



# ANNUAL REPORT

*2020-2021*



# REFLECTIONS

## from Interim Executive Director

It has been an honor to partner with Banyan Community leadership and families this year, to ensure the mission and programs continue to transform lives by developing youth, strengthening families, and creating community.

Banyan Community began as an idea, when founders Tim and Joani Essenburg moved into the Phillips neighborhood in 1990. The Essenburgs and the leaders of Banyan Community recognized that in order for children to thrive and ultimately graduate, go to college and succeed as adults, whole families and the larger community must be connected and engaged. This philosophy is at the heart of all of Banyan's programs. As we enter a new chapter for Banyan, this legacy will be honored and will continue.

Together with our founders, partners, families, and staff, Banyan has created a roadmap for the next five years. This strategic plan will be used as a guide, to help us achieve our mission, expand from our roots, and strengthen our programs. The three pillars of this plan include preschool to career support for youth and their families, building sustainable practices for Banyan as an organization that is for/by the community, and building relationships through collaboration to enhance the resources for the families and youth that Banyan serves.

The year ahead for Banyan will be about working together to implement this roadmap that you helped to create. To continue the programs and resources that Banyan



Community is known for, to honor the legacy of our founders, and to welcome a new executive director while we support the continued dedication of Banyan's community, staff, and volunteer leadership.

We are inspired every day by the youngest Banyan Community participants who demonstrate resilience, leadership, growth, perseverance. We walk with families to navigate significant challenges and yet continue to focus on the health, wellbeing, and education of the community. We recognize the courage it takes to advocate, ask for support, and persevere in order to foster change. We celebrate achievements, milestones, and many moments of joy together.

Banyan's mission is more relevant than ever, as our communities rebuild, our young people look for solid ground, and our families move from crisis to stability.

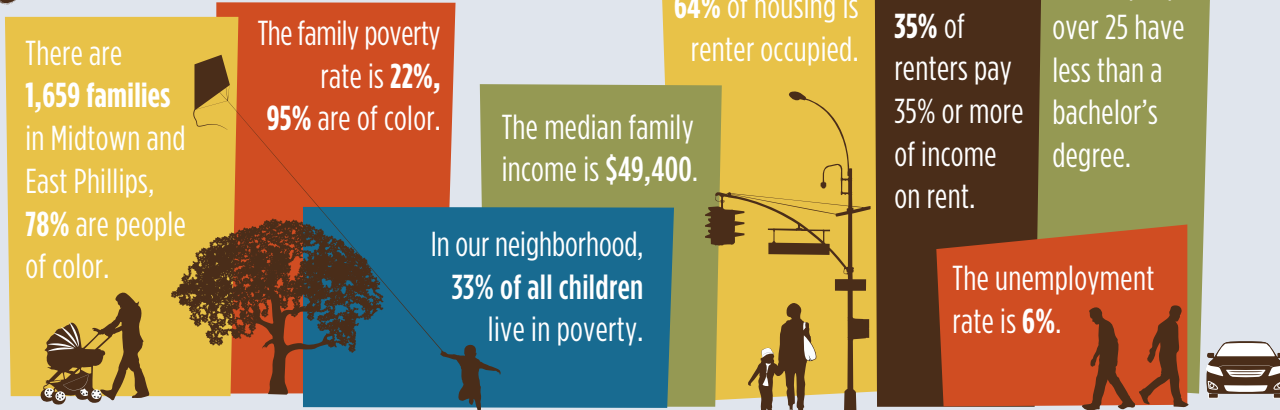


Thank you for your support. Thank you for being a part of the Banyan community.

In partnership,

Annie Van Avery  
Interim Executive Director

## Neighborhood Stats<sup>1</sup>







## Our 2021 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Banyan youth and families start creating a pathway to graduation beginning in kindergarten. Banyan walks alongside youth to foster curiosity and a love for learning, create educational maps, and explore career options. Participating in Banyan programs ensures kids get their homework done while they grow socially and emotionally. Add in your

support and we get to graduation! Banyan youth are not only graduating from a high performing, college preparatory high school, but their hearts, as well as their minds, are ready for college.

