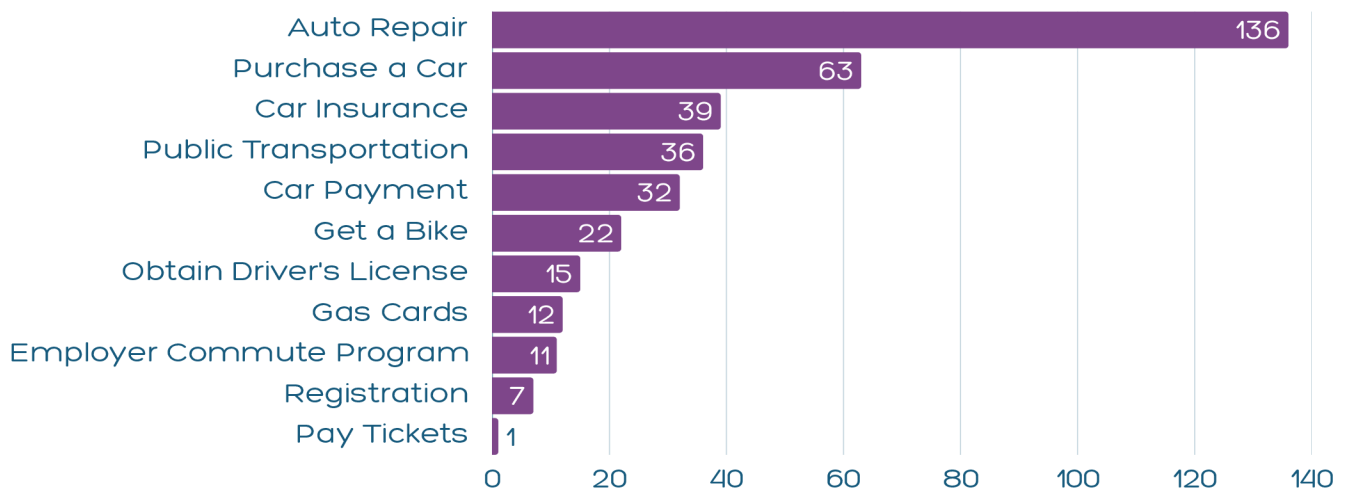
\$1,135

Monthly to own

Transportation is vital for our clients to get to and from work safely and on time.

Commutes must be consistent, reliable, and within their budget.

Transportation related barriers



Success spotlight Casey's story

The problem

Casey** reached out to The SOURCE for assistance with an auto repair. Casey had already paid a small portion of the bill to get the work done, but the car was almost done getting repaired and they did not have the remaining funds to cover the repair on their own. Additionally, during assessment it was determined that Casey needed some mental health resources for a family member and was unsure how to search for some options.

How The Source helped

The Resource Navigator was able to explore loan and grant options for Casey. After determining that a loan would not benefit Casey long term, grant funding was able to be used to cover a portion of the repair. Additionally, the Resource Navigator sent Casey some in network mental health professionals to share with their family member in need.

79%

Of our clients have a driver's license

The outcome

Casey was able to get their vehicle repaired and was able to get to work in a safe, reliable vehicle. They were also able to explore the mental health options and provide them to the family member they were assisting in alleviating stress from Casey's personal life to allow them to focus at work.

By helping employees,
we help our clients save
money and resources.

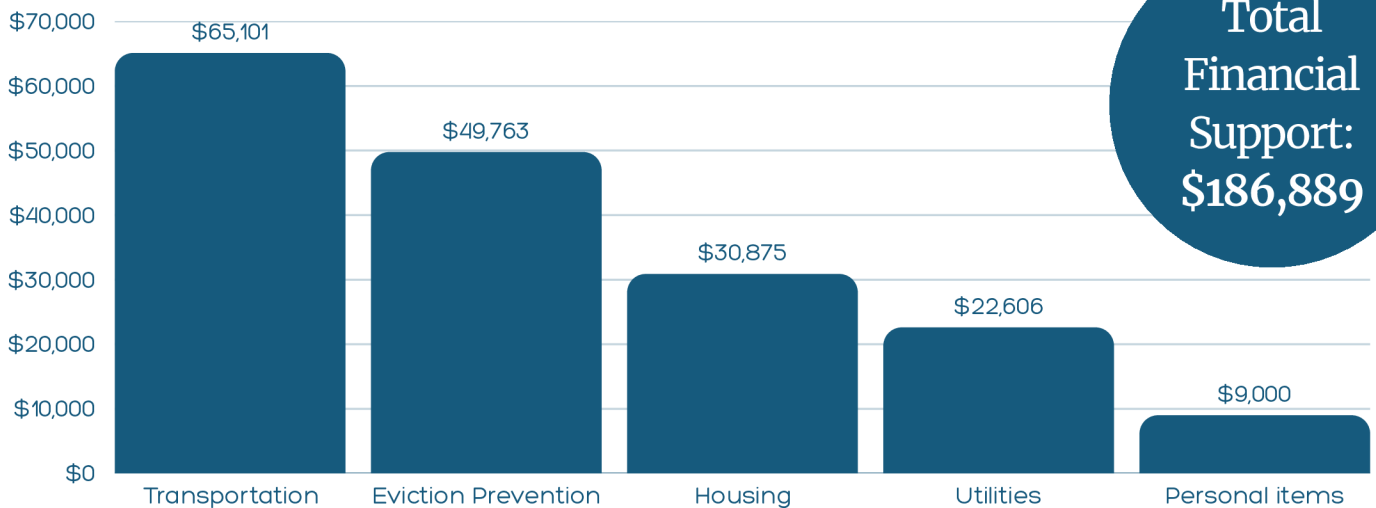
Supported employees bring their best to
work and are more present at home.

