



I AM AMANI

2023 NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERS'

AMANI REPORT

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN AMANI SHARE 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NEIGHBORHOOD
PRIORITY AREA:

Neighborhood Safety

WHAT AMANI WILL DO: Increase neighbors' willingness to support self, other neighbors, and community to achieve community peace.

INDICATOR OF SUCCESS: • Residents report willingness to actively support the achievement of community peace. • Residents report engagement in actively supporting the achievement of community peace. • Residents report engagement in addressing public safety efforts.



AARP Wisconsin and partners installed a traffic calming circle at the intersection of N. 25th and W. Locust in October 2023. The team effort was a result of feedback from the neighborhood about excessive car speeds and pedestrian safety issues.

■ **CURBING RECKLESS DRIVING**

AARP Installs Traffic Circle, Reduces Speeds at Intersection



AARP Wisconsin, in partnership with Amani United, Dominican Center, MilWALKee and City of Milwaukee Dept. of Public Works, installed a traffic calming circle at the intersection of N. 26th and W. Locust in October, 2023. This team effort was a result of feedback from the neighborhood about excessive car speeds and pedestrian safety issues. We'll be looking forward to updates to the traffic calming circle in 2024!

"It really stemmed from a pedestrian getting hit about a year ago while we were doing a walking tour. He got hit right in front of us. It was awful and the Amani residents said we're sick of reckless driving and speeding and we need to do something about it," said Amber Miller, Associate State Director of Community Outreach for AARP Wisconsin.

The neighborhood organizations and Amani residents conducted speed studies both before and after the traffic circle installation and speeds at the intersection have been reduced by 31%.



PRIORITY AREA: **NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY**



■ **ACTIVE & SAFE STREETS IN AMANI**

Dominican Center Engages Amani in Neighborhood Safety

Dominican Center works with residents and partners to identify safety concerns and issues in the community.

For example, reckless driving has emerged as a concern and threat to public safety and DC has partnered with others to improve safety for motorists and pedestrians in the neighborhood. In 2023, DC facilitated Amani Active Street programming along 26th Street, the pilot block of the award-winning Block-by-

Block Program, and installed additional signage to promote pedestrian safety.

DC also partnered with AARP Wisconsin and other organizations to install a temporary traffic calming circle to improve safety on 25th & Locust where an elderly man was struck and injured last year. The temporary structure has worked to decrease speeds by 31%. While the posted limit is 25 MPH, vehicles had gone as fast as 62 miles per hour with 15-20% of



vehicles going 10+ mph above the speed limit. After the circle, the max speed decreased to 36 mph with less than 1% driving 10+mph above the speed limit. However, the temporary structure has been damaged, which underscores the need for a permanent solution.

PRIORITY AREA: **NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY**

DC's organizer also engaged and leveraged community-based and city-wide resources throughout 2023. On an ongoing basis, the community organizer served as a liaison between the city and community, sharing resources and online tools about how residents can report different problems to the city, like illegal dumping and reckless driving. Reporting issues is vital to securing resources to improve neighborhood quality of life and well-being.

In 2023, DC's organizer also facilitated two aldermanic walks/clean-ups with city officials and helped to coordinate and organize resources and issue-based community meetings.

Dominican Center participated in eight Pop-Up Resource Days with area organizations meeting residents in the areas of Amani that have the most foot traffic to bring resources, free lunch and fun. These events also included a clean up of the area beforehand. We also encouraged neighborhood participation through two Rock the Block events and our annual Earth Day Clean Up, which brought in more than 50 volunteers.

DC facilitated beautification efforts and events, including the annual plant sale Bloom



& Groom. Plants grown at the Center's Hydroponics plat were sold and donated to residents.

In 2023, Dominican Center supported Amani United, the neighborhood's association, in their monthly Ambassador's Council safety meetings and attended Amani Crime & Safety meetings. In 2023, Dominican Center held 33 events and 31 meetings, serving more than 1,667 Amani residents.

