# St. Mark Community Center

## 2011 Annual Report & Update

St. Mark Community Center

Empowering Children

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# Empowering Children

2011 Annual Report / St. Mark Community Center

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## Our Mission:

*St. Mark Community Center provides support for the educational and social needs of school-aged youth and their families.*

## Our Goal:

*To empower children through academic mentoring, character-building and unique enrichment experiences.*

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*Dear Friends and Partners,*

*St. Mark Community Center has been providing education-based before and after-school programming to Dubuque area youth and their families for nearly 23 years. Our critical focus on academic mentoring and powerful enrichment activities has established St. Mark as a unique, vital service provider for hundreds of at-risk students and families in the Dubuque community.*

*St. Mark Community Center's strong partnerships with the Dubuque Community School District, community organizations, businesses and volunteers have enabled us to provide incredible opportunities to thousands of young people over the past three decades. In fact, none of our programming would be possible without the dedication and compassion of our more than 200 volunteer mentors and tutors or without the support of you, our friends.*

*It is with profound appreciation and gratitude that I thank each of you who has helped further our mission to provide incredible programs to Dubuque area children and their families. Your generosity has an immediate impact on our community. You are helping us to shape young lives on a daily basis! As we look forward to a time of transition, we are reminded of the incredible foundation that has been laid for us, and look forward with excitement to St. Mark Community Center's next chapter.*

*In Gratitude,*

Michelle M. Covey

*Michelle Covey—Board Chair*

## Executive Board of Trustees

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Vice Chair Mark O'Brien
Treasurer Janet Quick
Secretary Nikki Kiefer

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**Office Assistant-** Linda Schmidt
**Kids Connection Coordinator –** Natalie Capron
**Moving Up Coordinator -** Tina Schute
**AmeriCorps VISTA Member–** Audra Kremer
**Building Manager-** Derl Wuertzer

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"If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much."
-Marian Wright Edelman

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## Family Programming and Engagement

St. Mark Community Center offers a variety of opportunities for parents to get involved in our programs, both during and outside of program hours. Parents are a valued and integral part of our programming and are always welcome to observe their children during program, and to assist at our events.

**Family Literacy Nights** are education-based programming and activities for families to enjoy together. Parents learn new ways to assist their children's development of reading skills at home. Each child receives a book to add their own personal library as well as opportunities to practice reading skills.

**Family Nights** bring SMCC families together to conduct fun, educational sessions. A variety of local agencies provide activities that promote leadership, teamwork, and community involvement.

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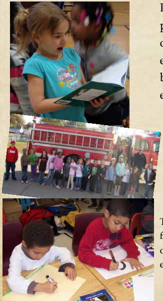
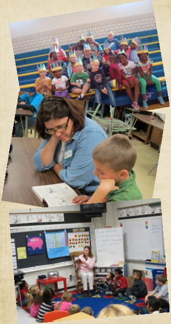
## Kids Connection Program



Led by experienced educators, the **Kids Connection Program** provides structured academic remediation, school-work support, organized physical activity, service learning projects, and enrichment activities to more than 200 students. It is offered before school (K-5) at Audubon, Fulton, Marshall, and Prescott elementary schools. And after school (K-3) at Audubon, Marshall and Lincoln elementary schools.

St. Mark Community Center partners with City of Dubuque Leisure Services, the Dubuque Community School District and hundreds of volunteer mentors to provide a program that meets the critical needs of youth in our community.

The Kids Connection Program Coordinator develops lesson plans using weekly fun-learning themes. A host of community partners from a variety of organizations and businesses also attend program as guest speakers and lead exciting experiential learning lessons for our students.



## Moving Up Program

The **Moving Up Program** is led by experienced educators who work closely with volunteer mentors, parents and classroom teachers to ensure that student needs are met. The after school program is offered daily for students in grades 4 and 5 at Audubon, Lincoln, and Marshall elementary schools. Through the specifically designed curriculum students learn the importance of respect for self, others, materials, and property.

St. Mark Community Center partners with a wide array of community leaders and friends to introduce and inspire the students in the program. The focus on experiential based learning and community partnerships helps students grasp new knowledge.

Moving Up provides academic mentoring, with major concentration on character development, that prepares students for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in middle school and high school. In this program, students develop personal and social skills and participate heavily in service learning activities. Topics covered range from time-management to bullying to drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

> "Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them."
>
> — Ladybird Johnson

## Summer Program

St Mark Community Center provides a five week summer program open to students entering grades 1- 5 in the fall of the following academic year. It is an education-based program that incorporates fun, experiential theme-based learning with a focus on math and literacy.

This program includes hands-on activities taught by licensed teachers with weekly educational fieldtrips, guest visitors or field experiences. Students take home a brand new book every week!

## Community Outreach

St. Mark Community Center welcomes community members on site at our Center—formerly St. Mark Lutheran Church. We provide a gathering place for the entire Dubuque community. More than 15 local organizations and a variety of groups utilize the Center on a weekly basis, ranging from a Headstart Classroom and group yoga class to Narcotics Anonymous and a variety of other organizations!