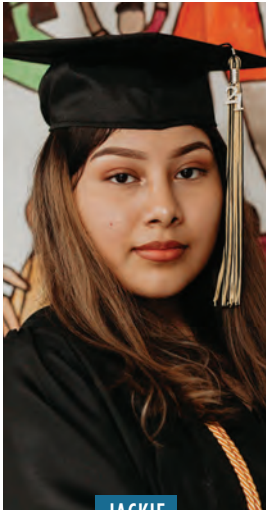
**Let's applaud the 2021 high school graduates!**



The City of Minneapolis four-year high school graduation rate is **74%** and drops to **68%** for Black or African American youth and **67%** for Latino youth.<sup>2</sup> The graduation rate for Banyan youth is **98%**.



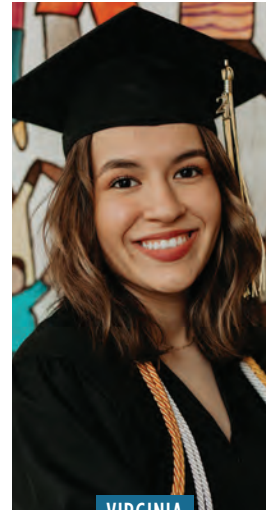
CHARLIE



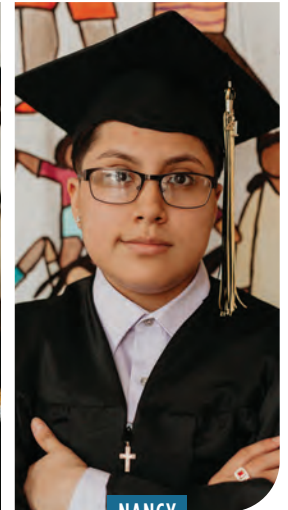
JACKIE



MARIA



VIRGINIA



NANCY

## NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS. TRANSFORMED LIVES.

*Banyan Community is rooted in the Phillips neighborhood to transform lives by developing youth, strengthening families, and creating community.*

# BANYAN PROGRAMS *and Outcomes (2020-21)*



## Youth

Banyan inspires young people to invest themselves in education and community. Youth are prepared to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through programs that cultivate social, emotional and educational growth. Our youth have fun while they develop into **Committed Learners** and **Reconciled People**.

*"I'm really glad we can come to Banyan again. It helps me focus, not being at home all the time."*

**—Banyan youth**

### YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

- **Elementary:** Thrive, Kids Club and Cool Off Days Summer Program
- **Middle School:** SOAR (Southside Adolescents Rising), Learning Circles and Cool Off Days Summer Program
- **High School:** ASPIRE! Tutoring, Higher Ground Scholarship and High School Employment
- **College:** Banyan Scholars and College Employment

## Families

Banyan brings hope to families by strengthening relationships between parents and children. Our families have close bonds that enable us to work together toward a brighter future. Banyan helps parents become advocates for their children in all arenas of life, while children become

an inspiration to their parents. Banyan families are **Future Oriented** because they see that their future is bright.

### FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMS:

- Family Support
- Goal-Setting Conferences
- Home Visits
- Parent Classes



## Community

Banyan connects members of the neighborhood with each other, creating bonds that encourage communication and belonging. Building trust between residents, and training leaders on every block, brings hope and safety to every home. Banyan acts as a "resource hub,"

connecting residents with supportive systems and equipping them as **Leading Citizens**.

### COMMUNITY CONNECTING PROGRAMS:

- Lighthouse Network (LHN)
- Gathering Events
- Community Council
- Community, Leadership, Education, and Connection (CLEC)



100% of graduating seniors plan to attend college of their choice this fall



100% of parents are committed to supporting their *child's positive development*

100% of middle school youth participated in planning a service project with Banyan

98% of K-5 youth have support from adults other than their parents



90% OF FAMILIES believe they can have an impact in making their *neighborhood a better place to live*

100% of K-5 youth feel *safe at Banyan*



100% OF CLEC attendees reported **POSITIVE CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES** from participation in CLEC events

14 **BLOCKS** participated in National Night Out



88% of middle school youth work with other team members to **ACCOMPLISH GOALS**

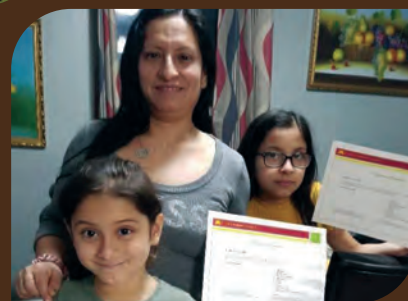


100% of families use **THEIR STRENGTHS** to address issues at home, school or in their neighborhoods

