



CHO

AU-R-00575
AU-R-000797

This entity qualifies for the Gold level tier of
the Social Equity All-Star Program



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<http://www.SmokeCHO.com>

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- Social Equity Plan -

Mission Statement

Provide the communities that we are in with only the highest level of quality in products, experiences, and expertise - while also giving back to the communities that surround us.

The Vision Statement

CHO is an ethnic minority owned, legal, state-licensed, adult-use, recreational cannabis store located at both 75 N Bridge St in Saranac, MI as well as 100 E Main St Suite C in Stanton, MI. We may have only ten employees on payroll – but we do so much more than just retail marijuana. We want to support the communities that support us. Quoting the President of CHO Malcolm Culmer, “We want to make an impact on the supporting communities that we touch as we grow. We would like to stand out and offer more than just the tax dollars within every community that welcomes us”.

Here at CHO - we have a vision. A vision that allows people from all walks of life to be able to become successful. Our employees are our most important asset - and should be treated as such. Coming from a sales and marketing background, the owner of CHO wanted to implement everything that he has learned and apply it to the cannabis business field. People should be rewarded for their hard work and perseverance. At CHO, we are able to create spaces where someone without a college degree – including those who have been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition - could learn the business ins-and-outs and successfully run the location. We call this the “Management Training Program”. This program allows anyone to come in and work from an entry level Budtender role to Team Leader, and then to eventual Management positions. They are trained on every aspect of the business and are able to grow with the company to be a Store Manager in less than one year’s time - which is unheard of in a lot of industries. We believe that with great diligence and hard work, anyone should be able to grow and exceed personal expectations. Our Vision is to empower as many people as possible. Everyone deserves an equal opportunity.

CHO is not just an adult-use recreational cannabis retail store; it is a culture – a culture of opportunity, and equality. We do not just offer jobs, we offer opportunities. CHO is a culture of acceptance, where everyone (twenty-one years old and older) is welcome. CHO is where you go when you have a bad day and need a cheerful smile, or a good laugh to forget your woes. CHO is a safe haven for so many people, including those who have been deemed disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. When you are having a good day and need somebody to share it with – CHO is there to be happy and excited right there along with you. Good days, bad days, and everything in between – CHO is there for you.

The communities that we are in love us because they know that we will always be there for them in any way that we can. If you have ever walked in our door, then you are already a part of the CHO family! Our customers sometimes do not even come in to make a purchase, they come in to feel genuinely cared about. That’s ok with CHO because sometimes, cannabis isn’t about money – sometimes it’s about love. We’re CHO, and we’re here for you.

Social Equity Accomplishments

Social equity is so important to the philosophy of CHO, that the very walls of CHO are proudly decorated with it! We will promote local individuals who are artists (and their art) on our social media pages. When their art sells from off our walls, then the artist will receive one hundred percent of the money received for the artwork. Currently at the time of writing, every single art piece decorating CHO was created by a different local woman. Our continued commitment to this aspect of our social equity program is so strong that we named the main retail sales floor that we display the art alongside our cannabis products, “The Gallery”. This is reflected in our current standard operating procedures manual.

Collectively to date, CHO has sold a total of at least seventy-five art pieces. We track the effectiveness of this social equity program by creating SKU’s for art pieces in our point-of-sale computer software. In addition, CHO has promoted, displayed, sold, and had all monies earned donated back to the individual local artists for a minimum total of \$1,704. Currently, there is approximately two thousand dollars worth of local art being promoted and displayed for sale inside of CHO to solely and entirely benefit local artists. We even opted as a company to employ full time one of the most popular local artists that we chose to include as part of our social equity plan for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024. They identify as individuals who has been affected disproportionately by cannabis prohibition – in more than one category.

In another accomplishment, CHO proudly gave back to the community that surrounds it through the Lake Creek clean-up effort on May 29th, 2022 undertaken voluntarily by its employees, management, and a few carefully selected members from the community. Armed

with six five-gallon buckets and some debris nets, our team from CHO and its volunteers were able to make it through a grueling and extremely treacherous 1,373ft worth of Lake Creek in Ionia County before having to call it a day and go back in time to open our cannabis retail dispensary. At the end of the clean-up, all the five-gallon buckets had been filled with trash, garbage, and debris collected out of the Lake Creek stream. It was properly and safely disposed of shortly thereafter.



Another program that CHO has in place already as a continuous way to provide community giveback is by participating in the popular Michigan Adopt-a-Highway program within Michigan counties that have been deemed struck hardest disproportionately by cannabis prohibition. In the early mornings of July 18th and July 19th of 2022, all the employees from CHO set out on M21 in Ionia County for the first time and began cleaning up the community.

