



2022 Annual Report

How We Foster Love.

As Together We Rise enters its new chapter as Foster Love we invite you to take a brief look back at what we accomplished TOGETHER.

Together We Rise started in 2008 when Danny Mendoza, our Founder and CEO, discovered his cousin Roger living in a car. Danny wanted to foster Roger but due to his young age, Danny was unable to legally take on the responsibility.

“The entire process of fostering was eye-opening to me. At the time, it felt like everywhere I turned there was red tape and all I wanted to do was to help my little cousin. So Together We Rise really started out as a way for anyone to support kids in foster care,” said Danny Mendoza, Founder, and CEO of Foster Love formally Together We Rise.

At first Together We Rise created after-school sports camps for foster youth. To raise money for the jerseys and sports equipment Danny and the early Together We Rise supporters would dumpster dive for recyclables. It was truly a labor of love for everyone involved.

Soon after we hosted our first bike build tour which led to the development of our service activity programs. These unique programs offered volunteers from across the country the ability to come together in support of foster youth in their community. Now we host the largest scholarship fund for current and former foster youth, extending care and emergency assistance to those pursuing higher education.

“Together We Rise’s evolution has allowed us to adapt and address the ever-changing needs within the foster care community. We’ve taken on nationwide clothing tours and created innovative programs allowing our supporters to give back from anywhere in the nation. Currently, we host the largest sibling reunification events in the country, and in 2022 we’ve added two new scholarship programs,” said Gianna Mulkay, Executive Director of Foster Love formally Together We Rise.

Our growth is a direct reflection of our advocacy efforts helping educate the public on the realities facing foster youth. 2022 was a year of realignment and revival made possible by the commitment of our supporters. The year saw the return of our large in-person events, as well as the launch of our American Industries and Brand Source scholarship programs.

As we move forward into 2023, we ask you to hold space for children in foster care.

We ask you to Foster Love.



DANNY MENDOZA
Founder, and CEO of Foster Love formally Together We Rise



GIANNA MULKAY
Executive Director of Foster Love formally Together We Rise

OUR MISSION

Foster Love formally Together We Rise is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming the way youth navigate through the foster care system in America.

OUR VISION

Foster Love formally Together We Rise is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization comprised of former foster youth and their supporters. Our vision is to improve the lives of children in foster care, who often find themselves forgotten and neglected by the public. We collaborate with individuals, companies, and community partners to bring resources to foster youth and use service-learning activities to educate volunteers on issues surrounding the foster care system.



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Since 2008

806,000+

Children & Youth Served

IN 2022

4.5M

RAISED TO SUPPORT
YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

60K+

SUPPORTERS
ENGAGED

156K+

CHILDREN &
YOUTH SERVED

Our Core Values

TEAMWORK

Working collaboratively allows us to become more efficient and effective in enacting our mission's goals. Leaders rise through their actions and support of one another

INNOVATION

We love and encourage new ideas, elevating each concept while celebrating the unique creativity of each individual within the organization, embracing the spirit of teamwork

PASSION

Our team radiates an intense enthusiasm, which allows us to develop a deeper meaning to our purpose with an eagerness and urgent sense of innovation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stephanie Baeza
Brandon Myers
Kim Moore
Christopher Mekdara
David Menzoda
Danny Mendoza

Community In Action

Bringing Resources Directly To Your Community

Our service activities bring direct relief and comfort to foster youth across the nation. These programs allow individuals, groups, and organizations the opportunity to give back to children in their community.

Replacing Trash Bags With Sweet Cases

For over a decade we have brought foster youth dignity in the form of our Sweet Case program. Every 2 minutes a child enters foster care and most enter with only the clothing on their backs. If given time, it is still a common practice to give children 10 minutes and black trash bag to pack their personal items. Each Sweet Cases replaces a trash bag with a duffle bag filled with a bear, hygiene kit, blanket, and most importantly, a reminder that they matter.