DC, Amani United, the Amani Youth Council and more partners held the Active Streets Safe Trick-or-Treat and Harvest Fest in October. The inaugural event was a success, hundreds of Amani residents of all ages came out for safe bike riding



and free candy, food, activities hosted by the AYC, and resources from neighborhood organizations.

Lastly, DC supports neighborhood safety through our support of our partners' initiatives. DC participated in the Amani Youth Council's Annual March Against Violence this summer. Supervisor Priscilla Coggs-Jones was a speaker and an open mic for anyone affected by gun violence in Milwaukee was held.

■ **EXPLORING SAFETY THROUGH ART**

Safe & Sound Encourage Amani Youth to Use their Voices

Safe & Sound collaborated with the Dominican Center in helping to facilitate the Parental Advisory and #Enough Plays Intergenerational Talk Back Session. This talk back session was centered around the youth of the Amani neighborhood, birthed out of the desire to allow for their opinions on the subject matter explored in the plays to be discussed and dissected in a manner that focuses on the overall safety and empowerment of the youth. The discussion was illuminating; there was an intergenerational aspect that occurred organically, which in turn begot plans for more intergenerational conversations in the future. There were youth in attendance who provided eye-opening feedback and simultaneously adults and elders who also chimed in on the conversation.

The Parental Advisory play covered censorship, from questioning and interrogating the necessity of it, to its effects on young people. The #Enough play was a series of monologues focused on gun violence, touching on everything from the impact of school shootings to hate crime shootings and youth dying at the hands of reckless shootings.

The conversations birthed from these plays at the Talk Back were steeped in profundity and introspection, with the young people in attendance looking forward, offering solutions and remedies to problems with censorship and gun violence, with plans on how to curb shootings and how to have their voices amplified and empowered in all spaces.

Safe & Sound staff offered a plethora of questions to stir up conversation, stoke meaningful debates and to probe for solutions to the many complex problems concerning the youth in the Amani neighborhood. The youth were quick to warm up and jump into the discussion, offering insightful tidbits of wisdom and working through the questions asked to ensure that every aspect of each question was thoroughly interrogated.

Out of this discussion, the topic of desensitization of young people and shootings, with examples such as one youth mentioning walking to school, hearing shooting and barely flinching at the sound of nearby gunshots. There were conversations had about censorship, including if and how current music can in-



fluence young people, for better or for worse. The youth in attendance were unafraid to speak up on how they felt the issues affect them, exploring everything from local stories of gun violence and how they'd been personally affected to how in enacting censorship, you allow for creativity and, furthermore, creative expression to be stifled.

The adults in attendance posed questions and scenarios that called for critical thinking and analysis within the young people, but they surely were up to task, expressing their thoughts and ideologies on the complex subject matter in ways that were revelatory and profound.

The intergenerational talkback experience went so well received that another such event is already in the works for the upcoming year.

Safe & Sound also walked in the March to End Gun Violence over the summer in the Amani neighborhood.

PRIORITY AREA: **NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY**



■ **NEIGHBORS SERVING EACH OTHER**

Amani United Creating Safe Spaces and Residential Blocks

Amani United worked with neighbors and partner organizations to lead initiatives to increase safety in the community and create spaces where everyone in Amani can be safe.

The revitalization and transformation of the former Cawker Park brought a new safe space for residents in Amani. The effort was led by Amani United, Milwaukee Parks, the Dominican Center and Safe & Sound, Inc.

The park was transformed with a mural designed by artist Tia Richardson and help from Amani residents, as well as a basketball court makeover by

Richardson and Activate Co. The park also was re-named Al Jarreau Park, after a Milwaukee-born musician with a vibrant and colorful legacy.

"Parks are places where kids can dream and develop their talents, skills, and abilities. Jarreau's legacy serves as a model to aspire to, and naming a park for him would introduce him to future generations of Milwaukee youth," says the nomination from Amani United.

