



# 60 Years

*Celebrating six decades of serving, supporting, and strengthening our community*

**LEADS**  
2025 ANNUAL REPORT





Nathan J. Keirns  
*Chief Executive Officer*

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Rochelle Paul  
*Chairperson*

John Compton  
*Vice Chairperson*

Warren Weber  
*Secretary/Treasurer*

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Chad Brown

Benjamin Broyles

Emma Chapman

Shelby Conley

Kelly Corrigan

Bill Cost Jr

George K. Croom

Kyle Fulton

Dee Hall

Jonathan K. Lang

Michelle Newman

Melissa Owens

Diana Reece

John Whittington

Katrina (Trina) Woods



## Message from Rochelle Paul

*Board of Trustees Chairperson*

In 1964, an impressionable teenager sat in front of a black and white TV and watched a news clip, narrated by Walter Cronkite, of President Lyndon B. Johnson signing legislation declaring “War on Poverty.” With its establishment came a plethora of acronyms like EOA (Economic Opportunity Act), VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), and CAP (Community Action Programs). Another acronym also began its history in Newark, Ohio, L.E.A.D.S. (Licking Economic Action Development Study). As the teenager came of age, so did that federally funded agency. L.E.A.D.S, became LEADS and grew into a Community Action Agency with a Head Start program, Housing, Community Services, and Emergency Services programs reaching thousands of customers over the years.

As circumstances evolved, that teenager, so inspired by the legislative “War on Poverty,” became a teacher of children with special needs, a majority of whom lived in poverty. She ended her teaching career in Newark, Ohio, miles away from her childhood home where she had watched the clip of the signing of the EOA, and the birth of Community Action. In 1997, she began volunteering with LEADS CAA, and after 29 years, still loves doing so.

LEADS continues opening doors, assisting with every day needs, working to lower the poverty rate, empowering customers, helping win the “War on Poverty...” and that’s only one such agency cherishing its history, celebrating the present, and charting the future.

Rochelle Paul, *Chairperson*

*Rochelle Paul has served on the LEADS Board of Trustees for more than 25 years, many of those as chairperson. As a respected educator, Rochelle generously lends her time and talents to LEADS. She is an active member of the community who is known for her unwavering dedication to service and as a champion for causes that support our most vulnerable neighbors.*



# Making a Difference for 60 Years!

Thank you to our staff!!



Ugly Sweater Day



CEO Nate and Board Chairperson Rochelle



Ugly Sweater Day



Staff members "Wear Blue for Child Abuse Prevention"



Community Services Staff



60th Anniversary Celebration



CEO, Executive Assistant, and LEADS Directors



Emergency Services Staff

## Welcome new LEADS Board of Trustees!



**Emma Chapman** advances United Way's mission through her leadership in housing and Emergency Warming Center taskforces, Women United affinity group, funds development, and volunteer coordination. A Licking Valley and Otterbein University graduate, she coordinates hygiene drives and volunteers throughout the county for United Way's Hygiene and Volunteer Hub programs. Emma chairs the Health, Education, and Youth Committee for the NAACP and is a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, having volunteered and served on its council for over 8 years. Emma lives in Newark and enjoys crafting, hiking, Star Trek, and supporting local service initiatives to help uplift all voices in the community.



**Shelby Conley** is the Executive Director of Fostering Further, a non-profit based in Newark. Prior to this role, she served as both Assistant Director and Finance Director at United Way of Licking County.

Shelby is a proud alumna of The Ohio State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in education, and Mount Vernon Nazarene University, where she completed her MBA. She also currently serves on the Newark-Heath Rotary Board, the Heath Church of Christ Women's Ministry Committee, and as a lunch buddy for Big Brothers/Big Sisters. In 2024, Shelby was named one of the Newark Advocate's "Top 20 Under 40". Shelby resides in Heath with her husband, Josh, and their two children. Outside of work, she can often be found on the golf course supporting her son or cheering on her daughter from the volleyball court.



