

Year in Review

ETHEL AND JAMES FLINN FOUNDATION, 2024



As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the **progress made and the partnerships forged** in advancing mental health access across southeast Michigan. In a time marked by both challenges and resilience, our community has demonstrated an **unwavering commitment** to fostering well-being and **breaking down barriers to mental health care.**

This year's journey has been one of **collaboration and innovation** and we are proud to share the impactful milestones and stories that have shaped our mission. Together we've taken meaningful steps toward creating a region where **mental health support is more accessible and compassionate.**



Grants awarded in 2024

The Flinn Foundation awarded

\$2.8 million

**in grant funding to 56
organizations across
southeast Michigan**

[See a full list of 2024 grants awarded](#)

The Foundation's support spans several program areas including:

- evidence-based treatment practices for adults and youth
- capacity building
- advocacy support
- and awareness and education initiatives

The Flinn Foundation Supported Significant Growth and Innovation

2024's growth, transformative change and well-deserved recognition within our mental health community underscore our community's **dedication to enhancing mental health services and support systems**, fostering a more **resilient and compassionate environment for all**. Here are **key highlights** from the year:



Andrea Cole Represents the Flinn Foundation at International Mental Health Gathering

In June 2024, Flinn Foundation President and CEO Andrea Cole was one of a select group of individuals invited to attend the **Global Leadership Exchange on Mental Health** in Brussels, Belgium. There, she engaged in discussions on climate anxiety and the impact of social media on youth mental health.



Unique Crisis Center Opens in Detroit

The **707 Crisis Care Center**, one of Michigan's first certified crisis stabilization units, opened its doors in Detroit, providing 24/7 accessible mental health support for individuals of all ages. The center is supported by one of Flinn's grantee partners **Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network**.

Two Centers Merge to Better Support Individuals

Sean de Four assumed the role of President and CEO of **MiSide**, a community impact network formed from the **merger of Southwest Solutions and Development Centers**, aiming to provide equitable access to health, education and self-sufficiency opportunities in Wayne County.



The Flinn Foundation Engaged in Critical Ongoing Work

This year, the Flinn Foundation's commitment to **critical and ongoing work in mental health** has led to significant initiatives and collaborations. These efforts underscore the importance of **collaborative action and strategic investment** in advancing mental health services and support systems nationwide. **Here's what happened in 2024:**



Others Learn from Wayne County's Unique Collaboration

Wayne County's **Behavioral Health Diversion Program** garnered national attention when a delegation from Tulsa, Oklahoma, visited Detroit to learn from its collaborative approach to public safety and mental health integration.

Developing Innovation in Crisis Response

In April 2024, the **Behavioral Health Emergency Response Initiative** convened the BHERi Impact Lab at the Detroit Athletic Club, hosted in partnership with the SCALE + Lab NYU Marron and the Flinn Foundation.

This two-day event brought together national and state-level funders and stakeholders to **develop innovative strategies aimed at transforming behavioral health crisis response** across the United States. The goal is to create actionable plans that address mental health crises effectively, reducing reliance on emergency departments, prisons and jails for acute behavioral health issues.



Investigating the Role of Philanthropy in Mental Health Infrastructure

Andrea Cole joined the board of **Mindful Philanthropy**, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing high-impact funding for mental health. Mindful Philanthropy has issued a call to action to **increase investments in mental health, addiction and well-being fivefold**, targeting \$35 billion in annual philanthropic giving by 2035.

Following the Activate 2023 conference, where funders and mental health experts explored innovative approaches, Mindful Philanthropy released **Mental Health at the Center**, highlighting the need for increased private investment. They also published **A Roadmap for Strategic Investment**, outlining five priority areas to support transformational change in mental health care access and delivery.



Critical Intervention Mapping in Youth Justice

In October 2024, Wayne County stakeholders convened to **develop youth justice intervention strategies**, focusing on **critical intervention mapping** to divert young individuals from deeper involvement in the legal system. This work has the potential for **significant impact on system-led change** for youth in Wayne County.

The Flinn Foundation Highlighted Significant Efforts of Grantees in Southeast Michigan

In 2024, Flinn Foundation grantees have made significant strides in **supporting unique populations** within our community. Here are **key highlights from 2024**:

CHASS Integrates Primary and Mental Health Services

The **Community Health and Social Services Center** in Southwest Detroit provides affordable integrated care **combining primary and mental health services** to reduce barriers like transportation and stigma for underserved Black and Latino populations.





Mental Health Conversations in Faith Communities

Through partnerships with Flinn grantees **NAMI** and **DWIHN**, Triumph Church in southeast Michigan connects faith and mental well-being for the African American community.

LAHC Supports Communities With Culturally Sensitive Services

Leaders Advancing & Helping Communities in Dearborn addresses the mental health needs of immigrant and refugee communities through **culturally sensitive services and recreational therapy**, reducing stigma and promoting well-being.



