



TAKE CHARGE AMERICA®
NONPROFIT FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Annual Report

Fiscal 2019

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Mission Statement

Take Charge America provides financial education and counseling services to improve the lives of individuals and families.

Vision Statement

Take Charge America will be an essential lifelong resource for those seeking education, guidance, options and solutions for improving their financial health.

Code of Ethics

Ethical, accurate performance is crucial to our success as a nonprofit organization. We value the trust our stakeholders have placed in us, and we adhere to a code of ethics in order to maintain it.

Our core values include:

- Commitment to quality service and education
- Accountability to the public
- Commitment beyond the law
- Respect for pluralism and diversity
- Transparency, integrity and honesty
- Accuracy, timeliness and follow through
- Responsible stewardship of resources
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals
- Commitment to excellence, always

Board of Directors

Ralph Gilbertsen, Chairman
Managing Director, CBRE, Inc.
Global Corporate Services

Deborah Haynes, Ph.D
Professor, Montana
State University

Andrea White
Master Certified Coach,
Self-Employed

Jonathan Fox, Ph.D
Professor, Department of Human
Development & Family Studies,
Iowa State University

Brenda Blunt
Eide Bailly LLP, Partner

Alice Sweeney
Industry Consultant,
Self-Employed

Kerwin Brown
Managing Principal, K-Vaughn
Consulting, LLC

Jody Davis
Private Mortgage Banker,
BMO Harris Bank

Sherry Celaya
Chief Financial Officer,
Phoenix Union High School
District

Senior Leadership Team

David Richardson, CPA
CEO/CFO

Carol Lown
Vice President/Corporate Secretary/
Compliance Officer

Ted Engel
Vice President/Director of Counseling Services

Christie Barfoot
Director of Education & Training

Richard McDaniel
Director of Security

Janna Thorne
Executive Assistant

Message from the CEO

The economic recovery following the Great Recession is now the longest on record, yet personal debt levels continue to climb and many fellow Americans are struggling with their finances. Fiscal 2019 provided Take Charge America with the opportunity to serve a growing number of consumers in need of credit and student loan counseling, putting them on a path towards financial stability.

Our efforts to increase our consumer reach while maintaining exceptional counseling services were recognized and rewarded by two large national credit card companies that independently chose to refer their clients experiencing financial hardships to TCA. Both companies cited our leadership in the use of technology to enhance the client experience as a primary factor in their selection criteria.

Over the past twelve months, we made strides in the following areas:

- Select and integrate a new IT vendor partner to accelerate the development of our IT capabilities and execute our vision.
- Progress toward achieving a PCI-compliant environment. PCI (Payment Card Industry) is a standard established by the credit card industry for organizations to safely and securely accept, store, process and transmit information to prevent fraud and data breaches of cardholder data.
- Successfully relaunch the My TCA client portal, which includes an intuitive dashboard, self-help payment features, debt payoff strategies and budgeting tips, as well as the ability to update personal information and communication preferences.
- Improve our organic website rankings, grow social engagement and increase the quality of paid search – proof that we are reaching more people with our educational efforts.

From a financial perspective, I am pleased to report that we made solid progress in shrinking our operating deficit.

As a new decade beckons, the Board of Directors and TCA leadership collaborated on a new FY 2020 – 2022 strategic framework to position ourselves for further success. Our goals include:

- Achieve a ranking as the top performing nonprofit financial education and services provider in the nation.
- Embrace technological resources as the primary way to deliver an exceptional user experience.
- Become the preferred back office partner to peer nonprofit financial services and education providers that rely upon TCA's industry-leading model and platform to deliver value in their markets.

We are excited about our future and remain very grateful to our existing clients and the partners who have entrusted us to help people seeking financial independence.

Sincerely,



David Richardson
CEO, Take Charge America

Company Overview

Take Charge America is a nonprofit financial counseling organization that has helped nearly 2 million people nationwide transform their financial outlooks with one-on-one guidance to pay off debts, regain financial independence and save for the future. An industry pioneer and leader, we are proud to drive many of the innovations and services that have supported consumers in financial distress since 1987.