**Bill Cost, Jr.** is the owner and operator of Bill Cost Jr. Photography in Newark. His lifelong interest in photography began in 8th grade, at Granville High School, where he was involved with many school projects. He also shot his first wedding as a young student. He served as the first photographer for the Granville Sentinel newspaper. In 1976 he graduated from The Ohio State University as a photography major, and opened his first studio in his home that same year. By 1978, he moved to a downtown Newark location (north side of the Midland theatre) for seven years, later purchasing a building on West Main Street for his studio in 1984, where he worked for 38 years. He is now located in the Commerce Center at 195 Union Street. Bill has also served as a member of Newark City Council at Large for three terms, is a member of the Newark Rotary Club, and many other local organizations.



**Jonathan K. Lang** has practiced law for 20 years and has spent most of his career in corporate counsel roles. He is currently Assistant General Counsel at Cardinal Health, where he supports a hub and non-commercial pharmacy business that helps patients access specialty therapies, a logistics business that works with biopharma manufacturers launching new specialty pharmaceutical products, and a managed care business focused on retail independent pharmacies. Jonathan also served on Newark City Council from 2017 to 2024, where he chaired the Personnel Committee and sat on the Finance Committee. He joined the LEADS Board in 2025 and lives in Newark with his fiancée, Olivia and their blended family of six.



**Kyle Fulton** is the Executive Director of the Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership (COMP), an OMA-endorsed industry sector partnership serving a 12-county Central Ohio region, where he leads employer-driven workforce initiatives to build a skilled manufacturing talent pipeline.

Prior to joining COMP, Kyle served as Associate Dean of Engineering and Information Technology at Central Ohio Technical College and as the Postsecondary Business & Industry Coordinator for Advanced Manufacturing and Public Safety at C-TEC's Postsecondary Center. Earlier in his career, he spent more than a decade in the private-sector within manufacturing as a technician and CNC/automation programmer.

Kyle holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati, Marshall University, Mountwest Community & Technical College and also completed a 4 year industry apprenticeship in tool & die.

# Thank you to our Board Members and Volunteers!



**Michelle Newman** is Vice President and Director of Marketing at North Valley Bank, bringing 20+ years in marketing and communications to advance community development. She previously led a boutique marketing firm serving small businesses and nonprofits and was Executive Director of Newark's Canal Market District, championing local food systems and entrepreneurship. Elected to the State Board of Education in 2020, she represented 18 Ohio counties through 2024, and in 2025 she was elected to represent Ward 7 on Newark City Council for a four year term. A committed civic volunteer, has also held leadership roles with the Licking County Coalition for Housing, the Granville Area Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations.



**Trina Woods** is the Executive Director for the Licking County Coalition for Housing (LCCH), where she has worked since November, 2011. During her time at LCCH, Trina has managed housing programs, oversaw the fiscal operations, and in 2024 became the Executive Director. LCCH operates several supportive housing programs including; Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Transitional Housing. LCCH is always working to make Licking County a "Community where everyone enjoys a safe, stable, and sustainable home."

Trina received her master's degree in Business Administration in 2008 from Mount Vernon Nazarene University. When Trina is not working she can be found spending time with her family and her dog, or traveling with her husband to wherever the road leads them.

## Volunteers Provide Valuable Services to LEADS & Our Community



Volunteers make our Food Pantries possible, help with Early Head Start and Head Start programs, assist with administrative duties, and so much more!

