



JOHN O. WILSON  
HAMILTON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, INC.

## **John O. Wilson Hamilton Neighborhood Center, Inc.**

### **2021 Annual Report**

**The John O. Wilson Hamilton Neighborhood Center, Inc.**, is a 501 (c) (3) social service organization, dedicated to strengthening individuals, supporting families, and building thriving communities. Also known as “the Wilson Center,” it is more than just a child care center, it’s a resource - a place where community residents can receive services and support. When we moved into our new location in 1976, we began to embrace the vision and we never looked back. Currently, the Wilson Center offers a wide-array of support programs and services such as emergency financial assistance programs, a food pantry, computer lab, health screenings/clinics and more.

With a more than 50-year history, the Wilson Center has served thousands of individuals and families in need. The Wilson Center is led by a volunteer board of directors, made up of a diverse group of working and retired professionals and community leaders. The Wilson Center is staffed with four full-time professionals and is supported by a host of volunteers.

#### **Center Information:**

**Hours of Operation:** Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

**Address:** 169 Wilfred Avenue, Hamilton, NJ 08610

**Office Phone:** (609) 393-6480 **Office Fax:** (609) 393-1230

**Website:** [www.jowilsoncenter.org](http://www.jowilsoncenter.org)

#### **Center Personnel:**

Laurethea L. Kidd, MPA, Executive Director

Peter Damiri, Director of Programs and Services

Martha I. Glenn, Administrative Assistant

Patricia Cerreto, Case Manager

#### **Board of Directors:**

Marlon Webb, President

James Walters, Vice President

Nina D. Melker, Treasurer

Dr. Joseph E. Woods, Member

Louis C. Samuels, Member

Mittie White, Member

Lia Campbell, Member

Nancy Phillips, Hamilton Township Liaison

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This report summarizes the programs, events, activities, and financial information, that have taken place at the John O. Wilson Hamilton Neighborhood Center, Inc. also known as “the Wilson Center” during 2021. The Wilson Center continues to play a pivotal role in the Hamilton community, changing the lives of those in need, every day.

## **Programs and Services**

### **Food Pantry**

Supporting individuals and families struggling with the ever-increasing rise in food insecurity, the Wilson Center, Inc.’s food pantry provided ongoing nourishment to residents within Hamilton Township and additional Mercer County communities. Stocked with canned fruits and vegetables, soup, pasta, rice, and other essential items, the food pantry is available to eligible residents weekly, due to COVID-19. The food pantry is accessed by appointment every Thursday, between the hours of 9:30 am to 4 pm.

In addition to the Food Pantry, our efforts in fighting food insecurities expanded to quarterly food drives which were available free of charge and without restriction for area residents. Depending on the time of year and selection/availability of items, various hunger-relief programs will feature boxes of fresh produce, Thanksgiving turkeys with all the trimmings, Christmas gift baskets, and other food options to help enhance nutritional health and overall wellness. Also, through our partnership with the Mercer County Department of Senior Services, area Hamilton seniors visit the Wilson Center to receive a free, nutritious lunch Monday through Friday as part of the county’s Nutrition Project for the Elderly. Currently, due to the ongoing pandemic, the nutrition program has suspended meal preparation at each location and implemented a daily “grab-and-go” process of food distribution.

#### **802 Individuals Served:**

- Food Pantry (123)
- Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway (229)
- Three Produce Giveaways (360)
- Christmas Food Giveaway (90)

Distribution days and times for the food pantry are: **Thursdays from 9:30 am – 4 pm, by appointment**. Food is provided to individuals who contact us in emergent situations, and for individuals referred to us from other social services agencies.

The Southern Regional Distribution Center, in Vineland, NJ is our primary food source, in addition to, goods and monetary donations were received from local schools, churches, civic organizations, community stakeholders and residents. Below, find some of our sponsors:

Hamilton Township, Business Administration and the Mayor’s Office

Hamilton Township Council

Mercer Street Friends

Shine and Inspire, Inc.

Women Who Move Mercer, Inc. – via ReMax Tri County Realtors

Bahai of Community of Hamilton  
Eastern Stars, Aaron Chapter #8,  
Hamilton High School West Varsity Football  
Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo  
Assemblyman Daniel Benson  
Saint Phillips Baptist Church  
Hamilton Area YMCA  
Miss Barbara's School House  
The Bank of Princeton

### **Case Management and Family Support**

With families continuing to experience personal and financial loss due to the ongoing pandemic, the Wilson Center saw first-hand the rise in food insecurity and many other economic hardships in our community. Driven to support the needy families in our community, the Wilson Center rose to the challenge to meet some of the critical needs through support programs and giveaways. These "well-received" initiatives included our annual school backpack giveaway, Christmas gift giveaway, winter coat/hat/gloves campaign, and our summer camp program in partnership with the Hamilton Area YMCA.

#### **173 Individuals Served:**

- Christmas Gift and Winter Coat Drives (113)
- School Backpack Giveaway (50)
- Summer Camp at the YMCA (10)

### **Combating Homelessness**

With the goal of keeping individuals and families from facing eviction and loss of heat, power or water, the Wilson Center Inc.'s Homelessness Prevention Program provided back rent and utility assistance to local residents who met program eligibility criteria. This critically needed emergency relief service offered a one-time supplemental payment toward rent, electricity, water, or heat to help mitigate the devastating effects of facing homelessness and/or loss of utility.