2022

Most Impact: Sweet Cases

“ I received a two month old baby girl. She has already been in two other placements before she found her way home. We are saving the decorative panel to incorporate into her life book.

It is all we have of her early days and means so much to have something to show her when she is older.

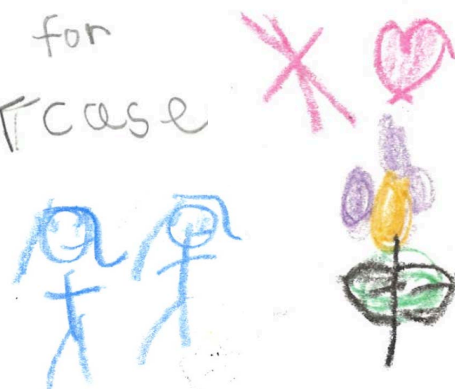
-Jenna, Foster Mom



32,042
SWEET CASES
WERE PROVIDED

Thank you for my sweet case

- Samantha, Age 6



“ I am a caseworker in Illinois. I had to move a teen boy and his preteen sister this week due to safety concerns in their placement. They spent a couple hours at the office while we waited for the new placement to get home from work. The girl was struggling so much. Tears. Anger. All the feels.

I went to go collect some necessities for them from our supply closet, as it was so emergent of a move that we weren't able to get their things until later, and I found all of the Together We Rise teddy bears amongst the hygiene supplies. I took one to the girl and her face brightened.

She held it for a few minutes and then felt ok enough to get up and play some while waiting. When we left she placed it in her backpack and said, "Can't forget him! He's safe in here with me!" Thank you for all you do. Your Teddy helped one of my kiddos on what she declared earlier in the day as, "the worst day of her life."

-Rachel, Caseworker



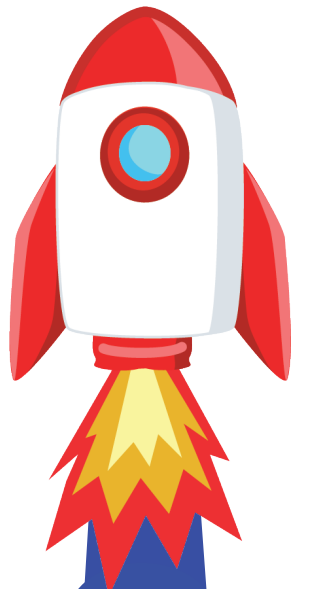
Introducing STEM Education

Last year we made a promise to bring STEM education to 5,000 children in foster care by the end of 2022.

We are ecstatic to report that between our Virtual STEM Kits and traditional STEM Service Activities we were able to surpass our goal and **bring STEM education to 5,400 foster youth this year.**

Dear Together We Rise,
Thank you so much for
our STEM boxes!
We feel loved! ❤️
THANK YOU!

- Children of Parks Youth Ranch



5,400

STEM BOXES WERE PROVIDED

Activating Volunteers

**Charitable Team Building Activities
for Adults, Kids, and All In-Between**

6,239

SUPERHERO BOXES

Awaken the hero within each child with Superhero Boxes. Help empower foster youth and show them their inner strength.



3,933

BIKE BUILD

Bikes provide more than transportation, they bring independence, adventure, and fun. Help change lives with a childhood rite of passage.

4,816

BIRTHDAY BOXES

Join us in celebrating more birthdays with the birthday box. Help ensure that all children in foster care get the birthday celebration they deserve.



2,183

TEEN DUFFLES

Children of all ages enter foster care at any time. Help ensure that teens have dignity and comfort when they enter foster care.

4,406

BUILD A BOARD

Youth in foster care may miss out on simple childhood moments like learning how to ride a skateboard. Help lift the spirits of foster youth.

1,904

BACK 2 SCHOOL PACKS

Providing educational tools is one way we are changing the foster care experience. Help foster youth excel.

Activating Volunteers Virtually

Helping Foster Youth From Anywhere

The pandemic forced our organization to adapt and adjust in order to keep our service projects alive.

