



## News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Amy Wilczynski  
586.945.1250  
[amywpr@gmail.com](mailto:amywpr@gmail.com)

### **Advancing Macomb Announces Reopening of Cairns Community Center** *Advancing Macomb Secures Funding for Programming, TCB Youth Mentoring Named Operating Partner*

**Mount Clemens, Mich.** (August 29, 2022) – [Advancing Macomb](#), a 501c3 that convenes resources to solve community challenges and enrich the lives of Macomb County residents, has secured funding to reopen the Cairns Community Center in Mount Clemens.

Established in 2008 with funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Cairns Community Center offers youth sports and recreational activities to help create a physically active and healthy community. The center was forced to close its doors in 2019 because of a lack of sustainable funding and operating partners.

Recognizing the community surrounding the center was significantly underserved and in need of recreation programs for at-risk youth, Advancing Macomb began advocating for its reopening soon after the center closed. Advancing Macomb negotiated an agreement with the City of Mount Clemens for the city to assume ownership and operations of the center from the Mount Clemens Public School District, while Advancing Macomb helped to secure funding and program partners. The City of Mount Clemens took over ownership of the center in 2021.

In 2022 Advancing Macomb successfully secured funding for programming at the Cairns Community Center as part of a funding package that would serve multiple communities. Funds came from several sources, including Wilson Legacy Funds through the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, Ascension Southeast Michigan and the City of Mount Clemens. Advancing Macomb provides administrative back-office support for programming at the center to support sustainability.

Advancing Macomb also secured funding from Congress this year for \$480,000 in capital improvements for facilities that provide after-school programming in Mount Clemens and Eastpointe. Half of that (\$240,000) will go to the Cairns Community Center. That project is expected to be underway in 2023.

“The Cairns Community Center fills an essential gap in the Mount Clemens community as continued disinvestments and shrinking tax bases have forced the city to cut back on recreational programming, putting youth sports and recreational activities out of reach for many families,” said Diane Banks, executive director of Advancing Macomb. “While the city has



allocated some funding for building maintenance and operations, a gap remained in funding and resources for recreational programming. By working with our existing community partners and resources, we were able to bridge this gap and demonstrate the importance of collaboration to solve a community challenge.”

Because of funding secured by Advancing Macomb, the City of Mount Clemens was able to contract with [TCB Youth Mentoring](#), a nonprofit youth organization dedicated to assisting at-risk youth, as the new operating partner for Cairns Community Center. TCB Youth Mentoring has run its mentorship program out of the center since its construction and has a strong relationship with the surrounding community, particularly youth and families.

Advancing Macomb and the City of Mount Clemens have partnered with TCB Youth Mentoring on several other successful initiatives, including “Sport Port,” a grant-funded sports equipment lending library with three locations in Macomb County including Mount Clemens. The initiative was part of a regional effort to increase access to youth sports. The Sport Port Mount Clemens location became a model for the region, illustrating the importance of community coalitions in increasing access to youth sports.

Thomas “Tommy” Barnes is the president and founder of TCB Youth Mentoring and is in charge of the day-to-day operations at the Cairns Community Center.

“We are bringing recreation back to Mount Clemens,” said Tommy Barnes. “As a kid, I benefitted greatly from public recreation programs. These programs level the playing field for all kids. When you are on the baseball field or basketball court, your socio-economic status does not matter. We are working to make our community healthier – healthier people make better decisions and achieve more.”

According to the Aspen Institute’s State of Play for Southeast Michigan Report, only 13% of youth in Southeast Michigan reach the recommended one hour of physical activity per day. The study also finds that kids from the lowest-income households are 3.6 times more likely than kids from the highest-income households to have zero days of activity during the week. They are also much less likely to be involved in a sport.

“The Cairns Community Center will play a vital role in our community by keeping kids active while providing a safe haven for them to grow and play,” continued Banks. “We are thrilled to secure the necessary funding to make the reopening possible.”

### **About Advancing Macomb**

Advancing Macomb is a 501c3 that convenes resources to solve community challenges and enrich the lives of Macomb County residents. The organization provides the philanthropic model and leadership needed to cement partnerships between the nonprofit, public and private sectors, identify and attract resources to fund major projects and programs, and increase Macomb County visibility. For more information about Advancing Macomb, visit [advancingmacomb.com](http://advancingmacomb.com).

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