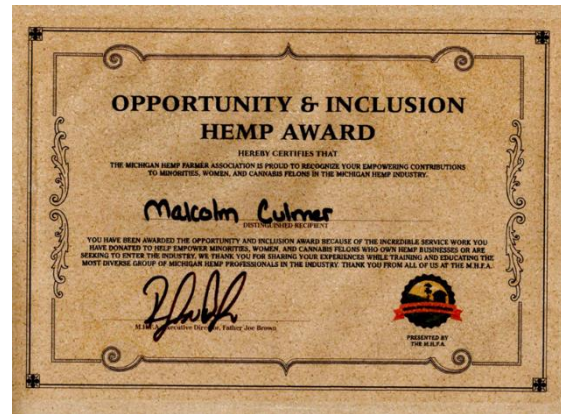
CHO has since also adopted a second highway in the ever popular Adopt-a-Highway program - in addition to continuing to service the first adopted highway for the community of Ionia as well. Our second adopted highway is in Montcalm County, in which that area we serve has been identified as a region that has been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. The stretch of highway that we had adopted in Montcalm County is a two mile stretch of M66 in Stanton.

The entire staff at CHO eagerly looks forward to participating in the Adopt-A-Highway road clean-ups each time they come around. Every year there is a spring, summer, and fall roadside clean up – and we as an entire company participate in all of them for both of our adopted highways in Ionia and Montcalm counties. On average, CHO collects (by hand) about seven full garbage bags of litter each time we go out to participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program. Some dates in which we participated in roadside clean-up dates were July 18th 2022, July 19th 2022, September 24th 2022, October 2nd 2022, April 23rd 2023 – April 30th 2023, July 15th



2023, September 23rd 2023, May 18th 2024, July 14th 2024, and September 22nd 2024. For three and a half years and counting, we have diligently worked to keep our portions of Michigan's beautiful highways clean.

The village of Saranac (in which one of our stores is located) is home to the Michigan Hemp Festival each year, organized by the Michigan Hemp Farmer Association. On Saturday, August 27th 2022, CHO became a major sponsor of the MHFA Michigan Hemp Festival. The organization was so grateful that CHO had become a sponsor and gotten involved that our CEO and President Malcolm Culmer was given an award from Fr. Joe Brown, the Executive Director of the Michigan Hemp Farmer Association, recognizing CHO as a staple of opportunity and inclusion in the village of Saranac.



Wanting to celebrate our first year in business on November 11th, 2022 we at CHO wanted to do something that would involve the community as a way to say thank you for all of the support provided to us during our first year of being open. After some thought, we decided to throw Saranac's first annual art festival. Artists that are being promoted and having their art sold by us out of the shop were all invited and given free booth space during the art festival. We encouraged all local artists to come on down and to advertise and sell their art during the festival, free of booth fees or any other costs or expenses. CHO also gave out free hot chocolates to everybody upon request, and sponsored a children's chalk art contest – with every child entered receiving a full, brand new box of chalk. The top three chalk art entries with the most votes each received a \$25 Visa gift card.

We wanted to reach out to more than just the communities that we are immediately in to make a difference. We reached out to the Lowell Chamber of Commerce (the neighboring city entity that we are not directly located in) to inquire about what community needs there may be in the city. That is when on September 10th, 2023 CHO decided to participate in its first beach clean-up. The entire staff at CHO went out to service Pebble Beach in Lowell. Officially named Stoney Lakeside Park, this fifty-three acre public park hosts a twenty-seven acre lake (previously in history was home to a gravel pit), that offers opportunities for swimming, fishing, and non-gas powered boating. The park is bordered along the south side by the mighty Grand River. Stoney Lakeside Park includes a beach, sand volleyball area, a small boat launch into the lake, restrooms, a recently constructed playground, two horseshoe pits, a skateboard park, and a 31,000-square-foot fenced dog park. Three large trash bags were filled with hand-collected garbage from the park by CHO employees on that particularly overcast and rainy day.

From the month between October 1st 2023 and November 1st 2023, CHO ran a collection bin of shower supplies and feminine hygiene products to benefit the Women United at the

Gathering Place, based out of Greenville, Michigan. Created by Jan Wheelock in 2020 during the isolation period of the coronavirus pandemic, The Gathering Place is a self-funded organization and was started with only a “motley crew of friends” and an idea. “Isolation was a concern, when people couldn’t gather and didn’t feel able to make a difference as just one person,” Wheelock was quoted as saying. It has since grown to about seventy members to serve a community of nine thousand people with its own brick-and-mortar location now!

For Veteran’s Day (November 11th) 2023, CHO hosted and paid for a community wide cornhole tournament in partnership with the American Legion Post 175 in Saranac, Michigan. Sensing a community-wide unhappiness with the dreary cold November weather (and wanting to generate awareness for the American Legion), CHO came up with a way to get people outside and spending time together again while having drinks and lunch at the American Legion. During the course of the afternoon cornhole tournament, there was a general atmosphere of community togetherness and an air of friendliness. Several strangers who once were competitors became and left as friends.

According to Sarah McCallum in 2020 of Barrie’s House in Gowen, “Love is toilet paper. Love is a gallon of milk”. Barrie’s House (ran out of the Settlement Lutheran Church located in Gowen, Michigan) is a non-profit food pantry and clothing distribution center that has been serving the Gowen community since 1992. The staff of CHO learned of the mission behind Barrie’s House and immediately wanted to spring to action to help in any way that we could. After a quick phone call, it was decided to start a canned food drive right away to help support Barrie’s House. Starting November 1st 2023 and ending on November 30th 2023, CHO collected and donated canned goods and non-perishable foods to Barrie’s House to help further their food pantry mission. Our efforts did not end there. Beginning on December 1st, 2023, and running through the end of that year, CHO ran a subsequent (less effective) coat drive for Barrie’s House as well!