*At left, Volunteers at our Pataskala Food Pantry celebrated the birthday of 90-year old volunteer, Vera!*



*Left, a community garden managed by the Buckeye Lake Food Pantry. Fresh vegetables from the garden are shared with customers of the Food Pantry.*

*Below left, Food Pantry volunteers enjoy a luncheon to celebrate their service.*



### Volunteer Efforts by the Numbers

	Volunteers	Hours
Head Start/Early Head Start	226	2,180
Emergency Services Division	54	5,461
Other	18	201
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>7,842</b>



**HEAD START | EARLY HEAD START** We prepare our community's most vulnerable young

### Head Start (HS)

Head Start prepares our community's most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. Our program takes a two-generation approach, focusing on building strong parent and child relationships with an overall goal of increasing the child's school readiness skills. We deliver services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being, while engaging parents as partners every step of the way.

During the 2024-25 school year, we served **354** children aged three-to-five-years old and their families at our center-based locations and through our home-based programs. We have programs in Licking, Delaware, and Union Counties.

### Early Head Start (EHS)

Designed to nurture healthy attachments between parent and child, the Early Head Start program serves infants, toddlers, and pregnant women through one-on-one weekly home visits. We support expectant families as they prepare for the upcoming new family member through a comprehensive approach that focuses on development, nutrition, health, mental health, and education.

During the 2024-25 school year, Early Head Start served **101** infants and toddlers, and **6** pregnant women.

*Funding for Head Start and Early Head Start is provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides reimbursement through the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for the meals served to children throughout the year.*

### Freshly Prepared Meals

Proper nutrition is fundamental for children to grow and develop in a healthy manner.

LEADS HS/EHS operates licensed kitchens at our Newark and Marysville facilities. The program is proud that all breakfast, lunch and snacks are prepared by Nutrition Staff who are ServSafe-Certified through the County Health Departments. The meals contain required components such as grain, vegetable, fruit, meat and fluid milk. We also prepare individual meals for children who may have food intolerances/allergies as well as religious and cultural food preferences. As our program utilizes resources from the USDA's CACFP program, we not only prepare healthy foods but we are able to provide parent education for the families.

*Newark firefighters donate coats, gloves, scarves and hats to the Head Start children every year.*





children to succeed in school and in life beyond school.

## Food Service

During the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) fiscal year, October 2024 through September 2025, LEADS' two kitchens provided:

- **75,230** total meals
- **25,184** breakfasts
- **26,753** lunches
- **23,293** snacks
- **4,004** gallons of milk

The reimbursement through CACFP:

**\$ 133,643.93** total food expenses

**\$ 9,050.50** non-food expenses

## Serving Pregnant Women

A total of **6** pregnant women were provided EHS services during the 2024-25 program year; of these families, **5** continued enrollment after the newborn arrived.

Each family is provided a newborn home visit and receives gift packages from Newborns in Need.

*All LEADS Head Start Centers earned a "Gold" quality rating through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Step Up to Quality (SUTQ).*

## Serving Children with Disabilities

Of the **455** children served, **44** had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) through their local education agency or education service center. **14** families had an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) through their local early intervention agency.

*These numbers reflect that we exceeded our mandate of having 10% of our enrollment serving children with diagnosed disabilities.*

## Family Engagement

Head Start and Early Head Start families received a wide variety of parent education and training services, including:

- Health and safety
- Nutrition
- Positive parenting
- Economic mobility
- Mental health
- More than **202** families planned and attended family and father events during the program year.
- **19** parent/guardians volunteered as members of the Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council and PART (Parent Activities Resource Team)

## Providing Services to Incarcerated Women with Infants

Early Head Start (EHS) provided services to **4** incarcerated mothers with infants at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW). The program assists the mothers by connecting them to services and programs for a successful return to society.