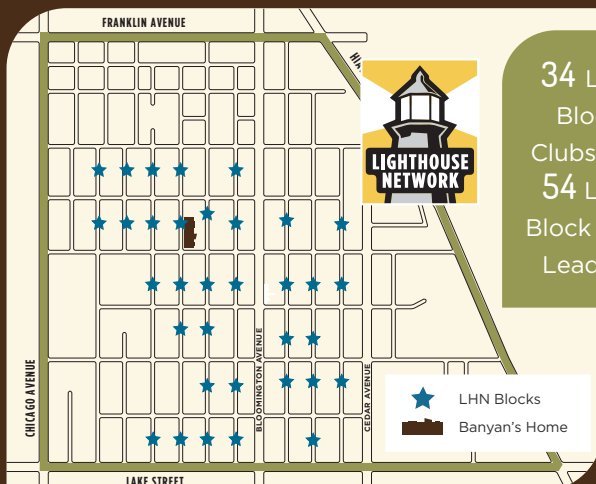
100% OF SENIORS graduated from high school

100% of youth staff consistently volunteered to take on leadership roles

100% of youth are **SOCIALLY ENGAGED** with peers



95% of Community Council members felt **SUPPORTED IN NEW LEADERSHIP ROLES**



34 LHN Block Clubs and 54 LHN Block Club Leaders

100% of youth **ENGAGED IN NEW EXPERIENCES** this summer

96% *family retention rate*

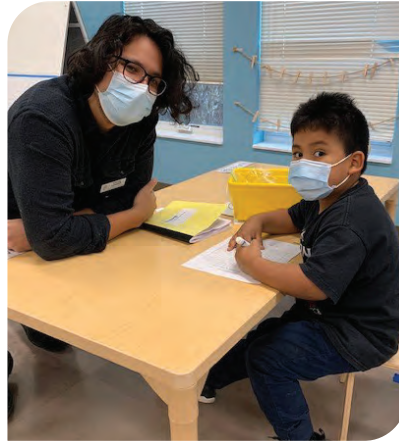


## Youth Programs: In-Person throughout 2020-21

# SUPPORTING DISTANCE LEARNING AND MUCH MORE

The 2020-2021 program year brought new opportunities to envision our programming as youth, families, and staff faced the evolving uncertainty of the pandemic and continued distance learning.

Banyan youth experienced school in many forms last year. From in-person and hybrid models to full distance learning, we supported youth and parents in each one. Banyan's youth programs adjusted and increased daily hours for onsite enrichment as well as continued remote learning supports. We made changes in the building to allow for social distancing and smaller classroom sizes. And,



we added additional curricula and academic supports to ensure that all youth were successful whether they were distance learning, in a classroom, or a little of both.

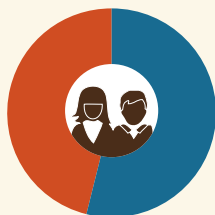
In addition to academic supports, we paid close attention to the social and emotional needs of youth. If we learned anything throughout the last year, we know that everyone needs some amount of connection and socializing. Youth lit up when they got to see each other in-person, and as one program participant said to staff during summer programs, "I would hug you if I could." Ensuring human connection while keeping everyone safe and healthy remains a priority.

While it has been a challenging year for us all, we see resiliency at each turn. We see committed youth engaged in their own academic advancement. And, with health and safety protocols in place we are proud that there were no secondary COVID-19 transmissions from programs at Banyan. Much dedication on the part of staff, youth, and families made this possible.

*"This year was way harder than I expected. I thought online school would be easy but it was really hard for me to pay attention all the time. It was easier to focus when I was at Banyan for tutoring." -Banyan youth*

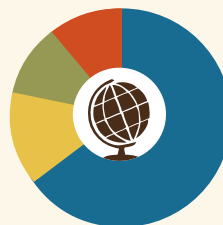
## BANYAN YOUTH

We have 152 YOUTH and 86 FAMILIES in our youth programs.