In addition Amani United's Ambassadors' Council, or Neighborhood Safety Committee was active in Amani in



2023, holding safety meetings each month after the Amani United 1st Saturday Meeting. Residents comprise the committee, 29 Amani residents serve as Ambassadors, some serving multiple blocks near their home. They are a direct resource to their neighbors, providing information on meetings, events, and available resources.

NEIGHBORHOOD
PRIORITY AREA:

Education & Family Well-Being

WHAT AMANI WILL DO: Increase family well-being and life-long learning.

INDICATOR OF SUCCESS: • Amani Residents serve on decision making teams in neighborhood organizations. • Organizations serving Amani connect with residents that need the services provided. • Amani Residents have access to all services needed to have positive family well-being.



[Feeding American Eastern Wisconsin] events opened the doors to families and neighborhood residents in need of additional food resources. These events allowed residents to select the foods that best suit their family's needs and preferences.

■ **FEEDING AMANI FAMILIES**

Feeding America Serves 375 Families at Mobile Pantries

For the fourth consecutive summer, Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin partnered with the Dominican Center to organize three mobile food pantries in the heart of the Amani neighborhood. Notably, this year's events witnessed a 40% increase in attendance compared to the summer distributions of 2022. A specially designed beverage-style truck, featuring sliding doors on the sides, efficiently delivered an array of culturally appropriate and nutritious food items, including chicken, beef, eggs, seasonings, collard greens, clementines, and more. Dedicated teams of volunteers, drawn from both the Amani neighborhood and external organizations, worked collaboratively to pack these essential items into boxes for the benefit of residents. Across the three events, 375 families were served, with many making the walk to the Dominican Center from nearby housing.

On average, each resident received over 26 pounds of food per visit, equivalent to approximately 22 meals. Beyond providing crucial nutritional support and fun activities like art, games, a bounce house, and a surprise appearance from Ban-



go from the Milwaukee bucks, the summer mobile pantries also served as a community fair and resource center. Vendors from many different organizations including Children's Wisconsin, Milwaukee Diaper Mission, and Safe and Sound came to join the fun and extend outreach services to residents, connecting them to a wide variety of community resources.

In addition to the summer mobile pantries, Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, in col-

laboration with Auer Avenue School, supported monthly events throughout the school year. Supported by funding from Northwestern Mutual, these events opened the school doors to families and neighborhood residents in need of additional food resources. Featuring a guest-choice style mobile pantry, these events allowed residents to select the foods that best suit their family's needs and preferences. Lean meats and fresh produce emerged as the most popular items, with both parents and children expressing gratitude for the availability of fresh and healthy food options. In the 2023 calendar year, Auer Avenue's mobile pantry connected residents to over 6,000 meals' worth of nutritious foods.

PRIORITY AREA: **EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING**

■ **CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES, STUDENTS**

Safe & Sound Promotes Safety through Education, Well-Being

In the Amani neighborhood, Safe & Sound's team worked with neighborhood schools, enacting many initiatives throughout them. Safe & Sound works with Auer Avenue Community School in many initiatives such as helping to facilitate Data Chats.

The purpose of the Data Chats is centered on improving student standardized test scores (specifically targeting reading) and students' overall reading, writing and reading comprehension skills. Safe & Sound is working with the students to explain to them how they are falling behind in their test scores, but not significantly, therefore there is room to grow and reach their targeted score areas.

Safe & Sound is working with students in third, fourth and fifth grades to identify their academic strengths and weaknesses in an effort to figure out solutions as to how to improve their reading test scores. Snacks are provided to the students as a means of welcoming them into the space and allowing for them to be focused on the work at hand. The students are provided a variety of books aimed at their grade levels to push them to read often but also to work on



reading comprehension skills. The students are encouraged to ask questions when they don't understand something.

Safe & Sound worked with the students on setting plausible goals for academic improvement as well as sorted through multiple pathways to achieving their reading based goals. The students were asked about their interests related to reading and encouraged to read things that interest them. Safe & Sound was diligent in allowing for the students an understanding of comprehension and how to better take in what is being read, and encouraged students to speak out and ask



for help if they are struggling to read and comprehend.

