

## EMCC makes a positive “First Impression”

### WHAT IS THE EMCC “FIRST IMPRESSIONS” PROGRAM?

As people often say “you never get a second chance to make a first impression.” About 5 years ago, Center staff became aware of a “service gap” that made the odds of a successful, re-entry for ex-offenders into mainstream society even more difficult. When ex-offenders are released from prison, there is a greater than 75% chance they will be re-arrested and sent back to prison within 5 years. There are numerous reasons for that sobering statistic but many people feel that there is a severe lack of systems and support in place to successfully help integrate former prisoners into a non-prison, life style.

The obstacles that await ex-offenders out in the “real world” are plentiful and even a motivated person who has been “bettered” by the prison system will find the challenges awaiting them almost insurmountable. One of the most crucial factors in surviving and thriving in a post-prison world is securing steady employment. Though some



*A key component of an ex-offender succeeding in a job interview is how they present themselves to those who will be interviewing them. Because most former prisoners leave prison with literally the clothes on their back, making a good first impression at an interview can be challenging.*

employers seek to give these former prisoners a fresh start, many other employers are hesitant to take a chance based on the criminal background of the person and the specific job they are applying for.

A key component of an ex-offender succeeding in a job interview is how they present themselves to those who will be interviewing them. Because most former prisoners leave prison with literally the clothes first impression at an inter-

view can be challenging. When EMCC staff members became aware of this additional hurdle for ex-offenders, we launched our First Impressions Program. The program is currently available to men, which make up a majority of the prison population. The Center has a wide collection of suits, sport coats, dress shirts, belts, ties and occasionally dress shoes. Those seeking clothing come to the Center and pick out whatever style and size they choose.

The Center partners with other businesses and non-profits to create awareness of this free service as well as to acquire quality clothing that will help the men get a boost in self-esteem as well as a professional look to help secure that all-important good first impression. The Center is especially grateful to the Men's Wearhouse for their annual drive to collect new suits, sport coats, etc.

We also welcome and receive professional clothing donations from the general public. Numerous men who recently retired have been very generous in providing First Impressions with a diverse array of quality clothing that is truly appreciated by the recipients. ■



### Donations

can be dropped off at  
EMCC on weekdays  
from 9am – 8pm.  
Call 249-0861 if you  
have questions or  
want to talk about  
specific donations.

Visit EMCC's website at [www.eastmadisoncc.org](http://www.eastmadisoncc.org)

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21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON!

# Bowl-a-Thon Rolls to \$43,000 for Youth Achievement Programs

**T**hank you for your generous support of the East Madison Community Center's 21st Annual Bowl-A-Thon! With your help, we raised over \$43,000, up from \$33,000 in 2016, to fund our Youth Minority Achievement Programs. Your generosity benefits hundreds of students right here in Madison, by making it possible to offer outstanding tutoring, mentoring, and educational programs for school-age children. ■



## SPONSORS!

A heartfelt *thank you* from everyone here at EMCC!

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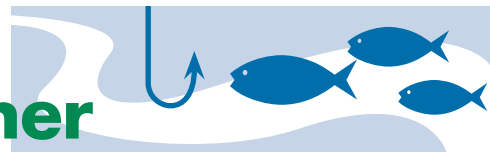
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# EMCC & MEJO partner to Host Community Fish Dinner



The Midwest Environmental Justice Organization (MEJO) has been awarded a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant for its Starkweather Creek project to engage low-income residents and subsistence

anglers on Madison's north-east side in learning about stormwater pollution and to build their capacities to participate in community decisions. The East Madison Community Center partnered with MEJO to host a commu-

nity fish dinner in late September. The dinner served over 200 area residents to kick-off the grant and to cap off National Hunger Action month activities provided by the EMCC. Dinner included several multi-cultural fish

dishes prepared with tilapia, bluegill, crappie, and catfish. Area students were also provided with books and personal hygiene essentials courtesy of the Madison Rotary and the Madison Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. respectively. Food and equipment donations were received from Willy Street Co-op – North, Troy Farm, East Madison Monona Rotary, Native Food Network, Kurt Welke and local community gardens. ■



## Save the Date

Mark your calendar for these upcoming EMCC 2018 Events!

- **March 7:** 2nd Annual EMCC Chili Cook-Off
- **April 12:** Community Garden Sign-Up
- **May 3:** Summer Camp Registration Deadline
- **May 18:** Woody Carey Scholarship Application Deadline
- **June 30:** EMCC night at the Mallard's Duck Pond

facebook



We are on Facebook! On Facebook, we have our up-to-date schedule of events. You will also be able to see pictures of EMCC events. Become a fan, so you stay up-to-date with what is happening in the community.



# YouTH News

## pre-teen Holiday Party 2017

EMCC students excitedly anticipated this year's annual Pre-Teen Holiday Party. On the days leading up to the event, students could be heard singing the Jackson Five's rendition of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." Teen staff were more than willing to set up for the event to ensure that younger students' experience was similar to what they had growing up at the EMCC. On the day of the party families gathered at the doors of the EMCC patiently waiting for a night of family friendly activities. The night included food, games, a live DJ, bounce-houses, face-painters, balloon twisters and more! However, the highlight of everyone's night was visiting Santa's Den where each child received a new special gift. ■



The EMCC would like to thank Saint Dennis Catholic Church, Madison Fire Department, and the East Madison/Monona Rotary for their generous support of this annual event.