#### **81 Individuals Avoided Homelessness or Utility Interruption:**

- Emergency Rent Assistance Payments (41)
- Emergency Utility Assistance Payments (40)

### **Improving Community Health and Wellness**

With a focus on educating the general community, the Wilson Center, Inc. launched a series of free, in-person classes and virtual presentations to help residents better understand and improve their physical, mental, emotional, financial, and spiritual health and wellbeing. Titled,

“Wellness @Wilson,” these presentations covered various wellness topics including how to better manage stress and anxiety, the benefits of yoga and tai chi, heart disease and diabetes education and more.

Also, for more than 20 years, the Wilson Center, Inc. has partnered with the Hamilton Township Division of Health to provide health education, health checks/screenings, pneumonia, and the flu immunizations to Hamilton seniors. During 2021, the Wilson Center, Inc. partnered with the Hamilton Township Division of Health to provide **three** vaccinations for COVID-19 and **one** immunization clinic for the flu, to help keep our community safe, healthy and protected.

**232 Individuals Served:**

- In-person and virtual wellness programs (32)
- Community health vaccinations (200)

**Caring for Our Seniors**

Recognizing the importance of maintaining social interaction and engagement with our senior population and keeping them updated on important resources to support their health and wellbeing, the Wilson Center, Inc. organized and hosted a variety of fun, interactive programs which included workshops, arts and crafts, and other activities which helped to reinforce cognitive capability.

Launched in the fall of 2021, the Wilson Center, Inc. introduced a “Lunch & Learn” series aimed at providing seniors with helpful information, opportunities for social interaction over lunch. Every senior in attendance received a “free hot lunch” from one of Hamilton’s own...restaurants or eatery. Alongside the meat, potatoes and of course veggies, this lunchtime “meet-up” offered cooking demonstrations, the introduction to new hobbies and interests, and other related topics of interest.

**134 Individuals Served:**

- Lunch and Learns (80)
- Recreational Bus Trip (54)

**Community Partnerships**

Serving as the neighborhood “hub” for social and civic groups, the Wilson Center, Inc. partnered with many community enrichment programs and activities including the federally funded Gateway Community Action Partnership - Early Head Start/Head Start, Mercer County Senior Nutrition Program, Narcotics Anonymous and more.

**Partner Programs:**

**# of Individuals Served Annually:**

Gateway Community Action Partnership – Early Head Start/Head Start	85
Narcotics Anonymous	50
Golden Agers of Hamilton	40

Family Transition Support Services (FTSS)	30
Mercer County Senior Nutrition Program	23
Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. (Professional Educator's Sorority)	25

**Copy, Fax & Notary Services**

Residents received assistance with all of their copying and faxing needs, free of charge. Notary services was also available for free.

**20 Individuals Served**

**Computer Room/Computer Access**

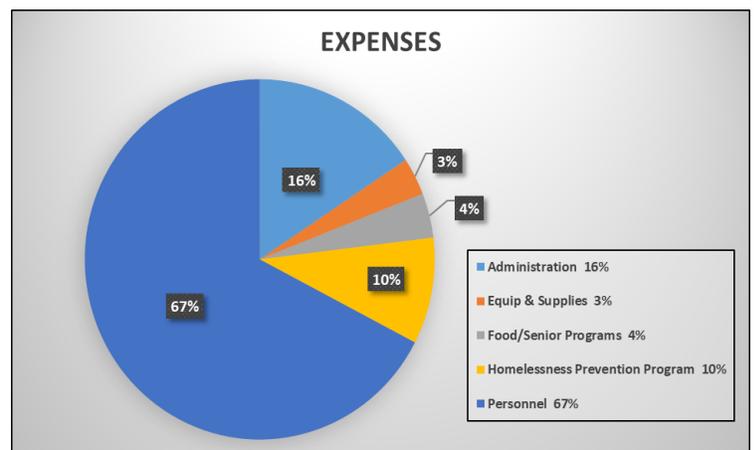
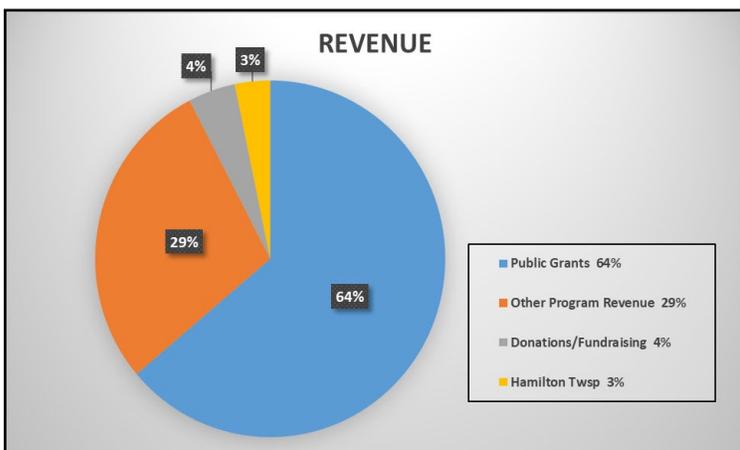
The Wilson Center computer lab, which is available to adults and students, is furnished with eight newly installed computers with access to a desktop printer. Residents accessed the computer lab by appointment only during the pandemic, to allow for the cleaning, disinfecting and safety for all that needed to use the lab. Appointments were made during the year for the following:

- job searches
- resume writing and updating
- applications
- contact to the NJ Department of Labor
- personal email
- projects, reports and meeting minutes

**25 Individuals Served**

**Financial Information:**

Annual Budget: \$307,655



## Showcase of Our Programs, Services and Activities

**Food Pantry**



**COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics**



**Lunch and Learns**



**Workshops**



**Produce Box Giveaways**



**Summer Camp**



**Senior Bus Trips**



**School Backpack Drive**



**Wellness@ Wilson**



### Craft Events



### Thanksgiving Baskets



### Christmas Gift Giveaway