Our solution was to create Virtual Service Activity Projects that can be mailed to our supporters and shipped back to our headquarters in Brea, CA **to be distributed to areas of need within the foster care community.**



9,403

IMPACTED THROUGH VIRTUAL SERVICE PROJECTS



Good Acts in Motion

Joy And Cheer During The Holiday Season

The holidays can be an extremely lonely and isolating time for children in foster care.

Sadly, hundreds of children are still entering the foster care system daily... so Foster Love created the Foster Love Holiday Box, an **all-inclusive kit that brings dignity and holiday cheer to children entering foster care or moving homes this holiday season.**



2,191

CHILDREN SUPPORTED DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Academic Services

Mending The Educational Divide For Foster Youth

Since 2015, Together We Rise has delivered over \$8 million dollars in academic assistance directly to college students who have experienced the foster care system. From the emergency resources set up in our Rapid Response program to our Family Fellowship and American Industries scholarships— **we are changing the stats by helping more foster youth reach their academic goals.**

Transforming Lives Through Education

“ As a foster kid, life has been extremely tough. I just wanted to thank you. Personally, and Foster Love as an org because of the opportunities you’re bringing to the foster community and the resources that allow kids like me to have a change in life.”

—James, Foster Youth



2022

At A Glance

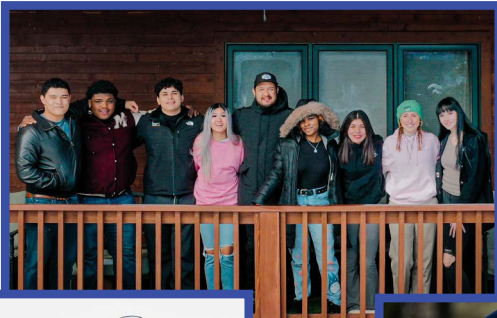
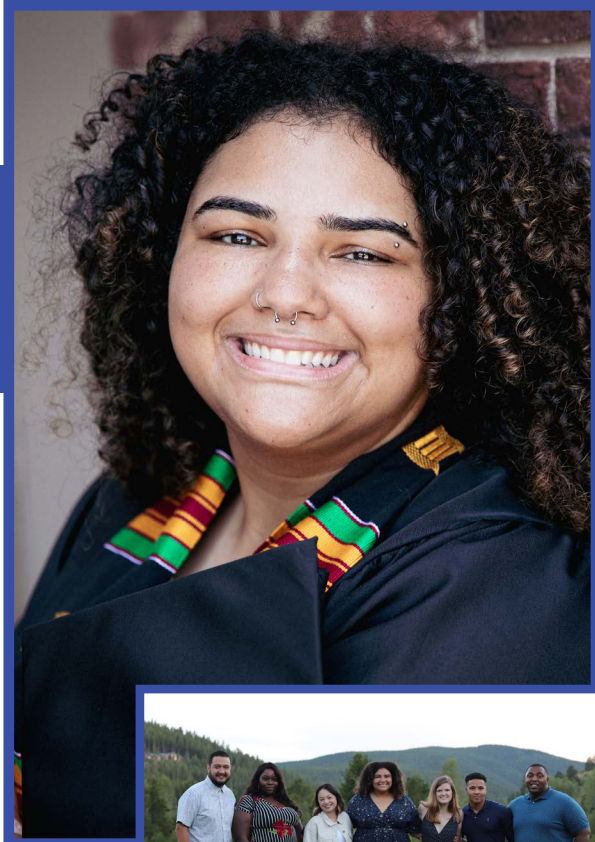
| | |
|--|---|
| \$600,000 | \$298,684 |
| TOTAL AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED | FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED THROUGH RAPID RESPONSE |
| \$150,000 | \$70,000 |
| TOTAL AMERICAN INDUSTRIES SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDED | TOTAL BRANDSOURCE SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDED |
| \$67,300 | \$15,800 |
| FUNDS TOWARDS SCHOOL SUPPLIES & DORM KITS | FUNDS TOWARDS COLLEGE SHOPPING SPREES |
| 992 | 595 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF SUPPORTED STUDENTS | STUDENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH RAPID RESPONSE |