In addition to providing this space for the community, St. Mark Community Center is an active part of the Downtown Neighborhood Association. We partner with the neighborhood association to host association meetings, sponsor Music in Jackson Park, participate in neighborhood clean-up efforts and ensure a strong presence and partnership within the neighborhood. We are thrilled to be located in the heart of downtown Dubuque, surrounded by a diverse, active community of neighbors and friends.

St. Mark Community Center welcomes community members to utilize our space. There is an ongoing calendar of activities easily accessible by contacting our office.

# Volunteer & Mentoring Opportunities

Volunteers are the heart of St. Mark Community Center's programs. More than 200 vetted mentors and tutors provide time, talent and compassion to our students every year.

### Program Volunteers

Program volunteers contribute an average of 700 hours each month to the programs. They come from diverse backgrounds and range from high-school age students to senior citizens.

### College Partnerships

St. Mark Community Center is proud to support area college students with service learning and work study opportunities. We partner with Clarke University, Loras College, University of Dubuque, University of Wisconsin-Platteville and Wartburg Seminary each year though work-study and education courses. Many of these courses incorporate a service learning objective that is met through partnering with SMCC College students receive hands-on invaluable experiences in the program, while SMCC program students receive incredible care and attention from these mentors.

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# Apples for Students

Since 1998 St. Mark Community Center's Apples for Students program has provided school supplies to nearly 1,300 students annually in the Dubuque area.

Each August over 150 volunteers spend more than 400 hours organizing supplies, sorting materials, packing bags and delivering to schools.

Children are referred through counselors and social service agencies. Each child referred will receive a bag of school supplies. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, friends and community partners, we are able to ensure that students start the school-year with confidence and support!

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# Holiday Activities

### Jingle Bell Hop

St. Mark Community Center hosts the annual Jingle Bell Hop on the second Sunday of December. In 2011, more than 1,000 people attended this event! Our family-friendly afternoon features a visit from Santa Claus, DJ music and dancing, holiday karaoke, arts and crafts, a bounce house, as well as tons of holiday treats and raffle giveaways. The $2 ticket cost, and support from dozens of community sponsors, continues to help the Jingle Bell Hop grow and thrive every year.

### Sponsor Angels

St. Mark Community Center coordinates the "Sponsor Angels" program every December. This program provides winter clothing for children in SMCC programs. Community friends and businesses work with SMCC to be paired, confidentially, with families that qualify for the program. "Sponsor Angels" purchase the requested clothing items, wrap them and deliver them to the center.

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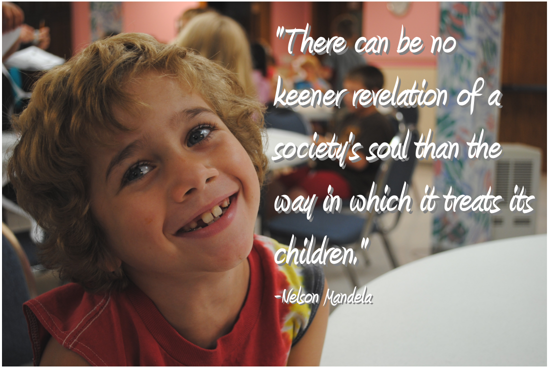
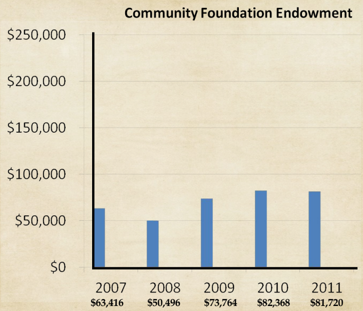


"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

-Nelson Mandela



> "In order to achieve sustainability in our programming, it's imperative for SMCC to continue forward in building our endowment."
>
> ***Janet Quick***
> Board Treasurer

> "Through the generosity of our friends, and supporters, SMCC will continue to add longevity to our already lasting legacy."
>
> ***Mark O'Brien***
> Vice Board Chair

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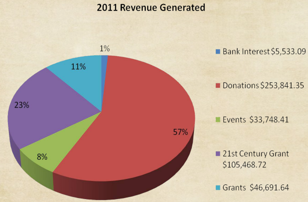

**Total Revenue: $445,283.21**

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."
-John F. Kennedy

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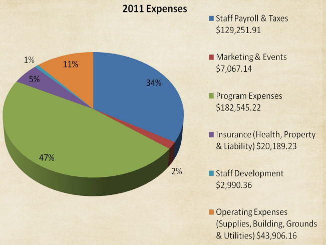
"Children make you want to start life over."
-Muhammad Ali



**Total Expense: $385,950.02**

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† Individual has passed

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✓ Please know that we tried to recognize each donor by name or organization. This recognition is important to us because it is through your kindness and support that SMCC is able to continue forward in our mission. If your name has been missed, please accept our sincerest apologies, and please contact our offices.

# Donor Recognition $500- $2,499

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- Sedbrook Auto Care Center LLC

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- Women Of The Moose #850

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- Cottingham & Butler
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- Prudential Financial
- Variety-The Children's Charity
- Wahlert Foundation

# Business & Community Partners $5,000—Above

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- McGraw-Hill Companies
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St. Mark Community Center

*Empowering Children*

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