### Child Development

The percentages of kindergarten-eligible children that met or exceeded agency benchmarks for school readiness goals were:

Approaches to Learning	46%
Language & Literacy	42%
Cognition & General Knowledge	40%
Physical Development & Health	52%
Social & Emotional Development	36%
English Language Learners	57%

### Health

- **87%** of EHS/HS children are up-to-date on all preventative primary health care
- **70%** of children diagnosed with a chronic health condition received/completed treatment
- **79%** of HS have continuous and accessible professional dental care

### Energy Efficiency

**69** households received energy efficiency improvements such as:

- New furnaces
- Home insulation
- High efficiency lighting
- Air sealing to reduce drafts and energy loss
- Home repair and improvement

**114** households received health and safety improvements within their home, such as:

- Lead, radon, carbon monoxide & fire hazard reduction
- Disability accessibility modifications

**155** households received essential home repairs or modifications such as:

- Electrical and plumbing repairs
- HVAC and A/C
- Minor roof repairs
- Other essential repairs
- Handicap accessibility modifications such as: wheelchair ramps, grab bars and railings

### EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION

**3,975** households participated in utility assistance programs

### Food Pantries / Food Assistance

LEADS operates food pantries in Buckeye Lake, Pataskala, and Utica. We obtain food supplies from a number of different resources, including donations from businesses, churches, groups/clubs, and individuals, as well as from the Food Pantry Network of Licking County.

- **8,577** eligible individuals/households received food from the pantries





## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

LEADS continues to be a leader in affordable housing development and management in Ohio. To date, the organization has participated in **40** housing developments totaling **1,476** units across **22** counties.

Funding Sources:

- Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- USDA Rural Development
- HUD

All tenants must meet eligibility based on income, credit, and background checks per funding program requirements.

### 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

A \$7 million rehabilitation of Brookside Place Apartments in Pataskala began in September 2025, supported by a 2024 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit award from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing is serving as the syndicator. Originally developed by LEADS in 1994, Brookside Place is undergoing extensive interior and exterior renovations that will preserve affordability for at least an additional 30 years. Construction is expected to be completed in fall 2026.

Ridgeview III, the third phase of an affordable housing property developed by LEADS in Johnstown, completed its initial 15-year compliance period and entered a 15-year expended use period on December 31, 2025. At that time, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing exited the partnership, and LEADS acquired its ownership interest.

### 2025 OUTCOMES

- 1,199 households housed in safe, affordable units
- 94% average occupancy rate

## PARTNERS & FUNDERS

US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)  
*Head Start & Early Head Start*

US Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
*Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)*

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP) & Columbia Gas of Ohio | *WarmChoice Program®*

Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA)  
*Home Repair & PASSPORT*

Ohio Department of Development  
*Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)*  
*Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)*  
*Winter Crisis | Summer Crisis*  
*Housing Assistance Grant Program*

*Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)*  
*Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)*

Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development (COAD)  
*Electric Partnership Program*

Licking County Food Pantry Network | *Food Pantries*

Licking County | *Senior Levy Home Repair Program*

Dollar Energy Fund

AEP Ohio | *Neighbor to Neighbor Program*

Private Donations

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA)

Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH)

USDA Rural Development

Multiple Private Equity and Financial Institutions | *Affordable Housing*

## Counties with LEADS Housing Properties

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| Ashland   | Licking    |
| Belmont   | Morgan     |
| Champaign | Morrow     |
| Clark     | Muskingum  |
| Clermont  | Perry      |
| Fairfield | Richland   |
| Huron     | Tuscarawas |
| Jefferson | Washington |
| Knox      |            |





**Terry Boehm:  
Four Decades  
of Leadership  
in Community  
Action and  
Energy Services**

Terry Boehm concluded more than four decades of dedicated service in community action, energy efficiency, and housing programs across central and east central Ohio. Since joining LEADS in 1996, Terry has served as the Director of the Community and Energy Services Division, at one point leading a team of more than 30 professionals and managing an annual operating budget exceeding \$10 million.

During his tenure, Terry oversaw major initiatives including two National Emergency Grants, countywide Community Needs Assessments, and administration of the Community Services Block Grant and Home Energy Assistance Program until 2021.

His work required deep expertise in federal and state regulations, grant management, construction oversight, and collaboration with local planning, finance, and civic partners. His ability to build strong relationships and navigate complex regulatory environments helped position LEADS as a trusted leader in community and energy services.