FAMILY FELLOWSHIP
 TOGETHER WE RISE

Mikayla Slaydon

Family Fellowship Scholarship Recipient
 2022 Graduate

"I want to thank you for this opportunity to benefit my educational path... I have so many plans for my future and how to make it better for everyone, and **I want you all to know that you are such an instrumental part of making those dreams a reality.**"



BRANDSOURCE[®]
 Scholars

Luis Almora

BrandSource Scholarship Recipient

"This scholarship is about to help me achieve the goal I always wanted since high school. I remember when I first started welding and when I first built my very own creation. I was proud because I was able to say "I built that". **Now, because of this scholarship, I will be able to complete my certification** and I will be able to say "Yeah, WE built that!"



68

**FAMILY FELLOWSHIP
 STUDENTS SUPPORTED
 SINCE 2015**

90%

**FAMILY FELLOWSHIP
 GRADUATION RATE**

A Year Of Giving



March
Spring into STEM



March
Social Worker Appreciation Gifts



May
Foster Care Awareness Month



June
Summer Fun Kits



August
Adoption Disney Trips



September
Sibling Reunification Event - Disney Days



October
Socktober



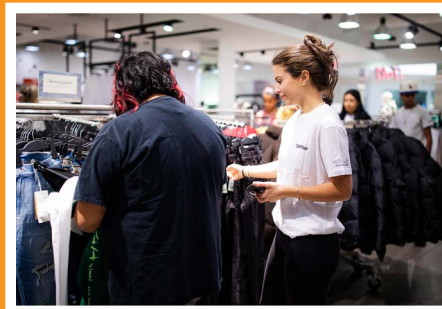
October
Halloween Treat



November
Feeding Families



November
Giving Tuesday



December
Holiday Shopping Sprees



December
Footlocker Shopping Sprees



Foster Care Awareness Month

MAY 2022

Every May Foster Care Awareness Month allows organizations and individuals to speak up and educate others about the disparities and joys within the foster care community. There are currently over 430,000 children in foster care nationwide and their needs exist all year round.

"Thank you so much for the care package, you made me cry lol, But it was the thoughtfulness that made me smile. The Items were much needed, minus the Gummies lol those were much wanted lol. **I am going through a hard time mentally and your thoughtfulness has helped put a smile on my face."**

-Annaleigh, Foster Youth

2,376
ACTIVE AGENCY
PARTNERS

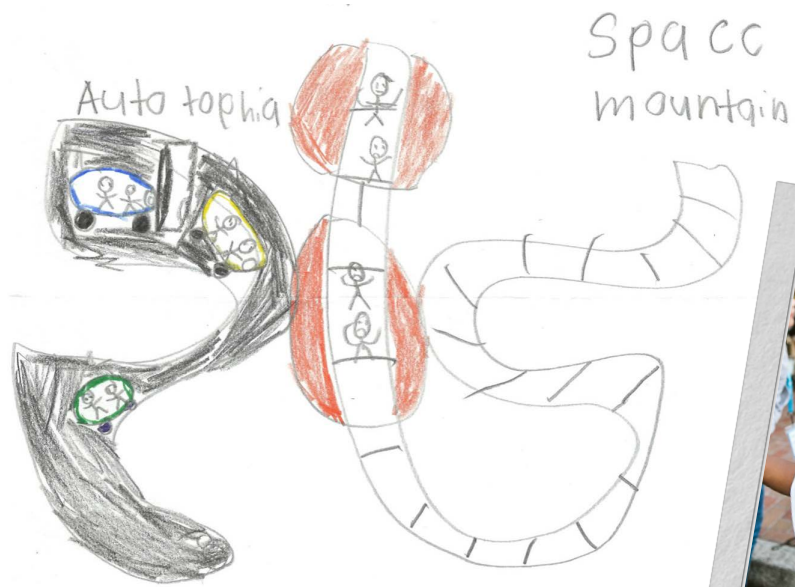


Sibling Reunification Events

DISNEY DAYS, SEPTEMBER 2022

For the past decade we've created magical moments for thousands of siblings during the Disney Days reunification event.