Zaman International Empowers Self-Sufficiency

Zaman International in Inkster empowers marginalized women and children particularly immigrants and refugees through programs **providing basic needs, skills training and behavioral health support** to foster self-sufficiency and community impact.

The Family Center Brings Resources Together

The **Family Center** offers resources and programs for parents and caregivers **strengthening family dynamics and supporting children's mental health** through collaborations with schools and organizations.



A Key Area of Support for The Flinn Foundation in 2024 Continues to be the Mental Health of Youth and Teens

Addressing the **mental health needs of children and teens** remains a top priority and several initiatives have made significant strides in this area. Here are some **important efforts we shared in 2024:**

ECSC Launches Through Wayne Pediatrics

The **Early Childhood Support Clinic**, a collaboration between Wayne State University's School of Social Work, Wayne Pediatrics and the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute, offers integrated care for children from birth to age 5. By **combining pediatric medical services** with specialized mental health support, ECSC addresses both physical and emotional development, ensuring holistic care for young children and their families.



WWSPC Provides Framework for Youth Suicide Prevention

The **Western Wayne Suicide Prevention Coalition** is a collaborative initiative established by Trinity Health to address the rising rates of youth suicide in Western Wayne County. The coalition, led by Growth Works in Wayne County, comprises nine school districts and two health systems, collectively **representing about 65,000** students. WWSPC focuses on:


- training adults and students in **suicide prevention techniques**
- standardizing **screening** processes
- and providing **professional development** for school mental health professionals

Their efforts aim to create a unified, community-wide approach to effectively **support student mental health and prevent youth suicides**



DPSCD Champions TRAILS for Student Mental Health Support

Detroit Public Schools Community District partners with **TRAILS** to provide Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Mindfulness sessions, helping students manage mental health challenges like **anxiety and depression**. In 2023-2024, nearly **1,000 students participated**, supported by 94 trained staff.



BGCSM Supports Every Student With Integrated Mental Health Programming

The **Boys and Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan** introduced the "Mentally Fit" program in partnership with Wayne State University's Department of Psychology. This initiative provides **real-time behavioral health support, social-emotional learning and personal development** for youth across all club locations, aiming to normalize mental health discussions and **reduce stigma** among children and adolescents.

2024 Board of Trustees Recognition

The Flinn Foundation proudly acknowledges the **exceptional contributions and leadership** within its Board of Trustees. Here's what made us **especially proud** in 2024:



Judge Burton Recognized With Prestigious National Award

Chief Judge Freddie G. Burton Jr., Chairman of the Flinn Foundation Board, was honored with the **2024 Treat Award for Excellence** by the National College of Probate Judges. This prestigious national award recognizes his creation of the Wayne County Probate Court's Behavioral Health Unit which has **significantly improved mental health services and reduced incarceration rates** for individuals with mental health conditions.



Andrea Cole Honored for 'Behind the Scenes' Work

Andrea Cole, President and CEO of the Flinn Foundation, received the Eleanor Josaitis "**Unsung Hero**" Award at the Shining Light Awards ceremony in October 2024. This accolade celebrates her **unwavering commitment to enhancing access to evidence-based mental health services** in southeast Michigan and exemplifies collaborative leadership in the community.

We Said Goodbye...

And, in 2024, southeast Michigan lost a true advocate for mental health equity and access. On January 21, 2024, the Flinn Foundation said **farewell to Leonard W. Smith**, a dedicated philanthropist and **visionary leader** who significantly advanced mental health services in southeast Michigan. His tenures with the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation and the Skillman Foundation were marked by a **steadfast commitment to improving mental health delivery and treatment outcomes** across the state.

The Flinn Foundation Mourned the Passing of Leonard W. Smith



Leonard Smith's Legacy Inspired Recognition for Exceptional Leaders for Their Support of Mental Health in Southeast Michigan

In 2024, the Flinn Foundation honored his legacy by establishing the Leonard W. Smith "Mental Health Hero" Award, recognizing nonprofit leaders who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to mental health care in the region.

- This award **celebrates their contributions** and provides a **month- long sabbatical** to rejuvenate, ensuring they can continue their vital work with renewed energy.
- Additionally, their organizations receive support to **foster leadership development** during their absence, promoting **sustainability and growth** within the mental health sector.
- This initiative embodies Leonard W. Smith's legacy of mentorship and service, inspiring continued excellence in mental health leadership across the region.

Meet the Inaugural "Mental Health Hero" Honorees:



Meredith Reese, COO of Vista Maria, Kenyatta Stephens, CEO of Black Family Development, Inc., Celia Thomas, COO of Alternatives for Girls, Nicole Wilson, Executive Director of The Yunion

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the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation

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