We offer counseling, resources and knowledge that generate a profound ripple effect, improving financial wellbeing at the individual, household and community levels – and ultimately leading to a positive and sustainable economic impact.

We have already helped our clients manage and repay more than \$6 billion in personal debts – and we have offered much-needed guidance to millions more through our public outreach and education efforts, preventing many debt challenges from developing in the first place.

Services include:



Financial Education



Bankruptcy Counseling



Credit Counseling



Student Loan Counseling



Debt Management



Housing Counseling

Credentials & Recognitions

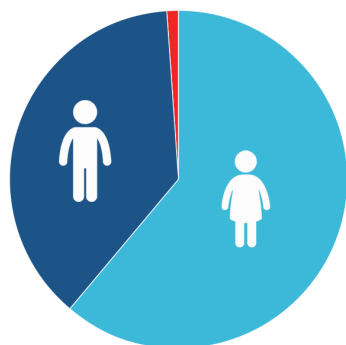
Take Charge America is committed to ethical business practices and providing the highest quality of service. We have earned an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau, and we have attained COA accreditation. COA is an independent organization, separate from the government, that ensures all of our programs and services are being delivered at the highest possible standards.

We are active members with the nation's industry associations, and counseling services are approved by federal and state agencies.



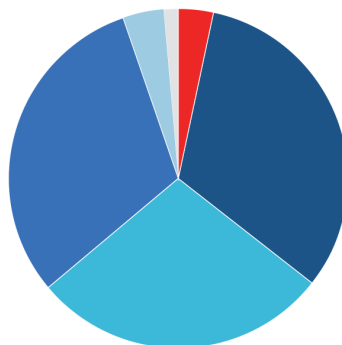
Client Demographics

Gender



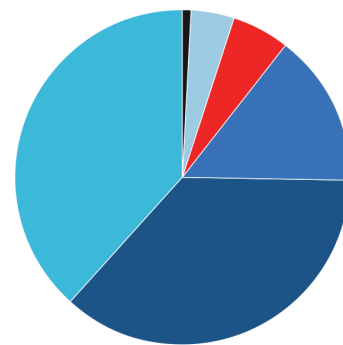
Female.....	62%
Male.....	38%
Not Provided.....	1%

Age



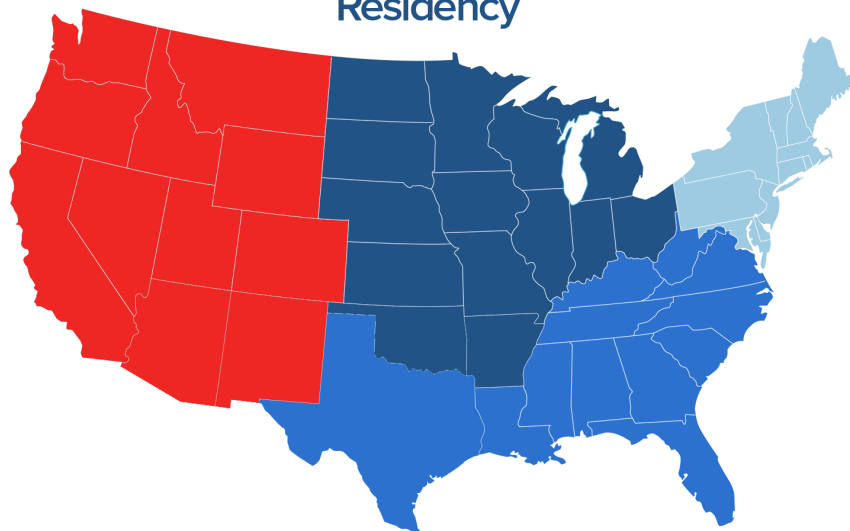
18-23.....	3%
24-38.....	32%
39-53.....	28%
54-75.....	31%
76 and older.....	4%
Declined to provide.....	1%

Marital Status



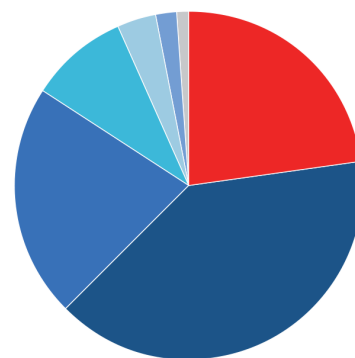
Married.....	36%
Single.....	38%
Divorced.....	15%
Widowed.....	5%
Separated.....	4%
Other.....	< 1%