Terry's commitment to public service extended far beyond his day-to-day responsibilities. He served on several local and state boards and advisory committees.

His work has been recognized with multiple honors, including five consecutive Best Practices Awards from The Ohio State University's John Glenn Institute and the AEP Energy Efficiency Champion Award from American Electric Power. He holds numerous professional certifications and licenses, including an HVAC license.

Throughout his career, Terry has been known for his steady leadership, technical expertise, and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Ohio families. His retirement marks the close of an extraordinary chapter of service, and his impact will continue to be felt across the communities he helped strengthen.

**Cindy Hottinger:  
Three Decades  
of Service  
to Head Start**



Cindy Hottinger retired in August 2025, after 33 years as an employee of LEADS. Prior to becoming an employee, Cindy volunteered while her oldest daughter and then twins attended Head Start. As a volunteer, she was elected as secretary of the Policy Council in 1990. Edwina McIntyre, the Head Start director at the time, noticed Cindy had great skills and encouraged her to apply for a half-time position. Throughout Cindy's years at LEADS she grew through numerous positions: full-time transportation, client specialist/family service worker, child care collaborations, home-based administrative assistant and then administrator for the same. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree from Ashford University, she became the manager of Community Partnerships, Health and Nutrition.

Cindy has numerous positive memories and recalled meeting potential parents out in the community; completing applications and paperwork on the hood of her car in a parking lot; and as a Family Service Worker, lugging around a black wheeled suitcase that contained a printer to make copies of needed documents.

As the daughter of two deaf parents, Cindy had a great skill set since she is proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) and was able to communicate with deaf or hearing-impaired families.

Thus far in Cindy's well-deserved retirement, she has enjoyed spending time with her spouse Bill, her three adult children, eight granddaughters and a grandson. A recent new favorite pastime was going on an eight-day cruise to Mexico and Honduras. Cindy shares she is eager to get her next cruise scheduled.

Cindy has been blessed with time to get to spend with her family, making everlasting memories. She shared she enjoys relaxing, cruising, sewing, crafting, camping and fishing.

# Service Milestones

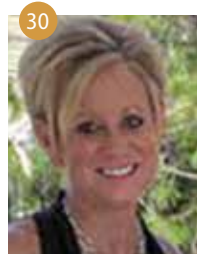
5 - 10 - 15 - 20 - 25 - 30 years of service!