### Sex

- 54% Female
- 46% Male



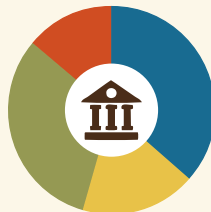
### Race

- 66% Latino
- 14% African American
- 11% Multiracial
- 9% Black/African



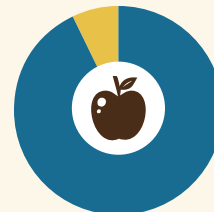
### Grades

- 18% K-2<sup>nd</sup>
- 27% 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>
- 21% 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>
- 16% 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>
- 18% College



### School

- 36% Private
- 18% Public
- 32% Charter
- 14% College



### Lunches

- 93% Free or Reduced





# SPRING GATHERING BUILDS NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Banyan families joined together on a sunny May afternoon to rejoice spring and embrace community as we continue to move forward after a challenging year. Our traditional spring carnival was reimagined to keep health and safety at the forefront. We were grateful for the beautiful day outside in the warm sun.

The gathering included a fun photo booth, yard games for youth and families, and refreshments to enjoy. Banyan gatherings occur several times throughout the year as an opportunity for youth, families, and staff to build relationships with each other and have shared experiences. As we build connections with our neighbors, we continue to become stronger as a community.

## *Building Bridges* Banyan virtual Leadership Event

We were pleased to present our annual breakfast event, virtually, featuring Banyan alum, Rey Reira as emcee. Special guest, **Dr. Artika R. Tyner** inspired us to be superheroes for justice as we work to support the future leaders at Banyan. With her address on "Leadership and Social Change," Dr. Tyner demonstrated her passion for creating a more equitable education system in Minnesota and beyond. She invited us to discover our own talents for creating change. We are grateful for Dr. Tyner's support of Banyan Community.

Rey shared his Banyan story and introduced several other Banyan scholars and alums. We heard their stories and plans and were inspired by these Banyan youth who are blazing new trails in higher education and making plans for future careers. You are a part of changing our urban American landscape, for the better!

The key takeaway, each one of us plays a role in building bridges for 1st generation leaders.



## *Congratulations College Graduates*



May is an exciting month for many Banyan youth who are celebrating graduation from elementary, middle, and high school. But none are quite as excited as our college graduates. We celebrated four Scholar graduations this year—bringing the total number of Banyan college graduates to 29! Let's give a special shout out to the Class of 2021!

### **JAZMINE PANORA**

Bachelor's in Information  
Technology Infrastructure  
University of Minnesota  
*Twin Cities Support Engineer at  
Microsoft*

### **WALTER ALVARADO**

Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering  
University of St. Thomas  
*Mechanical Engineer at Cantel Medical*

### **JORGE MARTINEZ**

Bachelor's in Human Resources  
Concordia University  
*Pursuing Master's in Human Resources  
at Concordia University*

### **CARLEEN CUEVAS**

Associate's Degree  
Normandale Community College  
*Teacher Assistant at Tierra Encantada*

# BUILDING OUR FUTURE STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW



During the past year, the Banyan Board of Directors approved our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan as our existing plan was expiring. In partnership with Deloitte and DeYoung Consulting, the Banyan Board of Directors, leadership, staff, parents, and community members developed the new 5 year plan that continues the journey we've been on to deepen our roots within the community and create enhancements to ensure youth and families receive relevant, future oriented programming.

The team undertook the most robust data collection process in Banyan's history. Insight and information from parents, neighbors, community council, staff and board informed the process. In the end, the voices from over 100 interviews and surveys were reflected in the vision for the next 5 years!

Our ongoing and focused approach will continue to develop reconciled people, committed learners, and leading citizens.

## *How is the strategic plan coming to life?*

### Build Out Additional Educational Capabilities

Throughout a programming year, Banyan youth are exposed to a variety of educational opportunities to expand upon classroom learning. In particular, educators utilize hands-on learning techniques that allow youth to explore while having fun at the same time. To deepen this work, Banyan seeks to develop partnerships with organizations that have expertise in

various programming areas to enhance Banyan's educational capabilities.

This fall, Banyan partnered with a local group seeking to remove barriers and provide accessible STEAM programming in underserved communities. Working with our K-2 youth weekly, they provide all types of learning opportunities utilizing their expertise. **Bringing additional curricula and partners to expose youth to a variety of opportunities ensures we are instilling a love of**

**lifelong learning at a young age that can be carried through to high school, postsecondary, and a meaningful career in the future.**



### Promote Diverse Postsecondary Options

In response to the ever evolving job market, our support of youth beyond high school is evolving. Although we have always worked to support youth to reach their aspiration, we are working to ensure they explore options that are "right" for them, as individuals, not in a prescribed way.