# EMCC Girls Ready to Take on the World

**E**MCC's Girls' Development Group is a diverse group of girls in grades 3-7 who come together to learn, grow, and most importantly, laugh. Each week, we explore one of a broad range of topics including being good friends, understanding our feelings, leadership, women in careers, history, life skills such as cooking, giving back to our community, and many more. The group participants brainstorm our topics, field trips, and activities for the year; and as a group set our expectations for how we treat one another. By working together to make our plan for the year, we not only create a group that is responsive to the interests of the girls, but builds leadership skills in our members.

The girls who come to EMCC's Girls' Development Group are different from one another in many ways – their ages, grades, and life stories to name a few – but they are united in one thing: being great girls. Our activities, topics, and guest speakers focus on issues that really matter to young women, and that will help them to grow up healthy, happy, and ready to take on the world. It is our goal that every girl

Our activities, topics, and guest speakers focus on issues that really matter to young women, and that will help them to grow up healthy, happy, and ready to take on the world... and make a few friends along the way!



who comes to girl's group learns how to respect herself and others, and makes a few friends along the way!

This year, the Girl's Development Group is ready to take on the world. We are looking forward to learning about black women in history, skills to be a good learner, how to use technology, and more. We can't wait to take field trips to try new things like ice skating; and to learn about careers and hear from women doing great things. If you know a girl who wants to join us in learning about ourselves and the world, she can join us on **Tuesdays from 6:30-8:00pm** – we'll see her there! ■



Learn more about EMCC programs at  
[www.eastmadisoncc.org](http://www.eastmadisoncc.org)



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# A letter from...

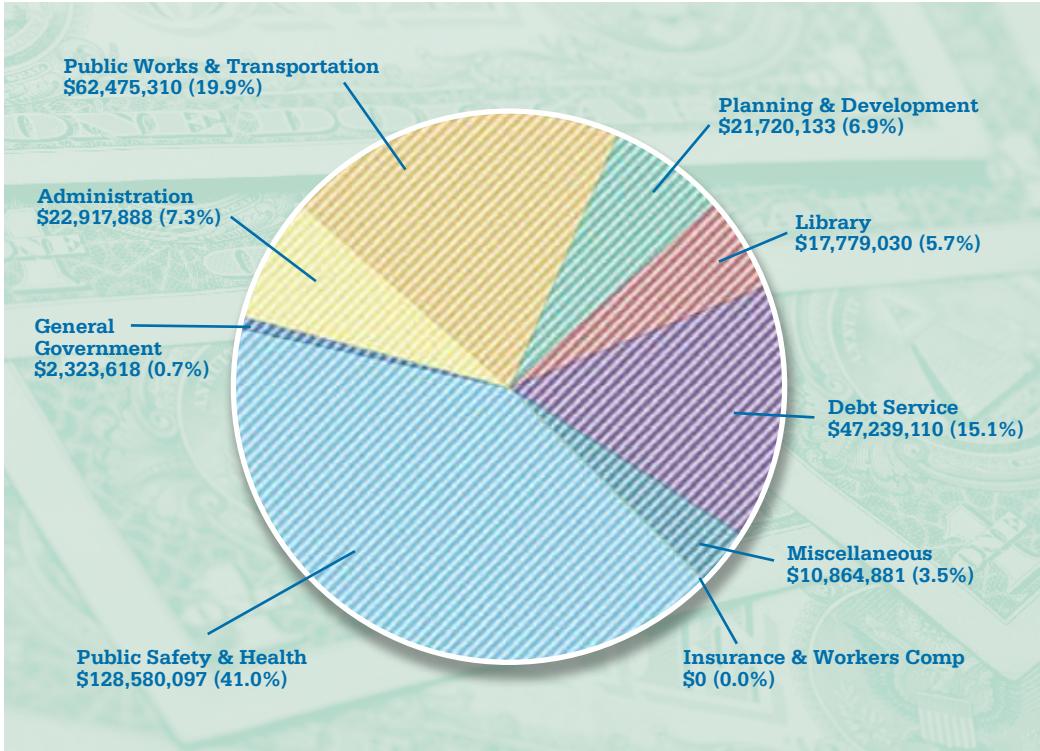
## DISTRICT 15

# Alderman David Ahrens

Last November, the city budget for 2018 was approved by the Council and Mayor. The budget is divided into two parts, the cost of operation and the cost of construction and new major equipment.

Operations are, for the most part, the cost to pay for 2,900 city employees. The operating costs are also for debt payments (15%) and numerous smaller purchases such as computers, police cars, etc. The city also purchases services from non-profit organizations such as the EMCC. All of this adds up to \$263 million or about \$1,000 for every city resident.