Currently, 70% of children in foster care are in placements separate from their siblings. We started Disney Days because **we believe that siblings in foster care belong together.**



- Carlos, Age 8

189
KIDS REUNITED

181
VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED



Thank you to the people that took us to Dineland that you so much for taking me and my brother to Dineland my brother says thank you so much for every things so so so much thank you. I appreciate so much for every thing that we did in the game like splash mountain and space mountain rollercoasters and for bracelets and lunch and Dener. Thank you so so much Thank you.

- Rosario, Age 9

Socktober!

OCTOBER 2022

Socks are the #1 most requested item in homeless shelters and foster care. Considering that one in every 30 children in the United States is experiencing homelessness... **it's imperative that we support them in any way we can.**

We started Socktober as a way to address this need among those experiencing homelessness. 2022 marks the 5th year that Together We Rise has participated in Socktober. Thanks to your support, we've provided socks to over 300,000 children in foster care.

"It makes me feel awesome to be part of an organization that is making an impact. Just to know that you don't need to do a lot to do good."

Sometimes just a little bit helps a lot and we all need a helping hand."

- Mandy Ho, Volunteer



Thank you very much for the socks

- Elizabeth, Age 7

85,000
SOCKS SHIPPED



Holiday Shopping Spree

DECEMBER 2022

"The holiday shopping spree was amazing and I will do it every year if I can. The teen I was paired up with was a freshman in high school, she was newly placed in a Foster home.

Her Foster mom told me that she pretty much arrived with the clothes that she was wearing. I was just kind of her personal shopper that day. She walked away with pretty much a wardrobe. It was a far place from where we started, she was so self-conscious and introverted.

By the end, she was just so proud and hugging.

You could just see her confidence elevate and it was just extremely rewarding for me. I really feel like I got to bring joy to this young lady.

Thinking back on my life, if somebody made that impact on me when I was 14 or 15 years old. I would have never forgotten it."

- Ann Marie, Volunteer



485
YOUTHS HELPED

Donors And Supporters



Foster Love

MAY 2022

Rapid Response Dorm Essentials Shopping Spree

Our Supporters

Create Positive Change In The Community

“ Please continue this, as a former foster child I can’t tell you how much the smallest of things really do matter so much.

The state funding, caseworkers, and foster parents are so limited as far as what they can feasibly do for the magnitude of children in their care.

I can remember everyone involved trying to make the best of what was available. It’s only getting more complicated and harder to provide. It feels good to see people pool together on this. Thank you.”

-Cierra, Former Foster Youth



A Special Thank You

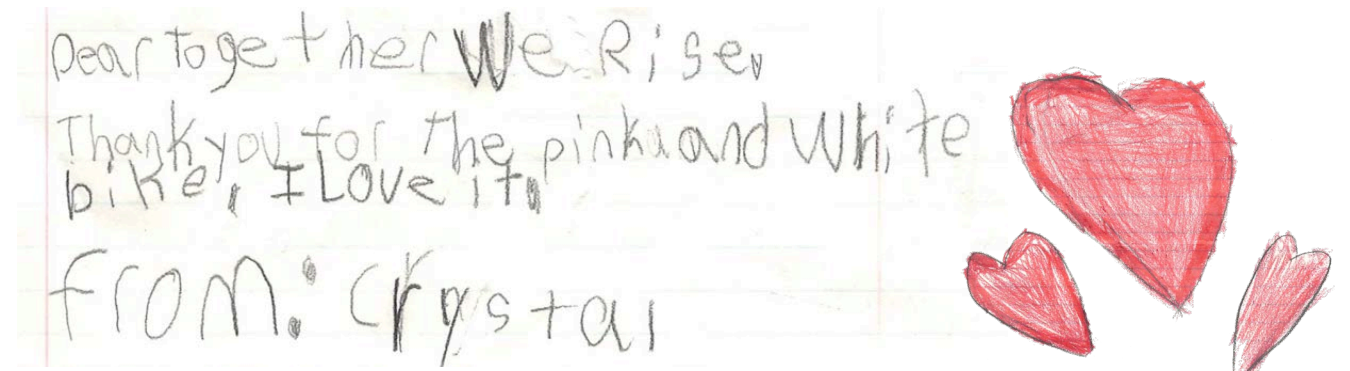
To Hope and Robert Smith, with the Fund II Foundation for their warmth and generosity towards our Family Fellowship scholars.