Various studies show correlations to youth standardized test scores and violent behavior trends later in life. Therefore, Safe & Sound staff helping the students to improve their test scores decreases the likelihood that they will be perpetrators or victims of violence in their adult lives, pushing forward the mission of Safe & Sound, that is safe and empowered neighborhoods.

PRIORITY AREA: **EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING**

Safe & Sound collaborated with partners and participated in the Dominican Center's Thanksgiving Grocery Giveaway in Amani. The giveaway included two full bags of groceries to prepare for a Thanksgiving meal as well as freshly grown vegetables (greens grown in the Dominican Center's hydroponics lab) and a grocery store gift card.

There were various organizations in attendance including the Milwaukee Police Department - District 5 officers, the Silver Ladies of AARP, staff from the Milwaukee Rep, a representative from the city of Milwaukee Waterworks program. There were various community members who pitched in to help with a plethora of tasks from transporting various food items and bags throughout the stations set up, manning said stations, directing traffic of community members who were there to pick up the grocery bags and gift cards and various duties as assigned.

Safe & Sound pitched in to help in whatever capacity was necessary to ensure the success of the event, to ensure that each member of the Amani neighborhood who showed up was able to receive the grocery bags and gift cards. There were lots of folks from the Amani community who showed up



and expressed their gratitude for the supplies they received.

The grocery giveaway was a festive and fun event, filled with servicing the community with joy and cheer in the spirit of the holidays with a commitment to ensuring the safety of the neighborhood. In providing food items and gift cards, this helps alleviate the probability that someone might go without during the holiday season or even find alternate routes to ensure that they have what they need.

This event aligns with Safe & Sound's mission, to unite residents, youth, law enforcement and community resources to build safe and empowered neighborhoods.



Safe & Sound also worked in Amani with the Dominican Center to table at their Trunk-or-Treat Block Party event as well as conducting various Trunk-or-Treat events throughout Amani schools, churches and businesses.

We have also been helping to curate the Community Garden at N. 19th Street in Amani.

Safe & Sound partnered with COA Goldin Center to help facilitate their Santa's Workshop holiday Gift Giveaway in Amani.

■ **BRINGING ART TO AMANI**

The Milwaukee Rep Reaches Amani Resident of All Ages

The Milwaukee Rep organized the entertainment and music for the Safe Summer Kickoff and the Beyond the Bookbag events. We brought a DJ artist to the community during the two events - in partnership with COA Youth and Family Center. During Safe Summer Kickoff, we had a guest performer a student from our Next Narrative Monologue Competition who performed her monologue for the community. Our cast of the world premiere production of PARENTAL ADVISORY performed a selection from the production at Beyond the Bookbag.

We continued to bring residents to productions at Milwaukee Rep through continuing our Neighborhood Nights where Amani residents have dinner together prior to the show. During this past year they saw our world premiere of PARENTAL ADVISORY, took part in a post-show panel, and snapped a photo with one of our cast members. In spring of 2023, they also attended August Wilson's SEVEN GUITARS.

Amani residents are also active participants in our Dinner Dialogue series where a group of community members come



together to discuss themes discussed in our shows while sharing a meal with each other! Residents have joined us at Sam's Jazz Cafe, Cafe Lulu Bar and Grill, Maharaja, and more.

The Rep also conducted free workshops at COA on Saturdays throughout the year with our Drama FUNdamental Saturday Youth Program series.

NOVA High School continues to be a school partner of ours



through our School Subscription program, where NOVA students experience four Milwaukee Rep productions each season and do a pre and post-show workshop with

actors from the production. Additionally, the students participate in a Rep Immersion Day where in addition to the student matinee they experience a series of demonstrations led by our production staff on how we bring a script to life onstage, sharing the multitude of career options available in theater.

