

Impact Report 2023

Liberians In Columbus, Inc.

Promoting and empowering Liberian cultural pride, advance social and economic development toward building a safer, thriving community.





LIBERIANS IN COLUMBUS, INC. IMPACT REPORT 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIRMAN

4

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

5

ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC & LICI BABY SHOWER 8

BREAKING BARRIERS 8

FRESH PRODUCE GIVEAWAY 9

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR WELLNESS 9

CAPACITY BUILDING 10

POWERUP FINANCIAL FREEDOM WORKSHOP 10

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP 11

BACK TO SCHOOL GIVEAWAY 11

YOUTH MOVIE NIGHT 11

SENIOR FUN DAY 12

WARM THE BLOCK COAT DRIVE 12

ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY AND TOY
GIVEAWAY 13

ANNUAL CULTURAL FUSION FESTIVAL 13

STATEHOUSE INDEPENDENCE DAY 14

INDEPENDENCE DAY GALA 14

OUR PUBLIC FUNDERS, CORPORATE & COMMUNITY PARTNERS, & MEMBERS

16

THE PEOPLE BEHIND LICI

18

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIRMAN

Dear Community Members and Stakeholders,

As we usher in a new year, it is with great pleasure and gratitude that we present the 2023 Impact Report for Liberians in Columbus, Inc (LICI). This past year has been a journey of growth, resilience, and community spirit, and we are excited to share the highlights of our collective achievements.

Throughout 2023, our organization witnessed an increased engagement from community members, volunteers, and partners. We successfully organized various community events, cultural celebrations, and social and educational programs that strengthened our ties and fostered a sense of unity and pride in our shared interest for community building.

One of the key accomplishments of the past year was the successful launching & implementation of our Community Wellness Program. Through our partnership with Franklin County Job and Family Services, and the generous support of our community and volunteers, we were able to make significant strides in connecting families to much needed resources. We connected two hundred and sixty-five (265) families to thirteen (13) referral hubs connecting them to eleven (11) service categories such as food, housing, employment, interpreters, house goods, legal, mental health and more. Our program empowered numerous new American and low-income residents in our community to survive and explore ways to thrive and positively impact the well-being of their families and our community at large.

Furthermore, LICI actively participated in local and regional initiatives that aimed at promoting diversity, inclusion, and cultural exchange. By building bridges with other communities, enriched our own experiences and also contributed to the broader tapestry of multiculturalism in Columbus. Looking ahead to 2024, we are filled with enthusiasm and optimism. Our strategic plan for the coming year focuses on further enhancing our

community footprint, designing a laser focused strategy to develop our community center that will be a beacon of hope for many residents, fostering sustainable development, and promoting a sense of belonging to community members. We aim to expand our outreach programs, expand on our youth initiatives, and continue our commitment to social responsibility and family building through various programs.

We invite all community members, partners, and stakeholders to actively participate in shaping the future of LICI and the impact it is making on residents in our community. Your ideas, feedback, and support are invaluable as we embark on this journey together. Let us continue to celebrate our cultural heritage, support one another, and make a positive impact on the lives of our community members.

In closing, we extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of LICI in 2023. Together, we have built a strong foundation for the future, and we are excited about the possibilities that 2024 holds for our organization.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication.

Sincerely,



Alpha Tongor, MBA
Executive Director



Hale Lafayette Harmon
Chairman Of The Board Of Directors

The background is a solid red color. It features several large, overlapping, curved lines in a lighter shade of red, creating a sense of motion and depth. A single, slightly darker red star is positioned on the left side, partially overlapping the curved lines.

2023 PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

LICI PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

In 2022, LICI leadership initiated a lease of a Community Resource to pilot programming and reinforce LICI's dedication to advancing social and economic development, fostering a safer, thriving community. The center provides family and youth services to new Americans, refugees, and low-income families in the Eastland community and beyond. Since its establishment, the center has partnered to organize various community-focused events and programs, including resource fairs, wellness programs, town hall meetings, fresh produce giveaways, financial literacy classes, community baby showers, and more. The LICI Resource Center welcomes the entire community, embracing the diverse families it serves. Heartfelt appreciation goes out to our funders, community partners, leadership, and dedicated volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