The staff at CHO were alerted about a local family who lost their home in totality to a tragic fire and had been displaced from their home on Christmas of 2023. The family lost everything they had to the Christmas fire. Beginning on December 28th 2023 and ending in February 2024, CHO accepted any clothing, non-perishable food, and gift card donations to help the family get through the tragic loss of their home and everything in it. Keeping the family anonymous, we were able to restock the closets of the entire family as well as start to fill their pantry again after their home was razed by the fire.

According to bridgemi.com, reading proficiency scores have gone down in almost every school district in the state of Michigan – and across all demographics. This fall is one of the worst among states administering similar tests to their students. The Ionia County Saranac school district has particularly alarming illiteracy rates among their students. In the 2016 - 2017 school year, only 45.5% of students were proficient in reading. One of our stores falls within this school district. We at CHO knew that we had to act immediately. All month long we ran a book drive for the local school district, partnering with Sunoco, one of the local gas station convenience stores in the village. On December 31st, 2023, CHO donated a basket of books that were relevant to people and children of all ages to help encourage the locals to

improve their literacy abilities by picking out any of the brand new books that we purchased or collected, free of charge.

Our Saranac location was approached by a member of the Ionia Hunting and Fishing Club in February of 2023 about possibly helping them to advertise their annual hunt as well as help raise awareness of the club to gain more members. This is a popular local annual event, so CHO was more than happy to oblige their request. On February 7th, 2023, the Ionia Hunting and Fishing Club announced on their Facebook page that the Ionia Squirrel and Rabbit Hunt “was both a great time and a huge success”. We would like to think that CHO helped to play a pivotal role in helping the local club to ascertain that success.

Good times with friends and positive, happy vibes are usually some of the feelings associated with the use of marijuana. Unfortunately, not every moment can be happy or uplifting. Tragedy struck the CHO Saranac location on April 11th, 2023. News broke that one of our favorite customers, Tucker Alan McPherson, had sadly passed away surrounded by family and friends after a long, losing battle with cancer. A very artistic person and great musician, Tucker had been a much loved barber cutting hair for thirty-six years until he had been diagnosed with not one, but two, stage four cancers.

The cancers ended up spreading throughout his body. He served as a mechanic in the Army National Guard from 1981 until 1987. Tucker was very proud of his service, and that lead him to become a member of the organization that shares a wall with our Saranac CHO location – the American Legion Post 175 in Saranac, Michigan.

Tucker would visit CHO as often as he could, although it was very difficult for him due to all of the cancer and the harsh treatments that he was under. He used to eat RSO darts like Halloween candy, because he was in so much pain that he needed enormous doses. The RSO



did end up alleviating some of his pain and gave him the greatest gift of all, his humanity back - if only for a fleeting few hours. He used to like pre-rolls too, as they helped his pain subside while waiting for the Rick Simpson oil to begin working internally. On the days when his cancer was winning, he would send his wonderful, caring, devoted wife into the shop for him. We always discounted both of their purchases to help offset some of the medical expenses they were dealing with as a result of all of his cancer. Tucker was one of our company’s first ever customers. The news of his loss hit hard and sent shockwaves through the company. We knew we



had to do something for his surviving widow beyond just offering continued discounts for her. Tucker was scheduled to be cremated May 6th, 2023, so we partnered with the American Legion Post 175 to throw the Tucker Alan McPherson Celebration of Life Dinner at the American Legion that very evening. The turnout was incredible! The following is an excerpt from his digital obituary that we as a company signed for his family and friends:

CHO Dispensary from 75 N Bridge St, Saranac, MI, wrote on Apr. 14, 2023

“Tucker was well loved by everyone on staff. He would always come in to bring us a smile and a laugh. He was polite to everybody - customers and staff alike. He was loved, and he will be very missed. Rest easy, Tucker.”

The next month, CHO was inspired to start a new community give back program for the month of June 2023. We wanted to help the local community, and the environment. After seeing a lot of pre-roll tubes littered all over the community, one of our employees came up with a pre-roll tube recycling program. We would only accept clean and empty glass and plastic pre-roll tubes. The plan was to collect the tubes, wash and sterilize them, then donate them to their respective recycling plants. We saved a few of them and inserted coupons redeemable at CHO for a free pre-roll. The goal was to spot somebody out in the community doing good for somebody else or performing some sort of volunteer work and then offer them the clean and sterilized tube with a coupon in it for a pre-roll at CHO as a random reward for helping out the community or its members, as well as inspire others to get involved in volunteering and community giveback programs. We called it “Random Acts of Dopeness”.

The Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail was organized in 1994 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its goal was to establish a recreational trail in Montcalm and Gratiot Counties, using former railroad rights-of-way, and to promote understanding through education on the advantages of such a trail. Trail users would include bicyclists, in-line skaters, hikers, joggers, walkers, cross-country skiers, runners, and nature lovers. No motorized vehicles would be allowed, and effective barriers were proposed. The trail is open from sunrise to sunset, all year. The purpose of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail is to provide a healthy and safe recreational outlet, close to home for families and individuals of all ages; to forge new bonds between local communities; to promote economic growth through tourism and related business opportunities; to establish and sustain a natural corridor for wildlife and greenspace protection, and to enhance the quality of life in Montcalm and Gratiot Counties. On June 21st, 2023, staff from our CHO Stanton location geared up, grabbed some trash bags, and set out for the trail. During the course of the two mile section that we volunteered to pick up, our staff was able to clean up multiple garbage bags of trash and litter from the trail – helping to maintain its natural beauty for everyone.

Stanton Old Fashioned Days is Stanton’s yearly city celebration. It takes place annually on the second weekend in August. The festival includes: a talent show, pageant, craft & food vendors, city wide yard sales, parades, stage entertainment, tractor and car shows, and a 5K race, along with other sporting events and competitions. Old Fashioned Days Weekend

serves as a homecoming reunion for the City, helping to promote its heritage and history, and strives to provide a variety of opportunities for community engagement. Each year that we have had a retail store located in Stanton, we have paid to be a sponsor. CHO volunteers to sponsor the always popular, highly requested roving ballon twister and prestidigitation performer for the entertainment of the event’s many patrons, visitors, and vendors (August 2023 and August 2024).

Shortly after Stanton Old Fashioned Days, CHO sponsors and hosts their own community event. In our Stanton location each summer, we host the CHO Motor Show that is free and open to the public of all ages. The cars that people sign up to show off are arranged chronologically by year, so when visitors stop by it is like walking back through time and seeing all of the changes and beauty that each decade brings in the automotive industry. There is also a crowd vote for the best sounding and the nicest looking motor vehicle. Even the Stanton Police Department stop by to show off their vehicles and engage with the community in a friendly and positive way, helping to bridge that stigma between cannabis and the law. CHO also offers food and beverages to the patrons and participants of the event. This most recent CHO Motor Show had the fiercest and most competitive cornhole tournament yet to date for the event! Some professional players showed up to participate in the tournament even. What a truly great time it is to be a part of the annual CHO Motor Shows (July 28th 2023 and August 31st 2024)!

Near our Saranac retail location, one of the area’s largest events (the Ionia Free Fair) is a very well-known event. Extremely large and sprawling across the entire fairgrounds, it is colloquially known as “the ten best days of summer” for the hundreds of thousands of locals



that attend the free fair each year. According to Executive Director Brenda Lehmkuhle, “...that event went very well. An estimated 325,000 people attended the 2023 Ionia Free Fair”. She continued, “This is probably what we’re going to look like for the next few years”. This fair is so large and well known that it has its own Wikipedia page. Sitting on the fairground’s property is a gorgeous, well-known building named the Ionia County

Floral Building. Built in 1929 with an occupancy of one hundred and twenty-nine people, the Floral Building is in need of restoration after surviving and still standing after the past ninety-six years. Used for weddings and community gatherings, it is truly a wonderful landmark in Ionia County. CHO has sponsored one of their annual Golf Outings (September 9th 2023) in an effort to help raise funds for restoration efforts.

During the 2023 year, CHO paid to become a member of the Saranac Community Association. As a result, we paid for all sorts of sponsorships and community events and marketed all of them for the Saranac Community Association, such as the Saranac Community Easter Egg Hunt (April 1st 2023), sponsoring the village’s annual community

day called Bridgefest (August 27th 2022 and August 26th 2023), the Community Potted Plant Sale (June 3rd 2023), The Saranac Summer Movie Series (June 9th, July 14th, and August 25th 2023), the Saranac Girls' Night Out henna booth sponsor (September 14th 2023), and we also volunteered our staff to check patrons' identification cards and driver's licenses for the beer tent hosted by the village - colloquially named Tunes At The Trailhead Live Music Event (June 23rd, July 28th, and August 26th 2023). CHO also was the Saranac Harvest Festival food truck sponsor (October 28th 2023).

In addition to those, every year for Halloween along the main street in the village of Saranac, the local businesses will set up tables and booths outside of their businesses for the local children to interact with and get their trick-or-treat candy or snacks. As a licensed cannabis business, we are obviously not able to participate in a children's trick-or-treat candy give-away. However, we still wanted to participate somehow. On October 31st

2023, CHO paid \$500 for a professional fire eating performance artist for the entertainment of the locals traveling along the main street visiting the trick-or-treating booths along the way during the event.

During the annual Saranac Bridgefest community day 2023, CHO went above and beyond to help the community. Not only by becoming a major sponsor for the event and helping to fund numerous activities, CHO also participated in and gave back to the community in many different ways that year. The Saranac store manager volunteered to



participate in becoming the Dunk Tank dunkee, which helped raise funds for the local children's sports teams, on a day when no other volunteers were willing to step up to the plate due to the colder air temperatures in combination with being dunked about a hundred times for charity. In addition, we also paid the booth fees for the Ionia County Animal Shelter to come out and host an animal adoption event to help empty the shelter before they get full as the outdoor temps started falling. A tornado touched down and destroyed most of the village days before Bridgefest. The team at CHO helped collect and remove downed trees to



participate in becoming the Dunk Tank dunkee, which helped raise funds for the local children's sports teams, on a day when no other volunteers were willing to step up to the plate due to the colder air temperatures in combination with being dunked about a hundred times for charity. In addition, we also paid the booth fees for the Ionia County Animal Shelter to come out and host an animal adoption event to help empty the shelter before they get full

make way for Bridgefest to still happen. A highly successful event, we were able to get most of the animals adopted that day!

Tragedy struck the CHO Saranac community once more shortly after Bridgefest 2023. Another one of our really good customers, Kyle Anthony DeDonado, had tragically passed away due to a horrific, fiery automobile accident in Vergennes Township on September 25th, 2023. Leaving behind a wife and young children, the entire community had felt the loss of his young life cut short. His passing was a very big deal to the entire community, as well as to our staff. In an effort to help out the family, we had transferred all of his reward points to his widow, as well as added many more to help her out during that extremely difficult time for their family. CHO also gave her a gift certificate to be used at any time she felt like she needed a break from it all, or maybe needed some help coping with the loss of her husband on the harder days. Her family had come in privately to thank us for being so supportive of their entire family during those dark times. He was always smiling. He was a good person and is still missed by many. All of us at CHO still miss Kyle, too.



On a lighter note - a fun, local event in Stanton that the downtown development authority hosts each year is the annual Girls' Night Out to promote local businesses, and to draw tourism from surrounding areas into the city of Stanton. A popular event, CHO participated in the Stanton Girls' Night Out taking place on October 19th, 2024. We offered a twenty percent blanket discount just for women during that event. Women have been identified as a demographic that has been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition, so we at CHO are always happy to be a part of any event that empowers or brings awareness to the struggles of women.

Another great example of CHO wanting to help the women demographic was our clothing drive for RAVE, an LGBTQ+ friendly organization in which serves the people of Ionia and Montcalm County. RAVE is an acronym for Relief After Violent Encounters, and is dedicated to creating a supportive, empathetic, and violence-free community. In October of 1979 the original volunteers (numbering only eighteen people), attended the first orientation session to begin services to aid survivors of spousal abuse in Ionia and Montcalm counties. What began as a crisis line answered by these dedicated volunteers in their own homes has grown into multi-program, 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency that has helped thousands of adults and children throughout the communities that we serve. RAVE's mission is to eliminate the crimes of domestic and sexual violence through programs that support appropriate change.

They are committed to confronting the existing imbalance of power within violent relationships and to support and advocate for the adult and child victims of domestic and sexual violence. It is always their goal to develop programs of empowerment that respect victims' rights to self-determination. On December 12th, 2023, CHO donated several sets of brand-new socks and dozens of pairs of underwear to the organization.

On January 1st, 2024, a group of drunk individuals from the bar across the street in our Saranac location set off a quarter mile long strip of firecrackers at midnight for the New Year – right down the main street in Saranac. That was such a dangerous and illegal celebration. Cars were forced to drive over explosive firecrackers being detonated - or drive around them and into oncoming traffic. None of these individuals cleaned up the unimaginable micro-paper firecracker confetti tissue paper remnants mess that was left all up and down the main street. CHO employees braved the immense cold and took to the streets the whole next day and shoveled and swept up every piece of the literal trillions of pieces of firecracker tissue paper that defaced our village until it was finally all gone. The entire village was so grateful and thankful for our community service in doing so!

For the next two weeks after that event (January 1st 2024 – January 14th 2024), CHO employees volunteered to shovel snow off of the sidewalks of the main street of the community as well as salt them with ice melt every day. According to censusreporter.org, 36% of the people who live in Saranac are aged fifty or older. We at CHO wanted to make sure that the heavily used sidewalks remained safe and usable throughout the day and evening for people of all ages - including the elderly and senior citizens. The village will typically only initiate winter removal procedures once per day, and only in the early morning. The last thing we would want is somebody to slip and take a tumble into the busy main street of the village. CHO also did the winter weather removal again for the week of February 1st 2024.

It was brought to our attention that the Ionia County Animal Shelter was in dire need of towels. Having partnered with them before, we decided to once again spring into action. For the week of January 22nd, 2024, CHO collected towel donations for them. Although this was not one of our most successful drives due to lack of donations collected, it never dampened our spirit in giving back to the communities that surround us.

Following the huge success of the book drive partnership with Sunoco in our Saranac location the previous month (December 2023), we decided to run another book drive – this time out of our Stanton location. For this particular book drive, the White Pine Library of Stanton, Michigan was selected as the recipient of the next book drive hosted by CHO. The book drive ran from January 19th, 2024 – February 28th, 2024 before the books collected were donated to the White Pine Library.

In March 2024, our Stanton location ran side-by-side pet supply donation drives. Both drives were to both support and bring awareness to two local pet rescues. Dori's Mini Farm and Rescue & Dali's to the Rescue were the non-profit organizations that were selected by

CHO to be the recipients of this pet supply drive for the month of March 2024. Dali's to the Rescue is located out of Alma, and Dori's Mini Farm and Rescue is located in Cedar Springs.

While our Stanton location was running a double-drive for pet supplies for the month of March 2024, our Saranac location was getting busy organizing our next community clean-up. One of our employees had brought up the playground in a nearby city that his son plays at frequently was very dirty, and full of improperly discarded garbage and litter. The playground is quite a popular one amongst local schoolchildren to play at. Built in 1994 and located in Lowell, Michigan, Creekside Kingdom is a twenty-two-acre park that was in desperate need of a trash pick-up. On March 24th, 2024, the team from CHO Saranac headed out to the park to collect and properly dispose of all of the garbage and litter in sight. We left Creekside Kingdom beautiful, clean, and better than we found it.