PRIORITY AREA: **EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING**

■ **HYDROPONICS EDUCATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

FullCircle26, Inc. Growing Food for Sustainability in Amani

FullCircle26, Inc. brought our Hydroponics Program with America Works beginner lab to the Dominican Center Hydroponic Training Lab allowing students to work in a real-world environment while growing food for sustainability.

We also added additional hydroponics units to the Dominican Center Lab, introducing all three types of hydroponics systems for growing: NFT, DFT and Aeroponics systems. Plans are underway to work with the Dominican Center lab and expand even more in 2024, including adding aquaponics, microgreens, and additional systems.

FullCircle26, Inc. participated in Amani's Thanksgiving food distribution through Dominican Center. The lab grew over 200 heads of cabbage and 200 bunches of colored greens for the Amani Neighborhood. More than 100 families enjoyed these greens from the hydroponics lab.

We also partnered with Milwaukee Ground Works to add two easily accessible raised garden beds to give Amani and the Dominican Center access to soil gardens.



■ **IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Clean Wisconsin Celebrates Green Infrastructure in Amani

For the past ten years, Clean Wisconsin has been working closely with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and community partners in Milwaukee's 30th Street Corridor to manage water where it falls.

The largest growing source of water pollution in the U.S. is stormwater runoff: rainwater that washes across landscapes often collecting and carrying trash, bacteria, heavy metals, pesticides, animal waste and other pollutants to our local waterways. Green infrastructure practices reduce stormwater runoff by mimicking nature and capturing rainwater so it can be reused, temporarily retained, or allowed to infiltrate into the soil. These practices provide other environmental, social and economic benefits, including better air quality and cooling of the urban heat island effect thanks to more trees and vegetation, increased pollinator habitat, community engagement and job opportunities installing and maintaining green infrastructure.

In September, Clean Wisconsin's green infrastructure manager and his team planted four fruit trees at the Dominican



Center with help from Mr. Wes and other Dominican Center staff. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the Dominican Center and will continue to collaborate in 2024 with the center. Not only will these trees help to manage stormwater, but they will also help to improve air quality and enhance green space, while providing a source of food in the future.

In October 2023, Clean Wisconsin celebrated its ten-year milestone of working with



residents in Milwaukee's 30th Street Corridor on improving their climate resiliency through stormwater management. We thank the Dominican Center for Women for graciously allowing us to host this free, family-friendly event at their site. Clean Wisconsin is excited to continue to partner with the Dominican Center and engage with Amani residents in 2024.

PRIORITY AREA: **EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING**

■ **LEGAL SERVICE CLOSE TO HOME**

Legal Aid Society Empowers Residents About Legal Rights

The Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee remained actively engaged in the Amani Neighborhood through 2023 on matters impacting education and family well-being.

The Legal Aid Society continued to provide education and resources on our website and Facebook pages at www.legalaidsociety.com (Our website provides an online form to determine eligibility for legal services, as does our phone intake hotline at (414) 727-5300.) Ultimately in 2023, Legal Aid

provided representation to 302 residents in the 53206 zip code on a host of legal matters involving estate planning, consumer and business issues, and pardon application completion and submission, among others. Such advocacy educates and empowers residents about their legal rights, strengthening the neighborhood and community in the process.

In 2023, Legal Aid Attorney Anthony Garcia began "office hours" at the Dominican Center on the 2nd and 4th Tues-



days of the month from 9:30 to noon. Amani residents can now conveniently access legal services close to home.

The Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee and Amani residents continue to work together with the Dominican Center to advance education and family well-being for this incredible neighborhood.

■ **SUPPORTING FAMILIES, YOUTH, PARKS**

Amani United Ensures Neighbors' Needs Holistically Met

Amani United worked with neighbors and partners to ensure the needs of Amani families were being holistically met.

We participated in five Mobile Food Pantries serving 575 families. We also helped educate and train youth in hydroponics, an effort to curb food insecurity in the future. We also ensured the well-being of residents through beautification efforts. We participated in the revitalization of the former Cawker Park,

including adding a mural and re-designing the basketball courts. In addition, we participated in eight cleanups and Amani's Annual Bloom & Groom plant sale.

