

WHO WE ARE

West Michigan Center for Arts + Technology (WMCAT) provides a culture of opportunity for people to make social and economic progress in their lives and community. We fulfill our mission through visual arts and tech engagement, workforce development, and social enterprise.



ARTS + TECH

Making space for teens to elevate their voices and build creative confidence through visual arts and technology engagement.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Building income security with families and young adults through post-secondary exploration, career training, and leadership development.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Advancing and supporting WMCAT's mission through commercial business models: Ambrose and Public Agency.

EXPLORE MORE AT [WMCAT.ORG](https://wmcats.org)



A YEAR OF BELONGING

If you are like me, you felt untethered at times this past year. So much of life – from public health to employment to education – was out of our control. And for me, there was no blueprint for transitioning into a leadership role during a pandemic that produced loss and uncertainty.

How do you adjust to an ever-changing situation where the “new normal” is indefinite uncertainty?

In this 2021 annual report, you'll see how – during a disruptive and challenging year – WMCAT leaned into being a space and a place for belonging and personal agency, whether we were virtual, in-person, or some combination of the two. Teens felt accepted for who they are at WMCAT and were encouraged to share their unique stories and perspectives. We celebrated the lived experiences of young adults as a means to postsecondary success. And adults were affirmed in their journeys to income security through new careers.

In this special annual report we also invite you to look ahead with us. How might we continue to center identity and personal agency? How might we respond to the next disruption?

Thank you for joining WMCAT this past year in providing a sense of belonging and control. Together we were that tether to identity, stability, and community during a time when predictability was needed most.

Jamon Alexander
PRESIDENT + CEO



Billie works on their project in the fashion design studio (left).

Billie, a current Teen Arts + Tech student (below).



ARTS + TECH

SHOWING 'WHO I AM' THROUGH ART

For Billie Beresford, the fashion design studio in WMCAT's Teen Arts + Tech Program isn't just a place to try new styles or experiment with color. It's a space for self-expression.

"I am very conscious of the way people perceive me," said Billie, a third-year WMCAT teen artist. "Once I started experimenting and finding my style it just made a big difference in my mental health and my willingness to show who I was."

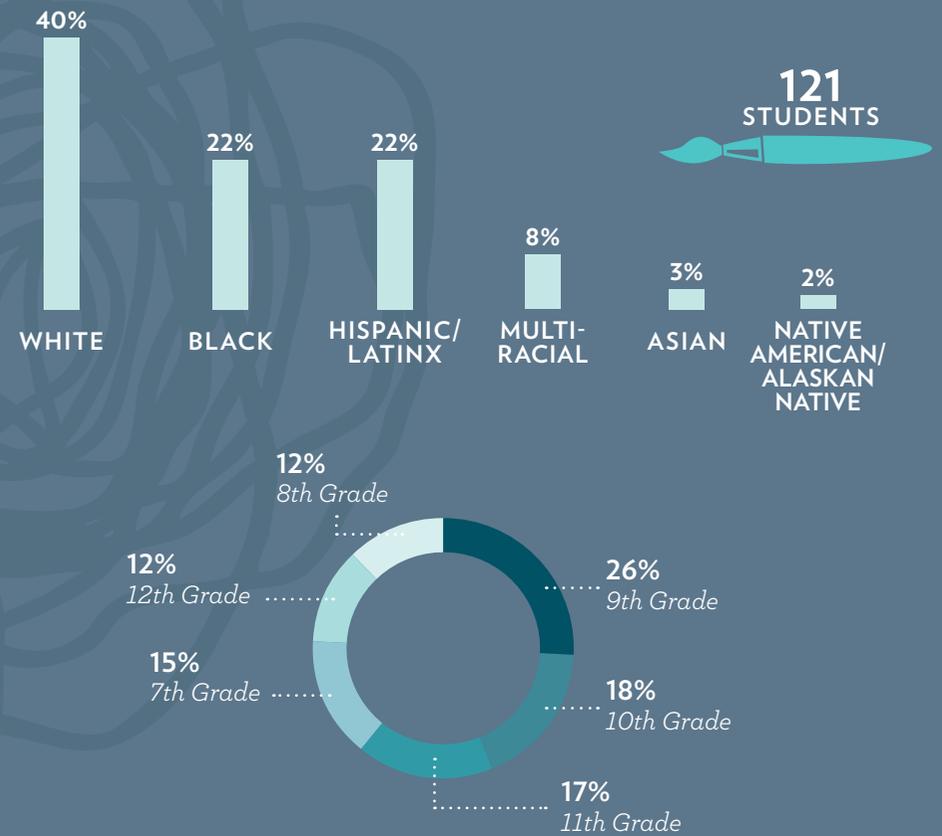
Beyond building skills in fabric dyeing, pattern making, and garment construction, WMCAT is a place for Billie to belong. "We always share and embrace our differences and celebrate them."