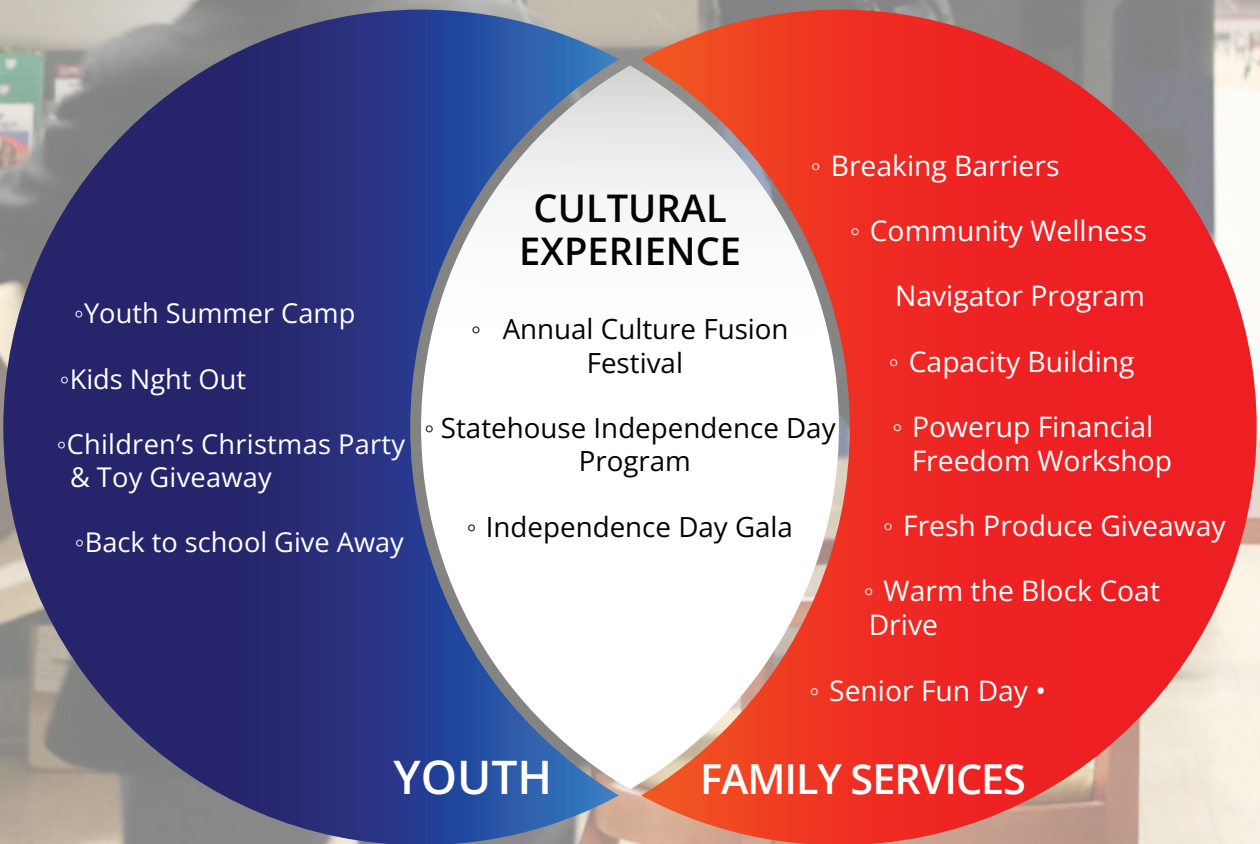
**40
Community
Based Events**

**3200
Members And
Stakeholders
Walked Through
The Doors**

**Welcome
People Of 25
Countries Of
Origin**

**Serve 12 Zip
Codes
In Central
Ohio**

Since November 2022



LICI PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc & Liberians in Columbus Community Baby Shower

The LICI Community Resource Center, hosted Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, to provide educational resources, essential baby supplies, and support to both new and expectant mothers. The aim was to bolster maternal health and offer a comprehensive platform for attendees to access vital information and resources crucial to their journey into motherhood.

- **Approximately 75 mothers attended among them, an average of 1-2 newborns per mother**
- **60% of attendees were expectant mothers**
- **500 baby essentials such as diapers, wipes, and bags distributed**



“Breaking Barriers”- Mental Health Stigma Reduction Program

The “LICI Breaking Barriers” Mental Health Stigma Reduction Program is a comprehensive initiative designed to combat the stigma surrounding mental health issues in our community. Recognizing the detrimental effects of stigma on community members seeking help, our program aims to create awareness, educate community members, and promote open conversations about mental health.