In 2023, Amani United also supported the Friends of Moody Park and the Amani Youth Council. We volunteered with the Amani Youth Council during their meetings and their events including Fun Fridays, Sound Baths, Hoops Tournament, Entrepreneur Showcase, and their



annual Youth March Against Violence. We further served the community by partnering with AYC for their winter apparel drive and participating in the Friends of Moody Park blanket drive, distributing items during the holiday season.

PRIORITY AREA: EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING



MEETING FAMILIES' NEEDS

DC Provides Critical Resources & Community Enrichment

The Dominican Center served Amani families' critical needs as a starting point for well-being in the neighborhood.

Three Mobile Food Pantries, in partnership with Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin served 375 people over three summer events. We distributed 8,500 pounds of food. These events were also attended by organizations like Milwaukee Diaper Mission, that gave away diapers and period supplies to Amani families.

DC also organized a Thanksgiving grocery giveaway in partnership with AARP Wisconsin and Amani United. Other neighborhood organizations and many Amani residents participated in every point in the giveaway, including shopping, packing and giving away groceries, and growing, harvesting and packaging greens and cabbage in our Hydroponics Lab to distribute to residents. We also held a Christmas ham giveaway sponsored by Northwestern Mutual, who donated



100 complete Christmas meal boxes. Our holiday grocery giveaways served nearly 200 Amani families.

DC also served seniors, delivering 364 food boxes weekly to homebound seniors in the Amani neighborhood.

PRIORITY AREA: **EDUCATION & FAMILY WELL-BEING**

We also distributed more than 50 warming kits and soup kits to Amani families during our Winter giveaway. We participated in the Amani Youth Council's Winter Apparel Drive and Moody Park's blanket drive.

DC knows that a family's well-being is directly affected by their environment. In 2023, DC took steps to improve the neighborhood environment with gardening. DC's Hydroponics Lab, which is capable of growing 40,000 organic plants a year, was busy producing produce for community giveaways, for the annual Bloom & Groom plant sale, and for DC's annual fundraising event, Green & Growing. The lab also serves as a classroom for our partner FullCircle26, Inc., as well as Amani residents and youth.

Sixteen Amani youth participated in the inaugural Hydroponics class at DC, hosted by Michelle Lyle, and Amani resident and entrepreneur. The classes help promote and provide immediate access to fresh produce in food insecure zones. Students learned agricultural education, black agricultural history, the components and functionality of hydroponics and botany.

In addition, DC continued to improve their environmental



infrastructure in their outdoor space with decorative Amani planters and raised garden beds installed by Ground Works Milwaukee, and fruit trees installed by Clean Wisconsin. When mature, the two service berry and two apple trees will provide shade and fruit to residents and staff at the Center. Clean Wisconsin also installed a rain barrel at DC.

DC continued referrals to our partner MATC for GED and HSED classes. We also participated in the City's Earn & Learn program, hosting Amani youth and teaching them about community engagement and activism during their summer employment.

DC provided additional education and enrichment through a



partnership with the Milwaukee Rep. Residents were able to see four theatre shows, as well as participate in the Rep's Dinner Dialogue series and Intergenerational dialogue sessions following the plays Parental Advisory and Enough.

Lastly, DC was awarded the Data Dream from partner Data You Can Use. The project allowed the organizations to work together to create a Logic Model and collect relevant data that will influence the work we do to enhance well-being in Amani.

NEIGHBORHOOD
PRIORITY AREA:

Housing & Economic Development

WHAT AMANI WILL DO: Improve housing conditions through the model block strategy in the Amani Neighborhood.

INDICATOR OF SUCCESS: • Improve conditions on the Model Block and Beta Block.
• Increased reported resident participation in Amani Beautification Efforts by 100%.



Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee is helping to build capacity of the lead neighborhood organization, residents, and those working to support and advance housing and economic development goals in the Amani Neighborhood.