Cassandra Ashcraft



Cindy Hottinger



Amy Mason



Ramona Russell



Terry Boehm



Judy Cullins



Teresa Groves



Carrie Kochensparger



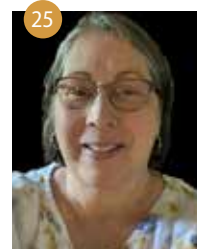
Beverly Lees



Kevin Ohde



Melissa Shaw



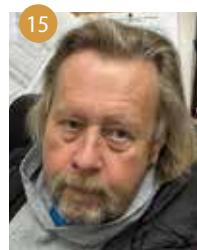
Marie Vermeulen



Doug Pearl



Rebecca Pittman



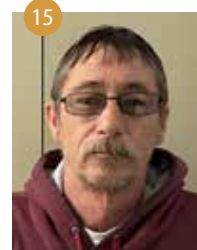
Danny Fallor



Michael Hayes



Tracy Higgins



Nelson Hill



Kristen Jones



Renee Krouskoupf



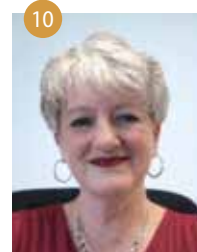
Pam Bowman



Gwynyth Chmara-Huff



Mark Fulton



Jessica Gosselin



Davita Grover



Kelly Irwin



Danielle McCoy



Heidi Harsh



Jessie Hixson



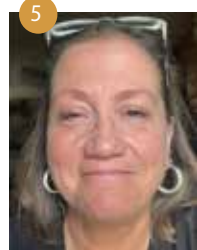
April Horn



Nathan Keirns



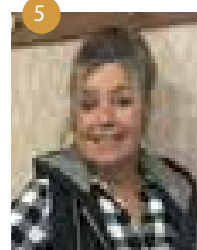
Chad Porter



Kimberlee Raike



Lela Rinehart

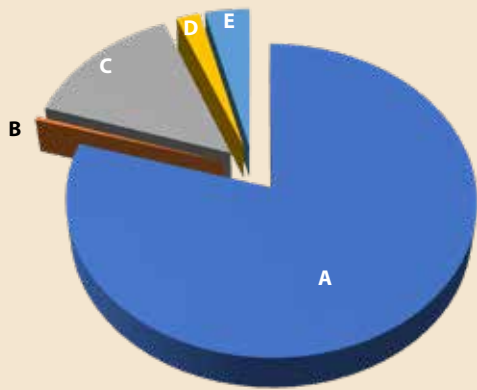


Shellie Sanborn



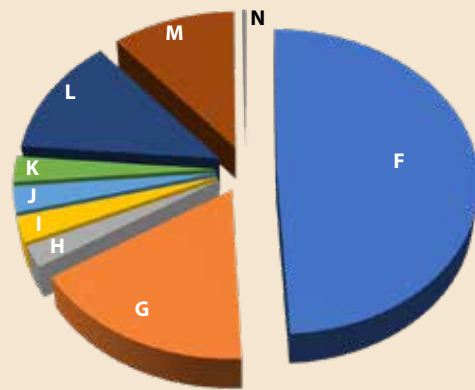
Jamie Spangler

2025 REVENUE \$ 9,207,054



<b>A</b> Grant Revenue	79.61 %
<b>B</b> Donations	.38 %
<b>C</b> Interest Income	14.05 %
<b>D</b> Other Revenue	2.08 %
<b>E</b> In-kind Contributions	3.88 %

2025 EXPENSES \$ 9,232,179



<b>F</b> Child Education	49.21 %
<b>G</b> Energy Assistance	16.70 %
<b>H</b> Food Programs	2.29 %
<b>I</b> Community Service	2.70 %
<b>J</b> Older Adult Programs	2.73 %
<b>K</b> Housing	2.72 %
<b>L</b> Corporate Activities	12.59 %
<b>M</b> Management & General	10.83 %
<b>N</b> Fundraising	.23 %



**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

159 Wilson Street | Newark, Ohio 43055 | 740.349.8606

**SERVICE CENTERS**

<b>NEWARK</b> 160 Wilson Street Newark, Ohio 43055 740.349.8606	<b>BUCKEYE LAKE</b> 41 First Street Buckeye Lake, Ohio 43008 740.928.4481
<b>PATASKALA</b> 12534 Adams Lane SW Pataskala, Ohio 43062 740.927.9861	<b>UTICA</b> 308 North Main Street Utica, Ohio 43080 740.892.4196

**HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS**

<b>DELAWARE</b> 607 Sunbury Road Delaware, Ohio 43015 740.363.8810	<b>MARYSVILLE</b> 111 Morey Drive Marysville, Ohio 43040 937.642.1230	<b>PATASKALA</b> 12536 Adams Lane SW Pataskala, Ohio 43062 740.209.5023
<b>LICKING COUNTY</b> <i>Home-Based Programs</i> 161 Wilson Street Newark, Ohio 43055 740.258.6119	<b>NEWARK</b> 986 East Main Street Newark, Ohio 43055 740.345.1745	<b>UTICA</b> 308 North Main Street Utica, Ohio 43080 740.892.4196

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*LEADS Community Action Agency is a private, non-profit corporation which seeks to identify and remove the causes of poverty and provide direct assistance to alleviate the effects of poverty to result in greater self-sufficiency among low-income citizens of our area.*