Residency



South.....	35%
West.....	24%
Northeast.....	18%
Midwest.....	22%
Not Provided.....	< 1%

Income



< \$20,000.....	23%
\$20,001 - \$40,000.....	40%
\$40,001 - \$60,000.....	21%
\$60,001 - \$80,000.....	9%
\$80,001 - \$100,000.....	4%
\$100,001 - \$125,000.....	2%
> \$125,000.....	1%

Financial Education & Outreach

As a nonprofit organization, our mission is rooted in providing our clients and the general public with free financial education. We offer free tools, resources and guidance to consumers facing a variety of financial challenges, helping them develop effective financial habits, budget to meet living expenses and manage debt.

Partnerships

Educational Institutions

At school systems throughout Maricopa and Pima Counties, Take Charge America educates staff and students about timely money management issues, including repayment options and strategies to tackle student loan debt – one of the country's most pressing personal finance crises.

- Estrella School District
- Glendale Union High School District
- Life Development Institute
- Maricopa Community College District
- Mesa Public Schools
- Ombudsman Charter School
- Paradise Valley School District
- Rio Salado
- University of Arizona

Employers

Take Charge America helps many of Arizona's top employers educate their employees about overcoming debt challenges and creating a secure financial future.

- Adelante Healthcare
- Bagnall
- Best Western
- Chandler Regional Hospital
- Compass Career & Business Solutions
- Cox Communications
- CVS/Caremark
- Discount Tire
- Epcor Water
- First Choice
- Fort McDowell Casino
- Gate 6
- Gila River Health Care
- Honor Health
- Hospice of the Valley
- Liberty Tax
- Lovitt & Touché
- Macy's
- Mercy Gilbert Hospital
- National Temp Services
- NPL Construction
- Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Plexus Worldwide
- Quality Care Network
- RE Darling
- Sheraton Hotels
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- Univision
- USI Insurance
- Varep

Financial Institutions

Many financial institutions refer their employees and customers to Take Charge America for financial education, credit counseling and student loan counseling.

- American Airlines Credit Union
- Amerifirst
- Arizona Central Credit Union
- Arizona State Credit Union
- Bank of America
- Coldwell Banker
- Capital One
- Central Credit Union
- Chase Bank
- Citibank
- Citywide Home Loans
- CNN Mortgage
- Deer Valley Credit Union
- Executive Credit Union
- Hughes Federal Credit Union
- MariSol Federal Credit Union
- Pacific Service Credit Union
- Prescott Federal Credit Union
- Public Service Credit Union
- Tucson Federal Credit Union
- US Bank
- Wells Fargo
- Western Federal Credit Union

Government

As a HUD-approved agency, numerous government programs refer residents to Take Charge America for financial education, housing counseling and credit counseling. We are also listed as an educational resource in various government publications.

- City of Chandler
- City of Peoria
- City of Phoenix
- City of Phoenix Senior Centers
- City of Tucson
- Luke Air Force Base
- Maricopa County
- State of Arizona

Success Stories

“They are very, very helpful and understanding. They are dedicated to helping you learn how to manage your finances and get back on track. They have gone above and beyond for me, and anytime I have a question, they are always polite and attentive to help me get the answers I need. I’m so thankful for this program.”

Robert M., Paid-In-Full Client

Financial Education & Outreach

Social Services

Take Charge America partners with social service agencies to educate individuals, families and children facing a wide variety of financial challenges. Our outreach is customized to respond to the needs of various populations. The financial education we provide spans debt savings, budgeting, housing and life skills.