PRIORITY AREA: HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN AMANI

LAS Serves 302 from Amani & 53206, Advances Goals

The Legal Aid Society remained actively engaged in the Amani neighborhood in 2023. Ultimately, Legal Aid staff provided representation to 302 residents in the 53206 zip code on matters involving housing security, benefits, estate planning, and consumer matters, as well as pardon applications, among others.

In 2023, Legal Aid began a collaboration with the Milwaukee Community Land Trust or MCLT to provide home ownership options for Amani (and other residents around the city) in year 2023. Legal Aid staff provided pre-closing counseling and accompanied homebuyers to closings to answer questions and ensured an informed transaction for this innovative path to home ownership. Legal Aid continued its role as a partner in the Amani Model and Beta Block project in 2023, providing legal representation on primarily housing issues central to a healthy and thriving neighborhood. In the summer of 2023, Legal Aid also participated in the Beta Block Summer Block Party and cleanup.

Legal Aid's partnership with the



von Briesen & Roper law firm continued into 2023, providing cutting edge seminars for entrepreneurs to successfully launch new businesses and existing business owners to continue them. That partnership advanced Amani residents' economic goals in 2023 for businesses that included

a non-profit theatre group, a cleaning business, a charcuterie board business, an entertainment business, and a youth support services business.

In these ways, Legal Aid is helping to build capacity of the lead neighborhood organization, residents, and those working to support and advance housing and economic development goals in the Amani Neighborhood.

PRIORITY AREA: HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



■ HOME IS THE HEART OF AMANI

DC & AU Revitalize Homes and Invest in Amani Residents

The Amani Neighborhood Revitalization Plan and the work of the Dominican Center and Amani United informed 2023 community organizing and improvement activities.

For example, DC's organizer recruited and helped train resident leaders and Amani youth to survey housing conditions using Reclaiming Our Neighborhood (RON) surveys. Residents canvassed 3,584 parcels surveyed on all 130 blocks in the Amani neighborhood to

complete surveys about the exterior conditions of Amani housing stock. For broader neighborhood awareness, the survey team also informed residents, both renters and owners, about the survey, Amani United, and Amani revitalization efforts. Survey results will help drive housing improvement efforts in the neighborhood, including Amani's Block by Block program.

To complete these surveys, DC enlisted Amani residents



to do the job. This program, along with other resident-led efforts, allowed DC to distribute \$13,000 in stipends to Amani residents for volunteer work. This allows residents to be a part of their own neighborhood revitalization and get paid to do the work.

PRIORITY AREA: HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In addition, DC had some flexible funding and was able to assist 4 residents in improving their quality of life with major housing improvements/repairs. Two residents were able to get full roof replacements, one resident was able to get full siding torn off and replaced, and another resident was able to get a front and back porch repaired.

Amani residents continue to be served by our Block by Block program, including Della Veasy, who lives on one of the Beta Blocks. Through this initiative, Ms. Veasy's home was brought up to code and her windows were replaced, her roof was fixed and her porch, basement and concrete walkways were repaired.

"I have enjoyed my life here. I love my home because I have good memories here. I worked for years and years and paid off my house after my husband passed," said Ms. Veasy. "At age 74 I can still do some things, but I don't like to ask my kids for help. Sometimes you think you don't need anything, but you don't realize you do until you ask for it. It's wonderful what DC is doing for the community, and I thank God for helping me find them."

In celebration of the Block by



Block initiative and a kick-off on the Beta Blocks in the project, DC and AU held a number of clean-ups and Rock the Block events.

In 2023, DC began to hold monthly housing meetings with partner Safe & Sound. A range of topics from renters' rights to home lending options

are discussed both virtually and in-person at Dominican Center.

DC also partnered with Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee to offer a business law seminar. The partner also offers office hours at Dominican Center and helps Amani residents with legal advice on a number of housing issues.

2023 NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERS' AMANI REPORT



CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS SERVING IN THE AMANI NEIGHBORHOOD:

