

# 2020

## annual report







It almost goes without saying that 2020 was a year like none of us have ever experienced. Living through a global pandemic while convening a group whose foundational outcomes include building a sense of community was a unique challenge. However, what we learned is that our resident leaders and partner organizations are creative and resilient! I think we always knew this, but it got highlighted in so many ways this year!

**CREATIVE** - our resident leaders planned and implemented a system to make sure their neighbors had the food they needed during quarantine, they shifted from a spring newsletter to producing more frequent postcards and they planned events that still helped neighbors feel seen and connected but not gathered in one space. They put in so much time and heart! Our organizational partners did things like facilitating a small business opening, serving our residents in unprecedented ways (isn't that the most overused word from 2020?), and dreaming, planning, and pushing towards improved quality of life as our residents have desired!

**RESILIENT** - 5 years! Can you believe we have been at this work for 5 years now? Our residents and partners have been working alongside each other well past the 'getting to know you' stage. It's a little like we got married, and then 2020 brought the first really big struggle, but we came out stronger! Nobody quit or ran away, and it is that kind of tenacity that has made this work impactful and enjoyable.

We started out so hopeful that neighborhood revitalization would work — residents would feel more connected, residents would be our leaders, existing neighborhood organizations assets would be leveraged, new partners would join us on this journey, residents' gifts, dreams, and concerns would remain at our core. All of this has and is happening — simply read the pages that follow, written by our residents and action team leaders! I can't wait to see where we go in the next 5 years.

Jena Ashby  
8twelve Coalition Convener



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## SMALL SPARKS

The Small Sparks Program is an opportunity for residents of the 8twelve Coalition, as well as local community organizations, to apply for small grants, up to \$500, to plan a neighborhood improvement project. A team of residents reviewed all the applications and 5 youth projects and 7 adult projects were awarded, a total of 12 projects this year!

### YOUTH PROJECTS AWARDED:

- Sidewalk Art- Lilly Arthur
- Painting Kits- Eden McCrory
- Bike Rack- Charlie Gipson
- Rock Art- Magnolia Gipson
- S.T.E.M. Kits- Linus Gipson

### ADULT PROJECTS AWARDED:

- Dance Uniforms- Shameka Gordon
- Vegetable Stand- Brian Carless
- Thriving Baby Kits- Marissa Rose
- Front Porch Party- Lezlie McCrory
- Garden Pumpkins- Pat McCrory
- Sunflowers- Mike Martin
- Food/Supply Giveaway- Forward S.T.E.P.S.

A special thank you to Ball Brothers Foundation, whose generous support and financial contribution to the 8twelve Coalition made this program possible. Thank you to the residents and organizations who engaged with this project to create and complete neighborhood improvement.



# SOUTH CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD

South Central's Neighborhood Association worked hard in recent years to develop an annual schedule of (award-winning!) clean-ups, regular meetings, summer parties in the Jefferson Street Pocket Park, and caroling in December. 2020 really did a number on the annual calendar we've been so proud of, but in some of the best ways.

**The pandemic challenge of not being able to gather people meant we found ourselves, as a board, doing far less asking neighbors to come to our events and far more taking our fun to neighbors' homes.**

More flexible funding meant we could creatively repurpose money and try new things as well, so we tried out ideas that made for fun surprises in a difficult year.

Our neighbor, Andrea, tried an idea to make surprise pizza deliveries for families coping with school closures early on. It brought so much joy that we turned into a parade in the summer. New connections were made as we walked the neighborhood with a tractor and neighborhood banner and 50 pizzas we delivered to homes and passers-by.

**Neighbors connecting to neighbors is what has seen us through this year.**

When violence ripped through a home, neighbors, as friends and acquaintances, came together to offer comfort and hope. When some neighbors had lost jobs or found themselves in need, other neighbors could connect them to partners offering food delivery or Thanksgiving baskets or share out of their own resources. In these difficult times, we've learned to appreciate and celebrate each other.

People are the backbone of our neighborhood, and the relationships of support we're forging together through working, sharing, and celebrating together are what truly make South Central great.