For the CHO 4/20 party on April 20th, 2024, we wanted to make sure that we involved some sort of community give-back program during the holiday. Collaborating with many local businesses from the village, we came up with a fun event named "Puppies and Pizza".



We partnered with Mackenzie's Animal Sanctuary to bring some puppies for adoption, Red Tomato donated a free large pizza to every family who adopted a puppy during the event, and the Saranac / Clarksville District Library donated their Wi-Fi hotspot units for Mackenzie's Animal Sanctuary to be able to fill out online adoption forms while in the park with the puppies for the event. In addition, the Ionia County Shopper's Guide agreed to

print and run advertising for the event for free to help find homes for all of the puppies from Mackenzie's. The Social House of Saranac offered free lunch to the volunteers who came with the puppies from Mackenzie's. The Saranac Community Association donated the use of their outdoor patio heaters to help keep the puppies warm that very chilly day while they were outside playing. The cornhole tournament was sponsored by CHO, the American Legion of Saranac Post 175, and the Social House of Saranac. Together, we collaborated and collectively pulled off another fantastic event for the community!

At CHO, we strive to help as many different people as we can with our community giveback programs and social equity events. One demographic of people that we wanted to focus on more was the LGBTQ+ community. In one of the surrounding areas to our Saranac location, the city of Lowell hosts a very popular Pride festival every year. Lowell Pride is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Their mission is to create a safe and welcoming environment for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They strive to promote equality, inclusivity, and support for the LGBTQ+ community through various events, programs, and initiatives. Their vision is a world where everyone can express their true selves with pride, without fear of discrimination or hate. They celebrate and promote the diversity of LGBTQ+ culture and believe in the power of unity and togetherness. Lowell Pride is committed to making a positive impact in our community through the decisions they make every day, and we wanted to be a part of such a positive influence on the community. As a result, on June 1st, 2024, CHO paid to become an official sponsor of the Lowell Pride Festival! We also paid for a booth so that CHO could hand out free water bottles to festival patrons in order to combat heat exhaustion on that sizzling hot June day.



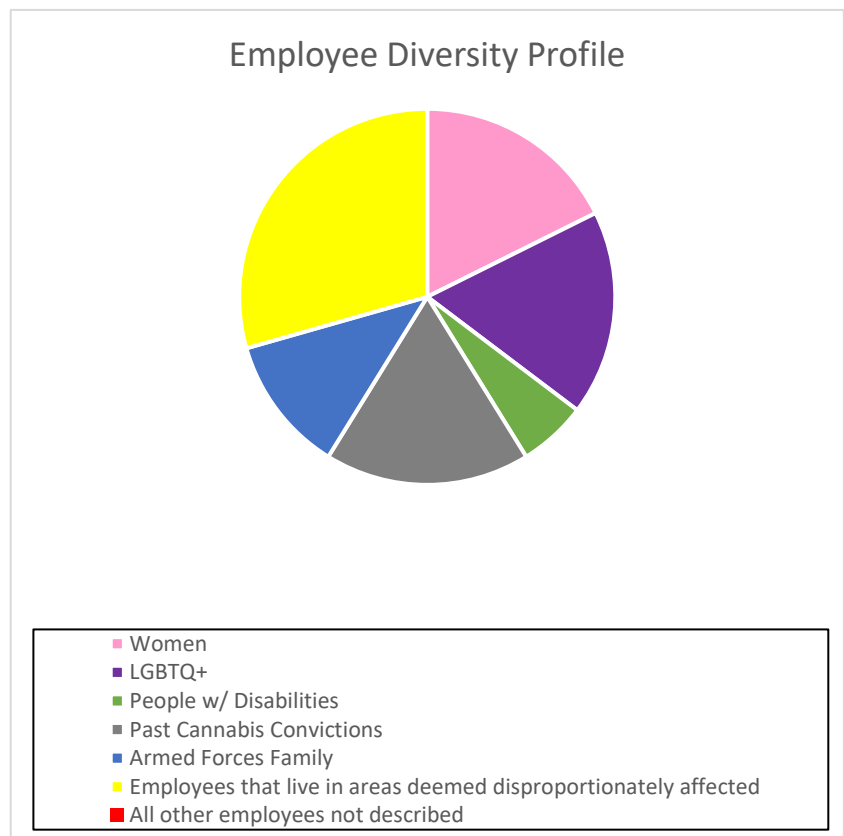
Shortly before August of 2024, CHO was made aware of a customer out of our Stanton location that had been diagnosed with kidney cancer and was struggling with paying for both treatment and living expenses. We knew we had to act to help out. CHO collected financial donations on behalf of Jody Gibbons and his family during the entire month of August. Staff, friends, family, and the community came together to help raise money for Jody's cancer and living expenses.

Word must have gotten out in Stanton about the effectiveness and willingness of the staff at CHO to help better their community, because we were approached by the Sheridan Community Hospital to help them run a winter coat drive beginning October 1st, 2024, and running through December 1st, 2024. We also collected monetary donations to aid in the purchasing of winter coats for the local community.