- **Mental health resources and free giveaways were available at the Culture Fusion Festival, which had approximately 800 people visit their booth**
- **Organized community awareness through 10 community churches**
- **Created an intake referral system at <https://www.lici.org/behavioral-health/>**
- **20 community members reached out wanting to talk to someone**



Fresh Produce Giveaway

Our fresh produce giveaway initiative provided nutritious and locally sourced fruits and vegetables to individuals and families in need. Through this program, we strive to address food insecurity and promote healthy living within our community.

- **536 Households Served**
- **6,370 Pounds of food distributed**
- **Seven Zip codes Served**



Community Wellness Navigator Program

LICI started a Community Navigator Wellness Program in partnership with Franklin County Jobs and Family Services. The program offers case management services and assists community members and their families quickly identify available services. Services are provided to Refugees, Immigrants, and low-income families facing challenges and barriers navigating community services.

- **Total Outreach 2,500**
- **Total Enrollment 265**
- **Connected to eleven (11) Service categories, from food to language**
- **Thirteen (13) Hub Referrals**
- **Participants are New Americans and low-income families**

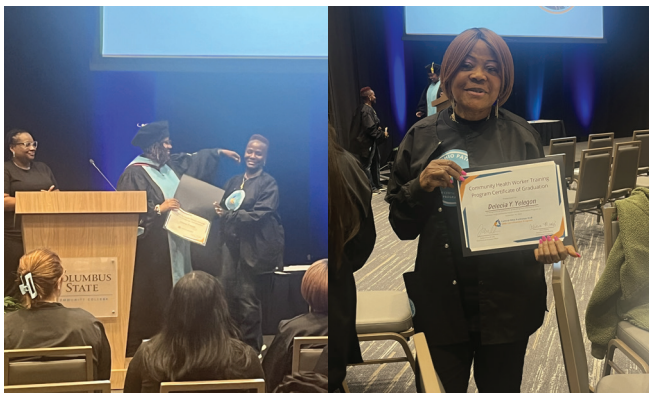


LICI PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



Capacity Building

LICI is growing as a new social service agency and is serving as a beacon of hope for many immigrant families in Columbus. We are slowly but surely growing in capacity so that we can continue to serve our building community. Three (3) LICI Community Navigators completed training and obtained their Community Health Workers Certification to better serve our clients' needs.



Powerup Financial Freedom Workshop

Our Powerup Financial Workshop was a one-day event designed to empower community members and individuals with the knowledge and skills to make informed and confident financial decisions. Participants learn to build budget, save for the future, invest wisely, from expert guidance.

- **23 Participants Enrolled**
- **98% Approval Rating**





Youth Summer Camp

Afri-Net Center for Global Integration 2023 Summer Youth Program, hosted a youth camp in collaboration with LICI in the summer. This program empowered and inspired our youth in diverse activities, including skill-building workshops, cultural exchanges, and community projects. The Summer Youth Program was an opportunity for learning, growing, and forming connections.

- Served children 5-16 years old
- Total number of participants was 35



Kids Night Out

On June 30, LICI organized a Youth Movie Night catering to students in grades K-12. The aim was to captivate our youth with artistic activities and provide them with positive and engaging experiences to keep them occupied. Sixty-two (62) youth participated in the event.



Back to School Giveaway

During LICI 6th annual Culture Fusion Festival, LICI hosted a back-to-school drive in July to provide school supplies to students.

- Total Participants 120
- Provide 2,500 school supplies, such as book bags, notebooks, pencils, folders, and markers

LICI PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



Senior Fun Day

Community Navigators proudly organized a Senior Citizens Fun Day—an occasion dedicated to celebrating and paying tribute to the lively spirit of our cherished seniors. The event featured a delightful mix of entertainment, camaraderie, and heartwarming activities, all aimed to bring smiles to our community senior members' faces and allow them to participate in the lively community activities.

- **Twenty (20) Seniors Participated**
- **Fifty (50) items were distributed, such as dried goods, blankets, and gloves**



Warm the Block Coat Drive

Teaming up with Ohio State Representative Lytana Humphrey from District #2 and the Haitian Community Network, LICI organized a Coat Drive to support members of the Haitian community.

- **350 Coats Were Donated**





Annual Children's Christmas Party & Toy Giveaway

LICI 15th annual toy giveaway was hosted in December to support families in need during the holidays.