This includes their peers, but Teaching Artist John Cox plays a big part in that too. "From the moment I walked in, he made me feel welcome," shared Billie.

When you support WMCAT, you provide a space for teens like Billie to build creative confidence and elevate their voice.

Learn more at artstech.wmcat.org.

2020-2021 TEEN ARTS + TECH AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

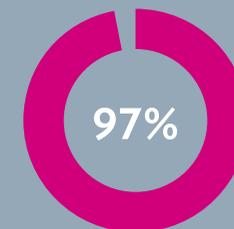


The Teen Arts + Tech Program is intended for students in grades 9-12. Due to COVID-19 adjustments in 2020-21, programming opened to grades 7-8 as well. Students from eight Grand Rapids Public high schools attended.

OUR STUDENTS SPEAK OUT



WMCAT accepts me for who I am



WMCAT staff care about me



WMCAT is a positive learning environment



I am more confident in my art/technology discipline

"My experience at WMCAT made me feel more confident in my art and gave me skills to express it."
- WMCAT Teen Artist



1 Maranda, pictured far left, poses with her Step Year cohort.
 2 Maranda, a graduate of the 2021 Step Year cohort.
 3 Maranda and WMCAT Director of Workforce Development Renida Clark.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FINDING HERSELF, FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

Ask Maranda Totten about her dreams for the future, and she'll pull out the vision board she created through Step Year at WMCAT. It now sits in the corner of her room – always nearby – covered with magazine clippings that represent her goals: get a driver's license, go to college, have a family, give back.

Maranda found WMCAT after a difficult year. She moved from Tennessee to Grand Rapids in early 2020, started at a new high school during her senior year, and made it to graduation in the midst of the pandemic. "I was trying to figure out what I want to do, where I want to work at ... it was really hard."

Step Year, WMCAT's curriculum-based college and career exploration program, supported Maranda in planning her next steps and became a place for her to belong and believe in herself. "I really didn't know myself, and I didn't think I could do it. [Director of Workforce Development] Renida helped me, like, 'you can do anything if you want to achieve it.'"

The goals Maranda created at WMCAT are guiding her now. "[Step Year] helped me figure out what I want to do." She's signed up for driver's training, pursuing a degree at Grand Rapids Community College, working as a nanny, and researching different career pathways for special education – her ultimate dream.

"In 2020, I felt like I was nothing and I didn't belong here. And this year I feel like I'm striving to the finish line. I'm slowly getting there but I'm getting there, I'm pushing. I'm just really loving life right now." If she needs a reminder of her destination, that vision board is right in the corner.

Thank you for supporting students like Maranda in taking their first steps to college and career.

Learn more at wmcats.org/stepyear.

2021 STEP YEAR COHORT



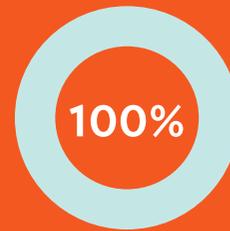
"Step Year is like stepping to a new you, a better you."
 – Maranda Totten



100% WMCAT accepts me for who I am



86% WMCAT helped me believe that I can set goals and achieve them



100% WMCAT helped me in creating an approachable support network to help me succeed



86% WMCAT helped me understand my career pathway options



Melody celebrates her accomplishments at graduation with her classmates (above).

Melody is ready to start a new career in medical coding (left).

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

‘YOU WERE RIGHT, I GOT THIS’

Melody Grimminck couldn't wait to share the good news with her WMCAT instructors: she got a job as a medical coder at Exalta Health.

“I never in my life dreamed I would be here today, in a career using my skills and knowledge to help the community and better my own life as well,” said Melody, a 2021 graduate of our Adult Career Training Program.