Manny, DeLaSalle class of 2015, had initially started his postsecondary



career in a four-year program with his sights set on an Automotive Engineering degree. He soon discovered that it wasn't the right

fit—he was more excited to work using his hands to fix cars. He navigated a transition to Dunwoody College where he enrolled in a Honda Professional Automotive Career Training program. He is now employed with Honda as a Journeyman Technician and loves his work. Someday he hopes to own a business fixing cars once he gains more experience and expertise.

**Supporting our youth to find the right fit as they seek out career opportunities is the priority.**



### Enhance community engagement to build lasting relationships

Banyan families reconnected at a summer picnic they organized alongside several staff members. Families lucked out with a perfect summer day that allowed them to relax and enjoy being with each other. Youth played volleyball and other

games while parents cooked and served up hamburgers, hot dogs, and other classic picnic cuisine like potato salad, fruit, and cookies.

**The leadership Banyan families demonstrated in organizing this picnic to build community is exactly the type of leadership we hope to embrace and grow over the next five years.** As we build on new community-driven leadership, our connections and roots will grow even deeper.

### Community

Through engagement, we will focus on building relationships and leveraging community assets to connect those who show commitment and interest with Banyan and with each other.

- Design comprehensive admissions process
- Develop and utilize consistent guidelines for serving families that move
- Enhance community engagement to build lasting relationships
- Identify older adult program opportunities

### Youth and Family

Provide preschool-to-career support for youth and families with the goal that participants are growing, active and resilient leaders in our community.

- Define approach and establish preschool
- Build out additional educational capabilities
- Expand high school network and program
- Promote diverse postsecondary options
- Enhance internship and career support
- Diversify and increase adult education options

### Organizational Infrastructure

Support staff by enhancing our human resources, organizational infrastructure and advancing our focus on diversity, equity and inclusion to best understand and serve our community for generations to come.

- Strengthen diverse representation and voice to honor neighborhood demographics
- Develop feedback opportunities and performance expectations
- Grow leadership skills and qualities that support organizational goals
- Create succession plan





## A look back FIVE YEARS LATER

On August 18, 2016, after a successful capital campaign and completed construction project, we brought out the giant scissors to cut the ribbon of our new home! It was a celebration of friends, families, and community all coming together in gratitude and anticipation of what was possible! We had done it and owned our space, with no mortgage!

Hard to believe that it was five years ago when we packed up the 6,000 square feet of space we leased on 26th and Bloomington Ave to move into our permanent home a few blocks away. Community members and staff packed, labeled, and moved Banyan Community into our permanent home (30,000 square feet). At the time, the space felt pretty big with much room to grow. Today, our space is filled with youth and families all year round – in response to community need. So much laughter, joy, curiosity, enrichment, learning, and new experiences are happening here every day.



In 2016, we outlined what was coming next as growth, depth, and expansion. We're proud to report we've made tremendous progress on each goal, a few highlights include:

- Brought permanence, Banyan is recognized as a community anchor, resulting in increased stability and connectedness in the neighborhood
- Welcomed many new families to our programs
- Graduated 32 youth from DeLaSalle High School who moved on to post-secondary opportunities!!
- Hosted too many events to count—for families, neighbors, and supporters
- Launched our Community, Leadership, Education, and Connection program for Banyan adults

We look forward to the next five years, guided by our new strategic plan. Thank you so much for being an integral part of our journey!

## Apples and Pumpkins come to Banyan

### Fall Gathering Reimagined as Harvest Festival

Although Banyan could not host our usual gathering at the apple orchard in 2020, we were able to bring the orchard to Banyan! Staff gathered to host a “drive-thru” event with families that included a photo booth, baking kits, treats for the kids, and plenty of pumpkins and apples! Families got to take home supplies to make their own caramel apples—a favorite annual treat. Both parents and kids came dressed in their best Halloween costumes.

We were grateful to connect and gather safely outside on a gorgeous day. It was wonderful to see families coming together to celebrate fall with Banyan!



*“I love Banyan because Banyan is our family”*

**—Thalia, 3rd grader**

# PARTNERS TO PATHWAYS

Banyan Community is blessed with many donors who support our mission year after year. Partners to Pathways celebrates this **tradition of consistent giving**. Every gift makes a difference and allows us to build pathways for the development of youth, the strengthening of families, and the creation of community. Thank you for your tremendous loyalty to and support of Banyan Community.