# THOMAS PARK, AVONDALE NEIGHBORHOOD

**Looking back 5 years ago to some of the things we dreamed about during our first planning sessions and looking around the neighborhood today, we can see changes. Changes in both the physical spaces and in the people.**

We have a core group of very committed residents helping lead a monthly neighborhood meeting and serving as resident leaders in the 8twelve Coalition. This group has helped build a network of relationships with neighbors, increasing trust and communication. One of the ways this trust has helped us move in the direction of residents' concerns is beginning to look at peer recovery coaching. This is a way neighbors in recovery walk together in friendship with other neighbors who are struggling.

For the last few years, the Thursday Night Meal at Avondale UMC has become a place for peace and relationships to grow. The Friday Market at the Ross Community Center is a place where neighbors and other community members make connections and increase the food supply for their homes. Collaborations have increased tremendously with these 2 events and others.

Places in the neighborhood are coming back to life with the addition of the Common Market and Rosebud Coffee House. The improvements and new ball diamonds at the Ross Community Center are awesome, too. Kids have gotten to see investment in things important to them and have also opened their eyes to their own potential projects like the bike repair club and bike shop.

**We are excited about where the next 5 years will take us!**





# HOUSING

Even with many setbacks and price increases due to COVID-19, our housing partners continued to strongly impact the housing landscape in the area. 21 places were improved or created.

In our first 5 years of working together, nearly 130 projects have been accomplished in the 8twelve area as a result of our focused work.

These housing projects range from new homeownership opportunities, to repairs, to demolition of houses too far gone. All of our housing partners serve a specific need in our community, and this kind of impact could not happen otherwise.

In the last five years, we've touched

**128**  
PROJECTS

**52%**

of those projects were  
rehab or repairs

**9%**

of those projects  
were new homes



# BEAUTIFICATION



While many things felt different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some things remained the same — neighborhood clean-ups and 'Dumpster Days'! Neighbors have come to rely upon these two events to help remove trash and unwanted large items. Dumpster Days make it possible for neighbors to do their own clean-up projects so volunteers can tackle other priorities and vacant properties during the neighborhood clean-ups. Once again, over 30 tons of trash was removed from the neighborhood in just one week!

While most volunteer gatherings were cancelled to prevent the spread of COVID-19, partners were able to complete an outdoor work day with volunteers from Lowe's, taking on projects spread out through the neighborhood in order to keep people apart. Neighbors led initiatives to clean up curbs and improve the Jefferson St. Pocket Park. Purchase and demolition of an unsafe house adjacent to The Jefferson Street Pocket Park this year means

we'll be able to expand that space going forward so it can continue to serve as an outdoor gathering space in a neighborhood without a city park.

Partner organizations took the lead this year, beautifying their spaces and places. Both Maring-Hunt Community Garden and Avondale Community Garden added signage to help engage residents and keep neighbors informed of upcoming events. Urban Light Community Development added playground equipment at their community garden, making it a destination for all ages. These public spaces have become important gathering spaces for friends and neighbors to meet and be together. We love to watch them continue to improve, change, and be maintained over time.

We are committed to creating a clean, inspiring, and welcoming neighborhood through our beautification efforts—and we are so grateful for our partners who join us to make that possible.



# EDUCATION & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Over the last 5 years, the Education and Family Engagement action team has implemented several projects within the 8twelve area. From developing a preschool at the Ross Community Center, to partnering with WIPB/ Ball State PBS, to bringing Ready to Learn family workshops and camps to the neighborhood, the impact has been significant for kids and families. Amanda Owen, Impact Coordinator at Ross Community Center, noted that "The WIPB partnership has been a wonderful opportunity for the Ross Center, for our families, and for the neighborhood."

Another project the team focused on over the last several years has been to assess the feasibility of opening a new, high-quality ECE program to meet the education needs of young children and the child care needs of working families. At the conclusion of the study, the action team has focused efforts into alternative solutions such as supporting existing preschools and employees in the neighborhood and the preschool at South View Elementary, before moving forward with the plan to open a new program. One way this happened is providing scholarships for preschool students at South View Elementary.

**The team is always exploring creative options in educating and spreading awareness to residents about the value of early childhood education, along with affordable early childhood opportunities that currently exist within the neighborhood.**



# BUSINESS

For all the struggles 2020 brought, it also saw some wonderful developments with the Business Action Team. The opening of the Rosebud Coffee House at the corner of Hoyt and Memorial was such a bright spot to the end of the year. Dreaming and collaborating together got us to this point of a small business starting right here where local neighbors and visitors can gather. In addition to the coffee shop, the expansion of the Common Market at the corner of Hoyt and 8th has been a big win. The Common Market is a place neighbors can gather, add to their record collection, and, most notably, grab a few groceries.