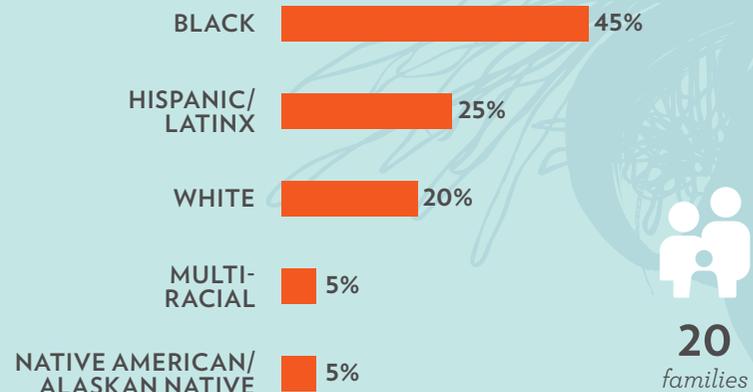
At WMCAT Melody found a support system and place to belong as she pushed through mental health challenges, built self-confidence, and worked to complete the program. “I wouldn't be able to have crossed the career finish line without WMCAT.”

Your support provides pathways to opportunity for adults pursuing economic security through new careers.

Learn more at work.wmcat.org.

“[WMCAT's] encouragement, when it all felt like too much to learn and I doubted myself, reminded me that I am smart and capable,” said Melody.

2020-2021 ADULT CAREER TRAINING PROGRAM



14

Kent County zip codes represented, the highest number from 49503



6-9

month courses in: medical billing, medical coding and pharmacy technician

LASTING IMPACT



2021 graduates placed in career within six months



2019 graduates employed two years post-graduation



Ambrose does live, on-site screen printing.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

ADVANCING MISSION, SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

How might we as a nonprofit advance our mission *and* strengthen organizational sustainability? For WMCAT, one answer is social enterprises: commercial ventures that align with our mission of equitable access to opportunity and provide revenue. In 2021 our two social enterprises, Ambrose and Public Agency, contributed to our earned revenue while also supporting community, belonging, and opportunity.

AMBROSE AT WMCAT

Ambrose at WMCAT is a commercial custom design and screen printing business that builds community and provides social and economic opportunity. With local and regional clients, Ambrose custom prints t-shirts, totes, and more with a focus on quality and creativity.

Learn more about how you can make t-shirts count at printambrose.wmcat.org.

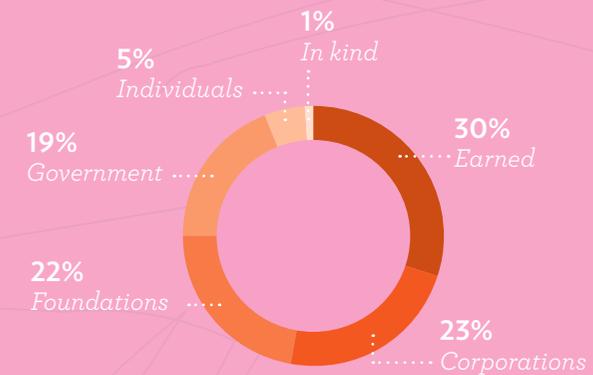
PUBLIC AGENCY AT WMCAT

Public Agency at WMCAT helps organizations foster a culture of equity, action, and innovation by leveraging human-centered design methods and mindsets. Their portfolio of work includes nonprofits, businesses, and public entities locally, statewide, and nationally; as well as a training program for aspiring community leaders.

Learn how your team can use design principles at publicagency.wmcat.org.

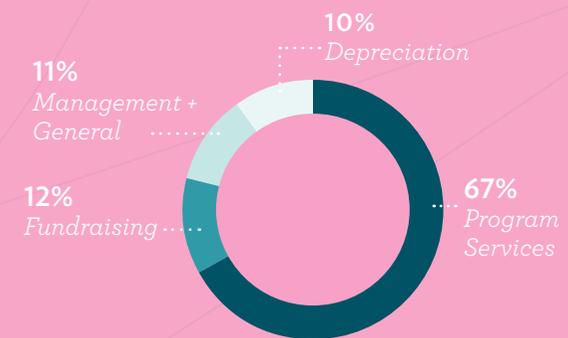
OUR FINANCIAL POSITION AND STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES (OPERATIONS, INCLUDING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES)

FISCAL YEAR 2021 REVENUE:
\$2,874,220*



*FY21 revenue does not include multi-year grants pledged in previous years, but allocated to subsequent year expenses.

FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING EXPENSES:
\$2,047,716



FY 21 FISCAL ASSETS AVAILABLE TO MEET GENERAL EXPENDITURES OF THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:
\$1,957,634

Source: Fiscal Year 2021 Audit by Hungerford Nichols CPAs + Advisors

WMCAT'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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