One of the most rewarding community giveback or social equity events was most recently this past December 2024. In our Stanton location, we have a couple (the Bowen family) who came in to visit us for the first time and had the most incredible story to tell. This past summer, somebody crashed into their vehicle and totaled it. While trying to fight insurance companies, sort out damages, heal from their injuries, and get their lives back on track – tragedy struck again a short two weeks later. A drunk driver had crossed the

centerline and completely destroyed their second vehicle in two weeks. All of Gary’s tools had been lost during the accident, rendering him unable to work. Both Gary and his wife survived the second auto accident, however both of them had become injured. Not too long after that, they had also lost their home and were forced to live in a tent during the fall and early winter months. Neither of them had ever asked for a discount, special favors, and were always so grateful and appreciative and so positive about everything. Gary and his wife were able to eventually secure a camper that they can stay in on their property. Knowing the adversity that they have been through, CHO decided to take action. The staff came together to donate a percentage of their tips, CHO itself donated a gift certificate, and the community came together to donate money and supplies to help them sleep warmly and comfortably. On Christmas Eve 2024, CHO called Gary and his wife into our Stanton location for a little Christmas surprise. What a truly successful fundraiser we ran for two kind and wonderful people who have been through a lot via no fault of their own.

Our most proud social equity accomplishment is our unbeatable staff diversity. Ten different people from all different backgrounds, heritages, and walks of life were able to corroborate together an amalgamation of something so beautiful and so inclusive as CHO. We are not a dispensary – we are an *experience*. We attribute the beauty of CHO to our welcomed and varied staff diversity. This kind of accomplishment is no easy feat but does come with starting out with an open mind and a business model of acceptance, equality, and inclusion. We have no reservations pertaining to employing individuals from communities and backgrounds that have been deemed



disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition, or with employing individuals with marijuana convictions. Having only been open for business and state-licensed for three and a half years, the ten of us employees in total have been able to achieve great things for the communities that we serve.



- Community Reinvestment Plan -

Our community reinvestment plan is as wide and as diverse as the employees that partake in it. All our ideas on how to give back to the communities that surround us were brainstormed, planned, and executed by our employees. We care about what our staff cares about. We want to support the causes, fundraisers, and organizations that are either deeply personally important to, or that are chosen by, our staff. In this way, we can diversify and achieve (without bias) our community reinvestment and social equity goals. CHO strives hard to accomplish at least one different social equity goal per month. Since implementing our social equity program and community reinvestment plan earlier this year – we have almost achieved so.

Partnering with Tony Baumgartner, owner and operator of Vikki’s Bridge Street Pasty Shop (located at 77 S Bridge St in Saranac, MI), CHO has yet created another exciting community giveback opportunity that happened in mid-August of 2022. Tony makes and prepares cold submarine sandwiches to raise funds for the local cheerleading team. He donates \$1.35 per submarine sandwich sold to the local cheerleading team to use as they see necessary for the cheer squad. Mr. Baumgartner had expressed a need for help with labor in preparing three thousand cold sub sandwiches, so the team at CHO eagerly leaped at the opportunity to volunteer and help him to raise funds for the local cheerleading team.

According to welfareinfo.org, one in every six residents of Saranac, MI (the community that we serve) lives in poverty – and in Stanton, MI (the other community that we serve), one in every seven residents lives in poverty. We want to fix that. By employing individuals from the areas that we serve, we are thereby also employing individuals who reside in counties that have been deemed disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. We currently employ individuals from both Kent, Ionia, and Montcalm Counties. We do not advertise employment opportunities using strictly only digital forms of media like many other companies (in an effort to streamline hiring practices), such as [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com), [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com), Facebook, nor

craigslist.com because without using these forms of media we are able to select from a much more wide, diverse, and varied candidate pool.

Some potential job applicants may not have access to technological resources to take advantage of these employment opportunities – if you want to apply, all you must do is walk in and ask. Everybody deserves a fair chance at the opportunities that we offer. We plan on continuing in this way to hire from disproportionately affected communities, or those who have been affected by cannabis prohibition, for at least the remainder of this year.

A large part of our community reinvestment plan each year that we are in business is to give back to the American Legion Post 175 full of veterans next door to us (people who also have been deemed disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition). We are ever vigilant in marketing for them any fundraising event that they are hosting. For example, every year they host the annual Ladies' Auxiliary Golf Outing that we help to both sponsor and promote for them (August 12th 2022, August 12th 2023, and August 12th 2024). Every Veterans' Day we throw a party, and all veterans are welcome to enjoy special discounts and promos for that day. In the past, we have also paid to have done traditional white dove ceremonial releases done for them. On October 21st, 2023, CHO helped with their UofM vs MSU watch party, as well as donated money and goods to become that event's raffle sponsor. In addition to helping get people signed up and marketing their fundraisers, we also currently offer a ten percent discount on goods in our retail store to give back to the veterans who gave some or all for us. CHO is also preparing to apply for the Michigan Cannabis Regulatory Agency's Task Force 1620 program to further give back to the veteran's that we serve.