- **Total Enrollment 345, ages 0-18**
- **5,600 items giveaway**
- **Ten (10) Zip codes served**



Annual Culture Fusion Festival

LICI Culture Fusion Festival is among the events commemorating Liberian Independence Day in Central Ohio. During this celebration, Liberians, friends of Liberia, and Central Ohio residents come together to rejoice in the vibrant blend of our culture, savoring the essence of our native land through food, music, arts, and sports.

- **6,743 Attendees**
- **250 Health Screening**
- **15 COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Issued**
- **25 Varieties of Culture Food**



LICI PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



Statehouse Independence Day Program

The Liberian Independence Flag Raising Ceremony at the Ohio State House symbolically marks our nation's independence. This event is a proud testament to the unity and resilience of the Liberian community in Ohio, highlighting the rich cultural tapestry that binds us together. Many Liberians and Friends of Liberians witness the spirit of independence soaring high and feel the pride as we honor our heritage in the heart of Ohio's capital. This event was attended by 140 members of our community, our community partners, and volunteers.



Independence Day Gala

LICI proudly presented its yearly Independence Day Gala and fundraiser, marking the culmination of our 167th Independence Celebration with a theme of "This is the US!" This evening was dedicated to honoring Liberian Excellence in Central Ohio, showcasing the remarkable contributions of Community Champions. The event featured captivating cultural entertainment, bringing together over 200 community members, partners, staff, and volunteers in a historic celebration of our collective achievements and a successful fundraiser.



MEET OUR PUBLIC FUNDERS, CORPORATE & COMMUNITY PARTNERS, & MEMBERS

Our funders, partners and sustaining members are critical to the success of LICl.

OUR PARTNERS

- New American Magazine
- Afrinet Center for Global Integration
- ETSS
- CRIS
- Haitian Community Network
- Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc
- Celebrate one
- Ministries for the Movement
- MidOhio Food Collective
- Child Development Council
- City of Columbus Department of Neighborhood
- Dash Media Group
- Liberian Community Social Organizations
- Liberian Community Churches
- New American Leadership Academy
- Primary One
- City of Columbus Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Dominicans in Columbus (DICO)
- FindHelp
- Mauritanian Network for Human Rights in the US
- ASECO
- BurgundyGinger Events
- Ohio State House District 2

OUR FUNDERS

- Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services
- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- JPS Print
- Ultimate Group of Companies
- Beyond Healthcare
- Alliance Healthcare



The background is a solid red color. On the left side, there is a faint, stylized graphic of a star, similar to the one on the flag of the Republic of the Philippines, with three curved lines sweeping upwards from the bottom left towards the top right, also in a lighter shade of red.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND LICI

THE LICI 2023 LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hale Lafayette Harmon

Board Chairman

Rev. Dr. Alexander Sumo

Vice Board Chair

Winston Cooper

Board Secretary

James McCabe

Board Member

Kanah Heckman

Board Member

Kim Kehl

Board Member

Comfort Kenneh

Board Member

Maima Kamara

Board Member

David Kudel

Board Member

STAFF LEADERSHIP (VOLUNTEERS)

Alpha Tongor

Executive Director

Ben Tarr

Assistant Executive Director

Estella Bracewell

CFO

Rebecca Wettee

Treasurer

Zari Carmona

Marketing & PR

Shadrick Addy

Community Affairs

Grace Kolliesuah

Program Director & Capital
Campaign Chair

Marie Sherif

Mental Health Grant Manager

Patrick Flomo

Special Program Coordinator &
Elections Commission

Vera Mayson

Ways & Means Chair

Lois Shaka

Fresh Produce Coordinator

Josephine White

Independence Gala
Coordinator



OUR MISSION

To promote and empower Liberian cultural pride and advance social and economic development toward building a safer, thriving community.

OUR VISION

The vision of LICI is deeply rooted in the organization's firm belief that Liberians can positively advance Central Ohio while making significant contributions to accelerate community development. We strive to implement effective models - through programs, civic engagement, and economic development for members to access opportunities for harnessing their talents, expertise, and resources for personal growth and family stability.

CREDITS

Editorial

Alpha Tongor
Grace Kolliesuah
Dedeh Cooper

Design

JPS Print

Photography

Zari Carmona
Shadrick Addy
Purple Star Photography

Promoting and empowering Liberian cultural pride, advance social and economic development toward building a safer, thriving community.