

Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Report

Washington C.A.S.H. (Community Alliance for Self-Help)

It has been an exciting year at Washington C.A.S.H., and we are eager to share updates about our programs and services. Thanks to your support, we were able to serve 648 aspiring entrepreneurs in FY2013. In recent months, we expanded our headquarters, hired new staff to provide advanced services for our clients, launched services in Snohomish County, and embarked in a strategic planning process. Whew! Through it all, we are 100% dedicated to promoting self-sufficiency through small business ownership among people with low incomes.

Strategic Plan Update

At the end of FY 2013, Washington C.A.S.H. embarked on a strategic planning process to ensure that our mission, vision, and values align with our programs and services.

As part of our goal to use every possible avenue to incubate client businesses, we made the commitment to hire our clients to provide the food and entertainment for all of our alumni, fundraising, and volunteer events. This change has strengthened the Washington C.A.S.H. community, as well as increased business for our clients. We've worked with many Washington C.A.S.H. graduates including Chicarepa Venezuelan Food, Streetzeria Pizza, Simply Soulful catering, and Trevani Truffles.

Onsite Business Incubator

An important innovation emerged during the early stages of our comprehensive strategic planning process – the understanding that the 8-week Business Development Training (BDT) that has long been the cornerstone of our programming is vital but introductory, and that the clients who are most successful are those who access a breadth of advanced services (such as loans and other financial products, advanced classroom training, one-on-one coaching, etc.) after completing the BDT. Many of our goals for the next three years focus on helping clients access those advanced tools they need to make their businesses self-sufficient. Last fall, we were fortunate to receive a three-year, \$728,750 grant from the U.S. Administration for Children and Families' Community Economic Development program that aligns perfectly with this vision. The goal of the project is to "accelerate" micro-businesses owned by very low-income individuals in order to create lucrative, full-time self-employment. These funds allowed us to hire a Business Accelerator Manager who provides high-touch intake and referral to help clients navigate the wide array of advanced services available to them at Washington C.A.S.H. This model allows us to use our resources more efficiently by making sure that clients get the advanced services they need in order to move their businesses forward. After basic training, clients access a range of services including:

- **Individual Coaching:** Heading into the year, it was our goal to provide additional one-on-one technical assistance for clients to help them address their most pressing business challenges on an individual basis. To accomplish this, we hired three new Business Specialists: a Marketing Coach, Bookkeeping Coach, and Latino Coach. Along with the rest of our staff, these coaches provided 1,200 hours of one-on-one coaching for 437 entrepreneurs this year.
- **Advanced Skill-Building:** Another goal this year was to supplement our successful basic training program with more in-depth skill-building on advanced topics. In early 2013, we launched a new 16-week Marketing series



Illegh Reynolds of Animate Objects Physical Theatre greets guests at our Experience Washington C.A.S.H. event held on April 26. Photo courtesy of Team Photogenic.

that is divided into three core parts: Marketing Planning, Marketing Collateral, and Social Media. Staff have also begun to develop similar series on Sales and Food-Business Management.

- **Financial Services:** In the last year, 54 individuals built savings for a small business through our Individual Development Account program, we enrolled seven new microloan clients into our peer-lending process, and 14 others enrolled in our AssetPlus loan program to restore their credit. Clients use loan funds to invest in marketing materials, inventory, work vehicles, and equipment.
- **Access to Markets at the Ventures Retail Store:** Client success at Ventures, our retail incubator located in Seattle's historic Pike Place Market, continues to grow. Ventures sells items created by our clients, and in turn, our clients receive a commission on every item they sell. Ventures experienced tremendous revenue growth in FY13—a 102% increase over last year—giving staff plenty of opportunities to coach vendors on maintaining strong inventory, pricing, product display, and customer service.

Strong Core Services

Our eight-week Business Development Training remains at the center of our work, and many clients find the support they need to get started with their businesses during the course or upon graduation. In total, 490 individuals participated in our business development trainings in the past year. We conducted 21 trainings in all, including eight trainings in King County, eight trainings in Spanish, and eight workshops for our participants enrolled in our East African program.



Graduates of our first ever product-focused BDT, held at the Pike Place Market

Your Support Makes a Difference

Overall, 99 entrepreneurs launched their businesses in the last year with support from Washington CASH, and an additional 279 grew their businesses by obtaining a business license, generating new sales, or improving their business plan. Business growth leads to measurable changes in clients' lives; on average, C.A.S.H. clients experience a 34% increase in household income with two years of receiving services.

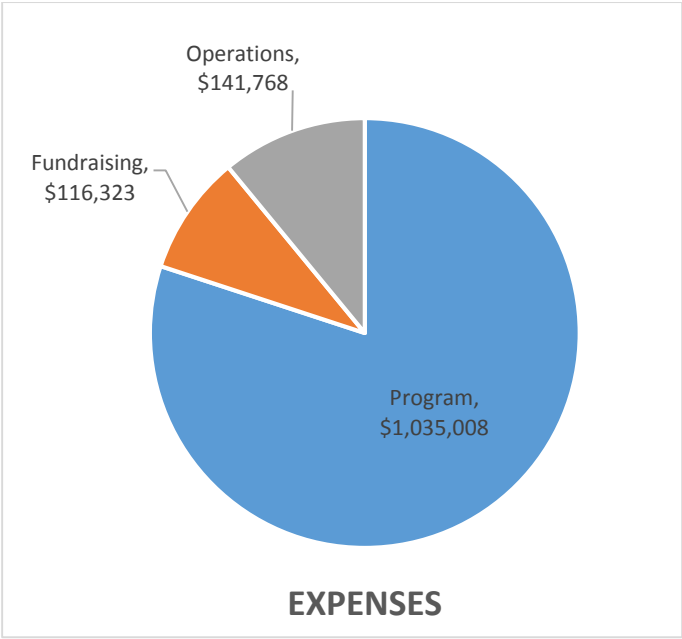
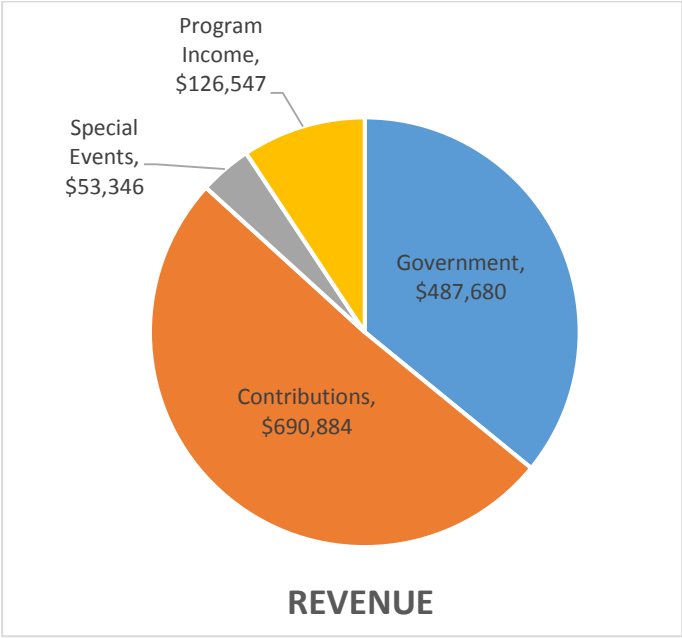
On behalf of the clients, staff, and board at Washington C.A.S.H., I extend heartfelt thanks for your generosity over the past year. Your support helps us change people's lives through small business ownership. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Gylan Green, Executive Director

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