\$7,737,300

Total impact

This value is calculated by the value of casework, retention, savings to clients, and financial support

2025 Financial Assistance - Top 5 Barriers



Other barriers addressed with financial support include:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Adult/ Elder Care | Debt | Furniture | Legal Assistance |
| Auto Repair | Domestic Violence | Health | Medical Financial Support |
| Career Coaching | Education | Homeless | Parenting/Pregnancy |
| Clothing | Food Assistance | Immigration | Vital Documents |

In June 2018, The Source began tracking financial support and savings to clients. Since then, The Source has connected clients with over \$2.3M in financial support.

2025 at a glance

Our clients often seek financial support

We leverage SOURCE-held grants and other funds to provide financial assistance and help clients improve their financial stability.

31%

of cases in 2025 resulted in financial assistance

91%

of funds used came from SOURCE-held grant funds

Emergency Loans

The SOURCE has partnered with AAC Credit Union since 2012 to provide a non-predatory loan option to clients. Currently, 15 member companies participate in this program.

\$11,000

2025 loan total

\$339,134

Program all time total

VITA Tax Site

Since 2005, we've helped individuals and families maximize their tax returns through free volunteer tax preparation—saving them an average of \$200 in filing costs and keeping more of their hard-earned money.

2024 Tax season highlights

993

Returns prepared
406 employees of member companies

\$198,600

in savings of preparation services

Savings for clients

Client savings reflect the value of resources leveraged from community partners, such as donated furniture or utility assistance from DHHS.

\$92,581

2025 savings for clients

\$341,000+

Savings all time since June 2018

Amway Financial Empowerment Grant

\$20,000: one-time

Purpose of funds

Amway provided a grant to support capacity building for a financial empowerment program offering onsite workshops and 1:1 financial coaching.

Outcomes

The Financial Empowerment program supported 269 clients through workshops and 1:1 coaching.

269

Families assisted

100%

Participants reported improved confidence in financial knowledge

100%

Participants reported feeling prepared for an unexpected expenses

Barrier Removal and Employment Success (BRES) Grant

\$177,000: 2 years

Purpose of funds

Funded by the State of Michigan, in partnership with West Michigan Works, these funds are used to remove barriers to gaining and maintaining employment.

Outcomes

These funds helped provide flexible support to clients in the areas in which they needed support the most.

The top barriers were housing, transportation and utilities.

214

Families assisted in 2025

305

Families assisted - grant all time

\$543

Average amount of support

Steelcase AYA Youth Employment Grant

\$150,000: 2 years

Purpose of funds

Steelcase Foundation provided a grant to launch a new workforce development program in collaboration with AYA Youth Collective. The program aims to help young adults who are experiencing instability to better navigate the workforce.

Outcomes

During this pilot, we learned that youth need extensive stabilization support prior to employment.

We partnered with 11 employers to provide first employment experiences to youth.

105

Youth served

58%

Participants reported securing stable or improved housing

70%

Participants reported personal circumstances have improved/stabilized as a result of this program

Wege Transportation Grant

\$40,000: 2 years

Purpose of funds

This grant supports the pilot of Ways to Wheels, a transportation program with AAC Credit Union. The Source will provide down payment matching funds, helping employees—regardless of credit score—purchase reliable vehicles.

Outcomes

100% of program participants report their transportation barrier was resolved and their mental health has improved.

At six months post purchase, all are still employed and 62% report that they have increased their savings since purchase.

~\$80

Average reduction in monthly payment

\$5,000

Average savings total cost of loan

\$289

Average monthly payment

Thank you for your commitment
to improving lives of employees
both at work and at home.

Contact us

616-452-5295

info@grsource.org

www.grsource.org

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