## 10+ CONSECUTIVE YEARS

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# THANK YOU

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for all gifts  
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support of  
our mission!**

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# OUR FINANCIALS

## True program costs: Core mission support

Banyan is interested in sharing the true costs of our programs and the vital importance of strong organizational infrastructure. Each of our programs is built around, is supported by, and shares responsibility for Core Mission Support. This visual is one way to accurately present the proportionate costs of our programs in a format that aligns with the strategic and financial reality of how nonprofit organizations really work.

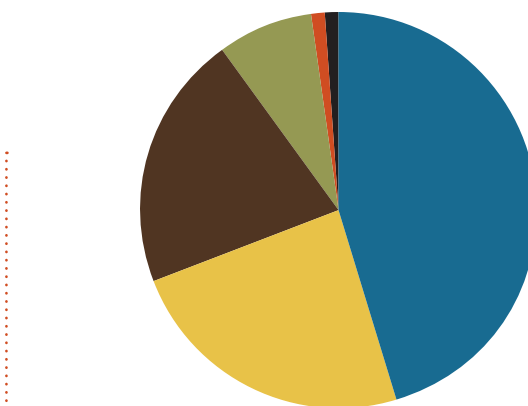
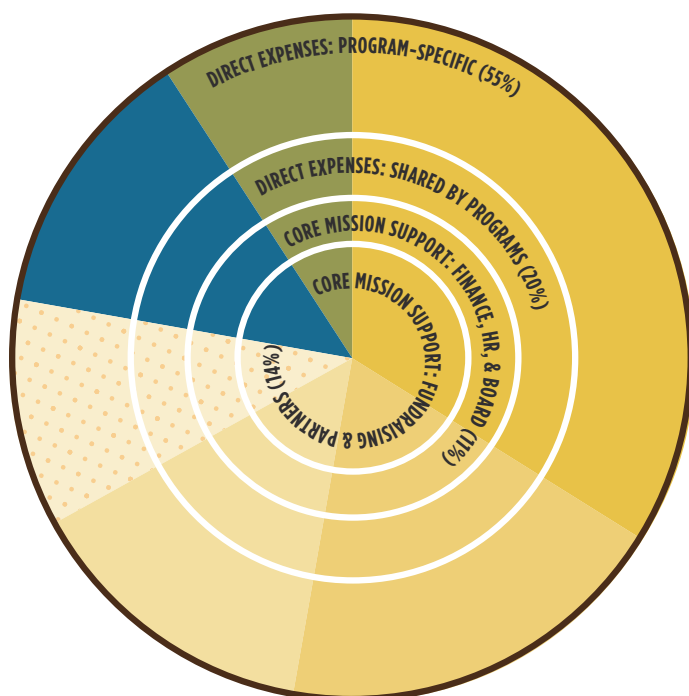
All of the resources we need to accomplish our programs are the True Program Costs, which include four types of expenses:

1. Direct Expenses: Program-Specific, \$1,170,052
2. Direct Expenses: Shared by Programs, \$424,141
3. Core Mission Support: Finance, HR, & Board, \$229,056
4. Core Mission Support: Fundraising & Partners, \$305,315

### TOTAL 2020 GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSE: \$2,128,564

The growth and effectiveness of our mission work depends on having a solid core at the center of our organization.

Investing in our infrastructure is smart, prudent, and absolutely necessary.



### 2020 FUNDING SOURCES \$1,927,577

■ 46%	Foundations/Corporations	\$882,282
■ 24%	Individuals	\$471,022
■ 21%	Government	\$407,180*
■ 8%	Special Event Revenue	\$157,746
■ 1%	Congregations	\$9,075
■ <1%	Interest/Investment	\$272

\*Includes Paycheck Protection Loan Forgiveness of \$218,100

### 2020 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION\*\*

Total Assets	\$12,481,110
Total Liabilities	\$6,741,027
Total Net Assets	\$5,740,083

### Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$12,481,110

\*\* Banyan Community and Banyan Investment Corporation (BIC) exist to develop youth, strengthen families, and create community. BIC is acting as the leverage lender for our federal New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) structured finance arrangement. Annually, we conduct an audit on both organizations making it most appropriate to show a consolidated (Banyan and BIC) presentation of financial position.