- Arizona Community Foundation
- Arizonans for Children
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Care First
- Catholic Charities
- Deer Valley Senior Center
- Fresh Start Women's Foundation
- Gilbert Public Library
- Hope Women's Center
- Jewish Family and Children's Services
- Maggie's Place
- Phoenix IDA
- Queen Creek Public Library
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Save the Family
- UMOM
- United Way of Pinal County
- Valley of the Sun United Way
- Westside Head Start
- White Tanks Public Library
- YWCA

Unions

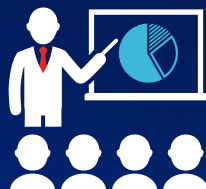
Take Charge America partners with unions to provide financial education, credit counseling and other services to their members.

- Smart Local Union 369
- United Food and Commercial Workers Local 99

By the Numbers



Workshops Reached **2,560** At-Risk Youth



Seminars Educated **1,561** Low-Income Adults & Seniors



24 Financial Literacy Topics Explored



324 Presentations Reached **4,121** Attendees

Community Outreach

Financial Literacy & Life Skills Educational Program

Our Financial Literacy & Life Skills Educational Program was developed for at-risk youth at Title 1 schools and children aging out of the foster care system. Through a series of fun and interactive sessions, we empower youth with the knowledge, tools and resources needed to gain confidence as they enter adulthood, obtain successful jobs and achieve financial security.

Topics include:

- Defining goals for work and education
- Résumé writing and job applications
- Mock job interviews
- Options for continued education
- Common financial challenges for young adults
- Credit reports, credit scores and credit cards
- Obtaining housing and transportation
- Understanding, creating and following a realistic budget

**KNOWLEDGE
IS POWER**

Each student completes pre- and post-course evaluations to track the knowledge gained throughout the session.

Success Stories

“The financial literacy information taught to our foster care youth is extremely useful. Our youth do not have much opportunity or experience with money matters. This area is very important as they transition into adulthood and learn to live independently. Overall, each student is able to take away something that is beneficial and that they could apply in the future.”

Gina Harper MSW, LBSW, JFCS Program Director

Financial Education & Outreach

Financial Empowerment & Credit Confidence Series

Designed for women who are seeking to establish independent lives, the Financial Empowerment & Credit Confidence Series provides a foundation for a secure financial future, including guidance on budgeting, money management and savings.

Topics include:

- Act Your Wage – Offers budgeting advice based on take-home income.
- Give Yourself Credit – Provides an overview of credit reports, credit scores and how credit affects daily life.
- Teaching Children About Money – Explains basic concepts of money, earning, spending and saving for kids.
- Stash It – Discusses the importance of saving with an emphasis on emergency savings.
- Spend Smart – Explores the concept of wants vs. needs and shares money-saving shopping tips.

Lend a Hand

The Lend a Hand program is a collaborative effort to help consumers struggling with the high cost of auto title loans, which can carry APRs up to 200%. Through a grant from the Phoenix IDA, Take Charge America and MariSol Federal Credit Union offer Maricopa County residents an alternative to title loans so they can break free of the high-cost lending cycle and regain financial independence.

- Borrowers can download an application at takechargeamerica.org/lendahand.
- Take Charge America offers applicants a free credit counseling session.
- If the application is approved, MariSol Federal Credit Union pays off the outstanding title loan, up to \$4,000, and offers a new low-interest loan with better repayment terms.
- Participants can also open a savings account at MariSol to jump-start an emergency savings plan.

Success Stories

“At UMOM, we now go into different aspects like budgeting and credit cards a little deeper with our teens post series, now that they have a base knowledge and understand why this is important to learn. The information is very much needed in our youth programs.”

Ashley Marengo, UMOM New Day Centers

Educational Content Strategy

One of Take Charge America's primary goals is to arm consumers nationwide with timely financial knowledge and resources in the format they want, when they want it, and how they want it delivered.



Blog

Our blog educates visitors about a wide range of issues impacting their financial outlooks in a fun and lighthearted manner. We aim to develop content that's relevant to people in numerous life phases, age groups and personal circumstances.



Newsletter

Produced in digital and printed formats, the Money Maximizer newsletter reaches more than 40,000 subscribers nationwide, including current and former clients. It's chock-full of timely tips and money management advice.



Media

We distribute monthly press releases covering a variety of personal financial topics that have resulted in media coverage around the country, aiding brand awareness and reaching all types of consumers with financial advice and support. We are also trusted and sought out as a financial source for top media outlets, including U.S. News & World Report, Fox Business and Yahoo! Finance.