Capital costs are for building and road construction and repair. Some of the biggest projects are new downtown parking garages for \$52 million, road construction for \$50 million, a new city office for \$30 million and new machinery and equipment for \$23 million. Also included is, what I believe to be an unnecessary expense of \$8 million for a “public market.” All together the bill comes to \$326 million. About half of this amount is borrowed.



There is one item of special importance to the East Madison community – a new library and city services center at Reindahl Park.

This project, initiated by Ald. Samba Baldeh, is viewed as part library, neighborhood meeting place, meal center and whatever else the community views as a priority. This year, we’ll begin meetings with local residents and next year (2019), the design process. This will be

a unique center for the city and an exciting venture for the community.

Overall, all of this will increase city property taxes by about 2.7%. For a house valued at \$200,000, that’s about a \$50 increase. Take note,

that although your tax bill comes from the city, only about one-third of your payments are kept by the city. About half is for schools and the remainder is for the county and MATC. ■

I am interested in hearing your views on this and other issues. If you have questions, concerns, problems or opinions about city policies or operations please feel free to contact me at

**district15@cityofmadison.com**  
or **608-334-1156.**

## Seasoning and Spice Drive a Success

*Thank You* to everyone who donated to EMCC’s Seasoning & Spice Drive. As a result, 119 families received approximately 550 pounds of pantry staples, including flour, sugar, cooking oil, and assorted spices. ■





## FOOD PANTRY

### The EMCC Choice Food Pantry

is open Tuesdays from 12 noon to 2pm with sign in starting at 10am. Bring identification and proof of residence to get signed up.

## Get Fit For Free at EMCC!



Come and check out the EMCC's upgraded Fitness Room. Just for touring the cozy, one-room facility you will receive a complimentary EMCC 50th anniversary water bottle. And better yet, record 10 hours of work-out time in our fitness room and you will receive a \$10 gift certificate for your effort.

Membership Fee =  
Initiation Fee =  
Cancellation Fee =

# FREE

**There is absolutely no cost to use the EMCC Fitness Room. Showers are available in the locker rooms.** We should again clarify that this is a small room though it does have a variety of equipment including free weights, treadmill and elliptical. You will never confuse our Fitness Room with the elaborate eastside Princeton Club. But, if you want a budget-friendly, no-frills work-out area, the East Madison Community Center might be your kind of place! So stop by the Center and check it out. Start getting in shape for 2018. ■

**The Fitness Room is open Monday–Friday from 9 am – 8 pm.**

## COMMUNITY GARDEN

# Think Spring!



IT'S TIME TO PLAN FOR THE SPRING PLANTING SEASON. JOIN US FOR OUR SPRING GARDEN MEETING ON **APRIL 12, 2018 AT 5:30 PM**



In 2017, we improved the gardens, making it easier than ever to grow your own food. First, we added three raised planting beds. These beds have excellent, rich soil and make planting, weeding and harvesting easier. We also enclosed our children's garden area, improving access for our young growers. Our Garden Coordinator, Sarah Jacobsen, can provide seeds or seedlings to help you get started. Plus, she'll be available to help you throughout the season. The Center has several plots available for new gardeners, in addition to our returning families. Take a healthy and fun new step in 2018 by becoming a gardener. To sign up, visit the website and download the 2018 Garden Sign Up packet: <http://eastmadisoncc.org/programs/nutrition-health/> Or, stop by the Center to pick up an application. ■



*We're also looking for Garden Volunteers for Spring and Summer 2018. If you work at a local business and have a team who would like to help in the garden on Fridays, contact De'Kendrea at 249-0861 or email [dstamps@eastmadisoncc.org](mailto:dstamps@eastmadisoncc.org).*



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# East Madison Community Center

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Current occupant or

E M C C C E N T E R P O I N T S

## EMCC 2018 VOLUNTEERS

### Youth Volunteers

Coco (Koriyanna) Fitzpatrick, Amira Hampton, Keyan Harper, Jelonzo Jackson, James Moore, Adonis Pickett, Nikia Rowe, Chashay Sayles, Heaven Thomas, James Xiong, Maleevong Xiong, Richard Xiong

### Food/Clothing/Household Items Distribution Volunteers

Kenny Brumfield, Calvin Gibbons, Barb Grimm, Pat Haak, Janice Johnson, Madison College Service Learning Academy, Quentin Sears, Mylas Sparks, Paul Von Gruben, LC Williams, Minnie Wilson, Ruthie Young, East Madison/Monona Rotary

### Resource Development

Larry Hamlin, Bunny Lenburg

### Program Volunteers

Meshan Adams, Ali Braddock, Pedro Diosardo, Martha Galston, Zoe Messing, Amanda Toy, Anna Wong, Madison College Service Learning Academy, UW Badger Volunteers

### Board Members

Aaron Blacks, Larry Hamlin, Rosie Haskins, Kristina Kuehl, Tracy Lomax, Dr. Melina Lozano, Tom Moen, Meghan O'Dell, Jamal Palmer, Kris Rasmussen, Elizabeth Reyes, Renee Robinson, Tauri Robinson, Marie White-Scott, Mylas Sparks, Sonia Spencer, Sandy Xiong

thanks!



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