- Family
- Community
- Youth Programs:
  - Elementary
  - Middle School
  - High School/College
  - Scholarships



Revenue and expenses reported are as shown in audited financial statements. For audit purposes revenues are shown in the year a grant is received even though the funds may be spent over several years. Because of this reporting method revenues could exceed expenses in some years and expenses could exceed revenues in a subsequent year when the funds are spent. The financial information shown for 2020 represents a year in which expenses exceed income.



# BANYAN COMMUNITY STAFF

## Aidee Arocho

Lead Program Associate

## Maricruz Arocho

Lead Family Advocate

## Allison Burns

Elementary Program Manager

## Keri Clifton

Development Officer

## Lucia Davila Alvarez

Family Advocate

## Jordan Holt

PE Specialist

## Ariana Hoyer

Elementary Educator  
Grades 3-5

## Luis Huerta

Program Assistant

## Diamond Jackson

Secondary Educator

## Katie Kirk

Secondary Program Manager

## Marilyn Kruey

Elementary Educator  
Grades K-2

## Adriana Lopez

Program Assistant

## Amy Luciano Santamaria

Community Engagement Specialist

## Kayne Lussier

Middle School Educator

## Joel McReynolds

Family & Community Engagement Program Manager

## Laurel Molin

College & Career Counselor

## Linda Nunez

Director of Operations

## Dan Olthoff

Finance Director

## Jasmine Ortiz

Program Assistant

## Victor Panora

Program Associate

## Judith Quiterio Zavaleta

Program Associate

## Lourdes Quiterio Zavaleta

Operations Associate

## Jacqueline Quizhpi Niola

Program Assistant

## Imelda Riera

Receptionist

## Sue Riesgraf

Development & Marketing Director

## Marianne Sadée

Development Associate

## Annie Van Avery

Interim Executive Director

## Dan Watson

Director of Youth, Family & Community Programs



*"Bless you and all the staff at Banyan for all the help you've given my family."*

**—Banyan parent**

*"Banyan gives us a feeling of normal even during these hard times."* **—Community Council member**

*"There is so much to do for college, it's crazy. I would never have known what to do on my own."* **—Banyan senior**



## Supporting Holistic Community Development Through a Virtual Broadcast



During the 2020 Annual Dinner live broadcast, we celebrated the successes of the past and our vision for the future. Christiane Cordero from WCCO 4 News and Banyan board alumni and friend, Vernon Rowland co-hosted the program. Through the stories and reflections shared by youth,

families, and community members, we experienced how a neighborhood faced with many challenges is finding a new norm: one where youth are graduating from high school, community members believe they can make the neighborhood a better place to live, and families are invested in a hopeful vision of the future.

Having grown up in the neighborhood, Vernon shared his Banyan story as a volunteer tutor and board member. In the early Banyan days, he understood the power and impact of this then very small neighborhood development



organization. He shared, "Banyan transforms lives. It has interrupted the cycle of poverty for hundreds of youth and families in our neighborhood. I know personally how important this is."

**As we all continued to cope with the changes in everyday life caused by the ongoing global pandemic, Banyan's steadfast and holistic community development approach has never been more relevant or necessary.**





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vendor Finance  
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Assistant Vice President,  
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## **Carol Frey Wolfe**

Director  
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## *Letter from Board Chair & Vice-Chair*

We want to start this letter by thanking the outstanding staff at Banyan. Again, 2021 brought even more new challenges, but thanks to the incredible work of the staff, we were able to provide wonderful in-person programming and leadership to our youth, families, and community. In addition to the staff, we also want to thank the community, our donors, and the Board of Directors; with your support, Banyan was able to continue to offer a safe place to learn and connect at a time it was most needed.



strengthening families, and creating community.

Change is not always easy, but it is necessary to ensure we remain aligned with the needs of the families

we serve and changing landscape of our community. We view the changes as the next step in the Banyan life cycle, and we want to build on the wonderful organization the Essenburgs started 23 years ago.

In 2022, we will lean on you for your continued support as we transition to our next Executive Director, move forward with our strategic plan, and find new and exciting ways to support this wonderful community.

We're very proud to be part of this wonderful organization.

God Bless,

Jeff Wertz

Judy Pennington



2529 13th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55404  
[www.banyancommunity.org](http://www.banyancommunity.org) 612.722.8512

*Banyan is a fig tree with a large center trunk. Long branches send out roots which grow downward and form new trunks that create a grove of trees. This is our vision—a vibrant and connected urban neighborhood with roots and transformed lives!*