Video

To cater to visual learners, we produce one-minute animated videos to illustrate personal finance challenges, the majority of which strategically coordinate with the most popular and well-read blogs on our website.



Social Media

We are active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube, disseminating financial tips and educating followers about the value of our counseling services. Collectively, we have nearly 10,000 followers who depend on our insights.

By the Numbers



30,000

Monthly Website Visitors



40,000

Newsletter Subscribers



137

Published News Articles



163 Million

Potential Media Reach

Services Overview

Credit Counseling

Credit counseling is a free service that helps consumers find solutions to financial challenges. It starts with a confidential, personal financial assessment to evaluate the consumer's current financial situation and determine an action plan for eliminating debts.

Counselors work with consumers to create a manageable budget, offer educational resources to help develop effective spending habits and suggest solutions to help consumers get back on the road to financial freedom.

Online

To start a free session, consumers can access the portal at cc.takechargeamerica.org. They can register for an account and save their progress, returning to complete the service when it's convenient, 24/7/365. The entire process typically takes 20 minutes or less. Upon completion, Take Charge America instantly provides an overview of debt repayment options, detailing how each works and which is ideal based on individual life circumstances.



We helped 3,699 clients create a budget.



We provided a comprehensive credit report review for 3,320 clients.



We recommended a personalized debt solution to 3,254 clients.

We continue to invest in and refine our online credit counseling platform. Our success aligns with today's tech-forward, on-demand culture, and we take great strides toward ensuring our solutions match today's expectations and technology habits.

Continuous Improvement: In the coming fiscal year, we are taking steps to increase the platform's mobile responsiveness, simplify the authentication process, deploy advanced analytics to enhance client service and improve engagement through education.

Phone

An early pioneer of nationwide credit counseling over the phone, thousands of consumers still rely on this hallmark service to create a budget and action plan, and evaluate options to pay off debt.

Debt Management

Following a comprehensive credit counseling session, consumers review options to eliminate debt based on their individual circumstances. When appropriate, counselors may recommend a debt management plan to help them overcome their financial challenges and learn how to live a debt-free life.

Debt management plans help clients get out of debt by lowering the total amount of interest paid and reducing the length of time it takes to repay credit card debt. Most clients on debt management plans are able to repay their debt in five years or less, freeing up funds to increase savings and invest in their future.

Benefits of a debt management plan typically include:

- Convenience of one lower monthly payment
- End of collection calls
- Reduced interest rates
- Waived late and over-limit fees
- Path to bring accounts current

While participating in a debt management plan, Take Charge America acts as the client's advocate, communicating with their creditors and disbursing payments to each in a timely manner. This keeps clients on track toward their goal and eliminates the challenges of juggling multiple payments and due dates.

Clients also receive ongoing education throughout their plan covering a wide variety of topics, such as budgeting, building effective spending habits, establishing emergency savings, reducing household expenses, preventing future debt, and much more.

There is a small monthly fee for the plan based on the state of residence.

By the Numbers



22,862

Financial Education
Conversations with DMP Clients



4,650

DMP Activations



2,249

Clients who Successfully
Completed DMPs



\$62,013,677

Total Debt Repaid to Creditors

Services Overview

My TCA

We successfully relaunched our client portal, My TCA, with new functionality to better meet the needs of our clients while easing the administration of debt management plans.

Key Features

- Intuitive dashboard
- Responsive design
- Enhanced security
- Self-service payment options
- Progress report
- Monthly statements
- Timely financial tips



Benefits to our Clients

Clients have 24/7 access to update account and payment information. The new, visual dashboard is easy to scan and responsive across all devices and browsers. Overall, it's a convenient and user-friendly experience.

Benefits to TCA

Since clients can manage their debt management plans online, we have been able to reduce call volume, increase client retention and improve operational efficiencies and reduce costs.

Next Steps

In fall 2019, we are enhancing our Education Center via the My TCA portal. Our clients will have access to timely educational content and resources pertinent to a variety of life phases. Additionally, we are integrating a Credit Overview to help our clients better understand their credit, including guidance on credit score influences, disputing credit report errors and general advice on managing credit.