# 2020 FUNDING AWARDS

## IU HEALTH BALL MEMORIAL HOSPITAL & IU HEALTH FOUNDATION \$596,000

Part of a \$1M pledge over three years with funding from the IU Health Community Impact Investment Fund.

### Year 1 Projects:

- **\$419,000** Ross Center Recreation & Wellness Projects
- **\$70,000** Inventory & Design of sidewalks, walking trails and bike lanes
- **\$57,000** Food Insecurity Projects
- **\$50,000** Hoyt & Memorial Development

## LOWE'S \$85,000

- **\$28,000** Open Door Health Services - Healthy Neighbors Initiative
- **\$20,000** Jefferson Street Pocket Park Expansion
- **\$18,250** South View Elementary School - Ready to Learn Student Initiative
- **\$8,500** Grants Administration

- **\$5,000** Small Sparks Education Grants for Post-secondary Students
- **\$5,000** Support for Organizations & Resident Leaders working with students
- **\$250** Face masks for neighbors

## VECTREN \$75,000

Part of a **\$225,000** pledge over three years

### Year 1 Projects:

- **\$58,368** 8twelve Management Costs
- **\$6,609** Beautification Projects
- **\$5,190** Marketing, Branding & Promotion
- **\$4,526** Neighborhood Activities
- **\$307** Leadership Training

## ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION \$60,000

- **\$19,000** Housing Projects - ecoREHAB, Habitat for Humanity, Muncie Mission, Urban Light Community Development
- **\$10,000** 8twelve Management Costs

- **\$10,000** Data Collection & Evaluation Process
- **\$6,000** Grants Administration
- **\$5,000** South View Elementary School
- **\$5,000** South Central Neighborhood Association Activities
- **\$5,000** Thomas Park/Avondale Association Activities

## BALL BROTHERS FOUNDATION \$45,000

- **\$25,000** 8twelve Management Costs
- **\$10,000** Marketing
- **\$5,000** Small Sparks
- **\$5,000** Study of Coalition Management Models

## SHERMAN & MARJORIE ZEIGLER FOUNDATION \$43,000

- **\$28,000** Jefferson Street Pocket Park Expansion
- **\$10,000** South Central Neighborhood Planters

- **\$5,000** Improvements to Walnut Streetscapes

## GENERAL MOTORS \$32,000

- **\$18,800** Physical Improvements at Rosebud Coffee House & Common Market
- **\$10,000** Neighborhood Residents' Employment at Rosebud Coffee House & Common Market
- **\$3,200** Grants Administration

## H & R BLOCK \$20,000

- **\$8,575** Resident Leader Stipends
- **\$8,151** Resident Engagement Activities
- **\$2,000** Grants Administration
- **\$1,274** Neighborhood Association Activities

## COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MUNCIE & DELAWARE COUNTY \$10,000

- **\$5,000** Resident Leader Stipends
- **\$5,000** Peer Recovery Coach Training

Coalition Partners	Foundational Outcomes	Steering Committee	Resource Development Committee	Governance Committee	Housing	Education & Family Engagement	Business Development & Employment	Beautification
Avondale UMC	☑	☑						
Ball State PBS						☑		
Building Better Neighborhoods-BSU	☑	☑	☑		☑			
Boys & Girls Club of Muncie	☑	☑	☑	☑				
Bridges Community Services					☑			
BY5		☑				☑		
City of Muncie					☑			
Common Market		☑					☑	
ecoREHAB	☑	☑	☑					
Huffer Memorial Child Care Center		☑	☑					
Muncie Habitat for Humanity	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Muncie Mission		☑	☑		☑		☑	
Muncie Public Library	☑	☑	☑			☑	☑	
Muncie Community Schools						☑		
Open Door Health Services							☑	
Pathstone Corporation					☑			
Purdue Extension						☑		
Residents	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Rosebud Coffee House							☑	
Ross Community Center	☑	☑	☑			☑		☑
South Central Neighborhood Association	☑	☑						☑
South View Elementary						☑		
Thomas Park Avondale	☑	☑					☑	☑
Urban Light Community Development	☑	☑	☑		☑			
Urban Light Community Church	☑							
Vectren								☑