Finally on board for our community reinvestment plan, we regularly host a Back-to-School drive for the impoverished children of our communities. We ask customers for school supply donations, and matching funds donated towards the school supply drive. We have marketed, drove up awareness for, or done Earth Day tree donations (April 22nd 2022), backpack drives, can and bottle drives (January 4th – January 7th, 2023), school supply collection bins (August 1st – August 30th, 2022), Ionia pancake breakfast fundraiser to benefit the Saranac Junior/Senior High School band (February 25th, 2023), sponsored children's animals at the 4-H expos, as well as other various fundraisers and supply drives. CHO even partnered with our neighbors at the Saranac American Legion Post 175 on March 24th, 2023, for an 80's Night fundraiser to benefit the 2023 Saranac senior class trip.



- Corporate Spending Plan -

CHO is aware that it takes more than just volunteer time and donations to make real, actual changes in a community. Therefore, we have decided to partner with businesses and individuals that have been deemed disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. Ideally, we would like to keep our supply chain as diverse as our staff and the surrounding communities. We seek out when able diverse suppliers to support and give preferential treatment to quotes and opportunities representing companies owned by women, ethnic minorities, veterans, LGBTQ+, or individuals with disabilities or past cannabis convictions.

Starting from the very beginning, we chose a location for our retail store that helps support a disproportionately affected individual. We have entered into agreement to pay \$180,000 over five years to lease the building in Saranac that CHO uses as a storefront from this disproportionately affected individual.

Additionally, we have partnered with Angela Mackay, owner and operator of Turtle Printing LLC, to produce our employee uniforms, saleable merchandise, and our marketing materials. Angela identifies as an individual who was disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. To date, we have spent a minimum total of \$786.80 with Turtle Printing LLC for employee uniforms, merchandise, and marketing.



Whenever possible, we seek out diverse suppliers that distribute brands that are owned by women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, veterans, people with disabilities, and/or ethnic minorities. Being ethnic minority owned ourselves, we understand the true value of partnering with cannabis companies like us in order to improve social equity across the cannabis industry in Michigan. CHO chooses to pay for the services of Niffler Bookkeeping - a woman owned, Better Business Bureau accredited accounting firm.

In the fiscal year 2024, CHO has spent \$25,495 with Calyxeum, a female ethnic minority owned cannabis company out of Detroit. We recently spent \$1,600 with Blunt Force Cannabis, a veteran-owned cultivation facility. For the fiscal years 2023 and 2024, CHO has

spent a minimum total of \$55,415.03 with Fawn River Cultivation Company (veteran owned), \$53,762.01 with RKive / Play (ethnic minority owned), \$61,894.75 with Distro10 (ethnic minority and women owned), \$27,745.50 with Pure LLC (veteran owned), \$6,962.01 with Shatter House (ethnic minority owned), \$23,625 with Vera (ethnic minority owned), \$3,950 with Ghost (veteran owned), \$16,700 with FLWRpot (women owned and ethnic minority staffed), \$52,630 with Goodlyfe Farms (women owned), and \$36,230 with House Brands Distro (ethnic minority owned).

In addition to seeking out and utilizing diverse suppliers, CHO also eagerly looks to do business with fellow MI CRA Social Equity All-Stars. In the years 2023 and 2024, CHO has spent at least \$45,892.87 with Redbud Roots (Gold Tier), \$27,745.50 with Pure LLC (Gold Tier), \$2,850 with Sweet Cut Grow (Gold Tier), \$8,000 with Pharmhouse Wellness (Gold Tier), \$6,550 with Diamond Cut Farms (Bronze Tier), and \$2,941.62 with Franklin Fields (Bronze Tier). Between 2023 and 2024, CHO has chosen to spend a minimum total of \$93,979.99 with fellow Social Equity All-Stars. It is our hope that spreading out almost a hundred thousand dollars in that small window of time to fellow Social Equity All-Stars will help to create real, positive change in communities that we ourselves would be unable to reach. It is in this way that CHO ensures the continuation of social equity programs and events state-wide.

To make community wide changes, it takes a lot of resources. Between volunteer time spent by our staff, to financial contributions, CHO is not afraid to offer solutions to community-wide problems. As a sign of commitment to reinvesting into the communities surrounding, CHO intends to commit 0.5% of net sales to be allocated to different community programs that help those who have been deemed disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition.

There are several social equity plans for the future that we currently have shelved for financially limiting reasons only. Once we grow as a company – we want the communities around us to grow too! We have been proudly sticking to our social equity goals that we are able to achieve as a small company of only ten employees and less than four years old. Though we may be small, our hearts and actions are BIG.

- Summary -

CHO is synonymous with caring. Whether that is caring for an individual via mentorship, employment, industry training, retail discounts, consumer education – or caring for an entire community or organization - CHO will happily be there. Through good-faith efforts and productive volunteer work, we here at CHO are always eager to improve the communities around us through our varied and diverse social equity and community reinvestment programs. Having only been in business for three and a half years, and only having ten employees, we have been able to achieve great things in a very short amount of time with very limited resources. We will continue to always look for new, innovative, and more effective ways to add to our social equity goals and improve the communities that we serve. Sometimes cannabis isn't about money – sometimes cannabis is about love.