Student Loan Guidance

Take Charge America provides assistance to borrowers who are struggling with federal student loans. We offer two paths for guidance, each focused on the individual's specific life circumstances and goals.

Student Loan Counseling

Student loan counseling provides clients with information about their available options to repay federal student loans and a recommendation for the best repayment option.



We helped 1,087 borrowers learn about the pros and cons of available repayment options.

Student Loan Payment Plan Assistance

Student loan payment plan assistance is a fee-based service that helps clients implement a repayment plan, which may include assistance completing enrollment forms and serving as an advocate on conference calls with loan servicers.



We assisted 252 clients with implementing a repayment plan.

Online Support – Coming Soon!

In Q4 2019, we are introducing online support for student loan borrowers. With this new feature, clients can complete an online questionnaire, 24/7, to instantly receive an action plan with loan details, repayment estimates and eligible options. Upgrades for phone support and servicer advocacy will remain available.

Success Stories

“For the second year in a row, the people at TCA have been absolutely fabulous! Lorraine first and this year, Laurel. I can’t thank them enough for all of the help they gave me. I am sure I could have figured it out myself but it is always good to have a knowledgeable person on the matter walk you through it.

I will use again next year for my recertification!”

Chris R., Student Loan Counseling Client

Services Overview

Bankruptcy Counseling

Bankruptcy counseling helps consumers navigate the complex bankruptcy process. Take Charge America is approved to issue certificates of completion for both pre- and post-filing bankruptcy counseling in compliance with the Bankruptcy Code. Upon completion of each course, consumers receive a certificate to present to the court. Both courses offer online and audio options and cost \$39 to enroll.

Housing Counseling

For many people, homeownership represents the American Dream – a dream that comes with both opportunities and challenges. Take Charge America’s housing counselors are familiar with the challenges of buying and owning a home throughout various life phases. By evaluating each client’s unique situation, we provide unbiased information about the programs available to assist them.

Homebuyer Education

Our online Homebuyer Education Workshop is designed for prospective homebuyers nationwide. The 8-hour Make Your Move course is available to take at any time and costs \$100. People who complete the course may qualify for thousands of dollars in down-payment assistance through various state programs. HUD-approved housing counselors are also available to answer questions, provide educational resources and determine homebuying options based on the consumer’s financial situation.



We provided homebuyer education to 408 potential homebuyers.

Reverse Mortgage Counseling

Reverse mortgage counseling is a requirement for consumers age 62 and older who are seeking a reverse mortgage loan. Our counselors will review the terms of the loan, including tax implications, and evaluate alternatives to a reverse mortgage. After the counseling session, consumers receive a certificate of completion that they can take to their lender to process the reverse mortgage. Reverse mortgage counseling costs \$150.



We helped 99 consumers learn about the pros and cons of a reverse mortgage during the past year.

Top Contributors

AAFES/MILITARY STAR	FIRST CITIZENS BANK	PENNSYLVANIA STATE EMPLOYEE CU
ACI	FIRST FINANCIAL BANK	PACIFIC MARINE CU
ALLTRAN FINANCIAL	FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	PENTAGON FCU
AMERICAN EXPRESS	FIRST NATIONAL CREDIT CARD	PIONEER MILITARY LOANS
APPLIED BANK	FIRST PREMIER BANK	PNC BANK
ATLANTIC CREDIT & FINANCE	FIRSTMARK SERVICES	PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES
AVANT CREDIT	FORTIVA PERSONAL LOANS	PROSPER
B B & T	GENESIS FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS	RAUSCH STURM ISRAEL ENERSON & HORNIK
BANK OF AMERICA	GOLDEN 1 CU	REGIONS BANK
BARCLAYS BANK	GREENSKY CREDIT	RESURGENT CAPITAL SERVICES LP
BECU	HELP CARD	SANTANDER BANK
BEST EGG	HSBC CREDIT CARD SERVICES	SCHOOLS FIRST FCU
BMW BANK	HUDSON VALLEY FCU	SEVENTH AVENUE
CAPITAL ONE BANK	HUNTINGTON NATIONAL BANK	SST INC
CAVALRY PORTFOLIO SERVICES	IC SYSTEM INC	STATE FARM BANK
CHASE BANK	INNOVATIVE DEBT RECOVERY INC	SUNTRUST BANK
CITIBANK	JEFFERSON CAPITAL SYSTEMS	SYNCHRONY BANK
COMENITY BANK	KEY BANK	SYNCHRONY BANK - ATLANTA
COMMERCE BANK	KOHL'S	TARGET NATIONAL BANK
COMMUNITY AMERICA CU	LENDING CLUB	TD BANKNORTH
COMPASS BANK	LOGIX FCU	TD RETAIL CARD SERVICES
CONTINENTAL FINANCE	MARCUS BY GOLDMAN SACHS	TOTAL CARD VISA
CREDIT CARD SERVICES	M & T BANK	UNION BANK
CREDIT FIRST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	MERRICK BANK	UPSTART NETWORK
CREDIT ONE BANK	MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY FCU	US BANK/ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES
CREDITSHOP	MIDLAND CREDIT MANAGEMENT	CONSUMER/BUSINESS
DELL FINANCIAL	MOUNTAIN AMERICA CU	USAA FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK
DISCOVER CARD	NATIONWIDE MUTUAL INSURANCE	VERIZON WIRELESS
DISCOVER PERSONAL LOANS	NAVY FCU	VIRGINIA CU
ENERBANK USA	NCB MANAGEMENT SERVICES	VYSTAR CU
ENHANCED RECOVERY CORP	NETCREDIT	WELLS FARGO BANK
FIFTH THIRD BANK	NORDSTROM	ZWICKER & ASSOCIATES PC
FINGERHUT DIRECT MARKETING	NORTHSTAR LOCATION SERVICES	

Financial Overview

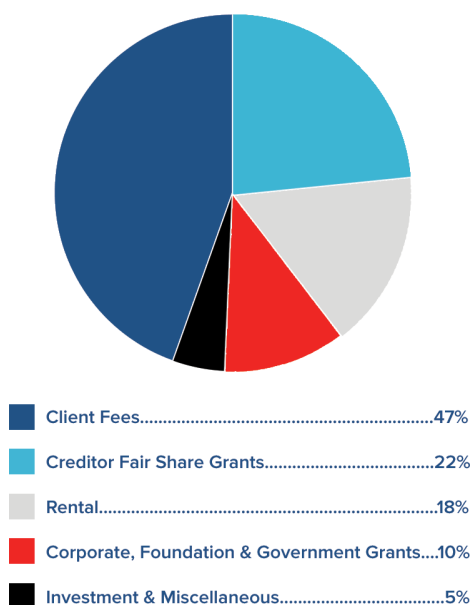
Funding and resources for Take Charge America's services are provided through corporations, foundations, client fees and grants. About 76% of the organization's income was allocated to education and counseling and 8% allocated to general and administration.

Revenue: \$9,961,067

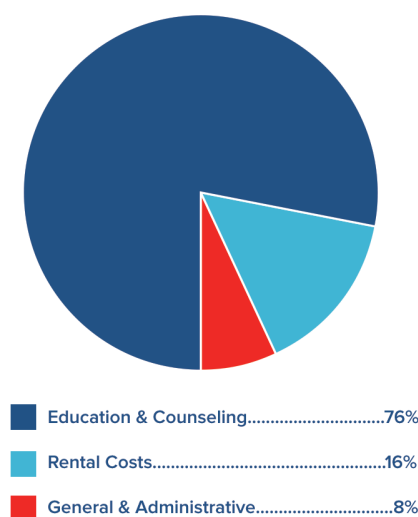
Expenditures: \$10,175,040

Decrease in net assets: \$213,973

Sources of Revenue



Expenditures



Get Involved

Take Charge America offers opportunities for individuals and organizations to support financial education efforts.

- Request a community presentation
- Sponsor a financial program
- Donate to financial education efforts

Contact:

Christie Barfoot, Director of Education & Training
623-266-6132
cbarfoot@takechargeamerica.org



TakeChargeAmerica.org



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