SUPERHERO | \$100,000



CHAMPION | \$75,000



- Crystal, Age 6

ALLY | \$50,000



FRIEND | \$25,000



Foundations

Brea Rotary Club
Carmax Foundation
Denver Foundation
Fund II Foundation
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Inland Empire Community Foundation
Karakin Foundation
National Christian Foundation
Omron Foundation Inc.
Reïssa Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Steve Tisch Family Foundation
Stuart Foundation
The Figgers Foundation
The Stephen Haag & Quincy Marchelya Fund
Walter S. Johnson Foundation

Supporters

All Together ATX
AppFolio Property Manager
ArcBest
Avalon Bay
Benevity
Channel Bakers
Cisco
Covia
Crown Toyota
Edwards
Experian
HBO
Macy's
Netflix
New York Life
Saban Brands
Sage
Southern CA Edison
Sundt Corp
Thrivent Financial
TJX
Vertical Bridge Reit LLC
Visa
Water Marq
ZipRecruiter



A Special Thanks To Our Volunteers

We are humbled by the support our mission has found in volunteers across the nation. Each volunteer carries the torch of our mission through their commitment and love. Thanks to their efforts we are able to bring resources directly to the foster youth who need them.

Our mission is sustained by the kindness and dedication of thousands of volunteers who understand that children in foster care need us.

“Together We Rise is a great foundation. You guys do a lot of really great things, probably one of the first things we (SAGE) did was build bikes. Once we did that first event, I was kind of hooked.

Usually, I try to do all the monthly events. I think the most impactful thing I have experienced is Disney Days. You get to be hands-on with the kids and see them come in really unsure about the day with little confidence. You get to spend time with them and talk with them. By the end of the day, they were opening up and flourishing.

You just see that simply by spending time and embracing these kids it really made a difference.

These kids felt like someone really cared. You get to bond with them and it makes you feel like you really made a difference.”

- Michelle Pickering, Volunteer



61,809
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED IN 2022

A Special Thank You

To Our In-Kind Donors!

Bombas Socks

Shiseido

Sparkling Ice

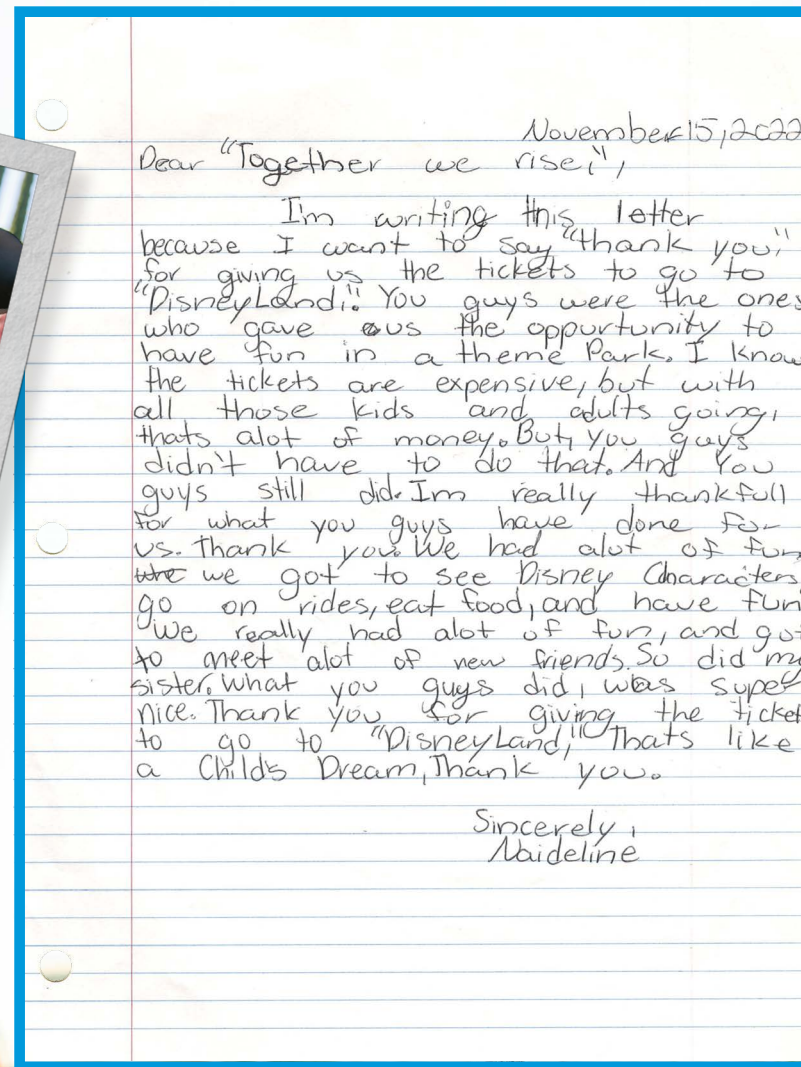
Purple Mattress

AWAY Luggage

Thrive Cosmetics

The Chalk Bloc

AURA

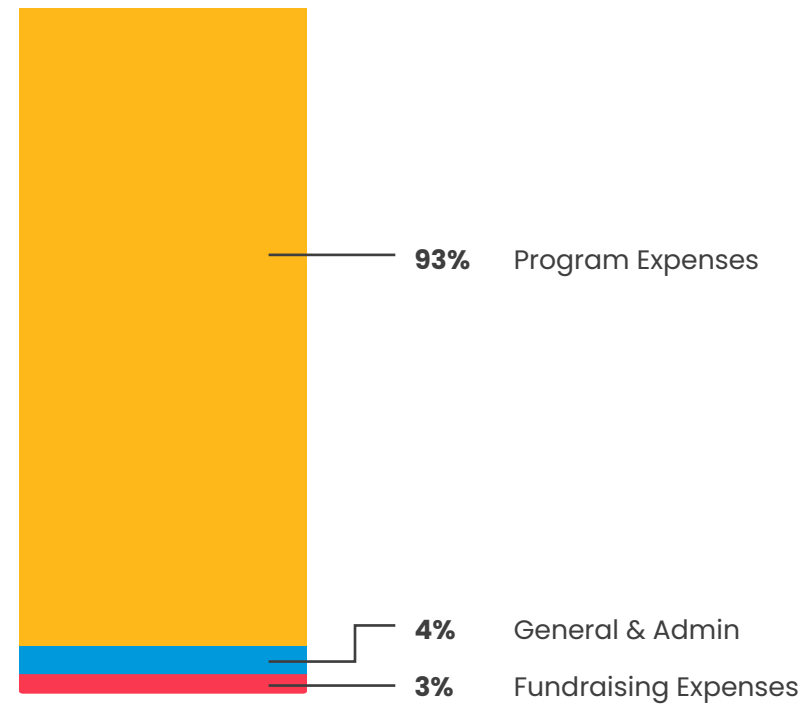


Financials

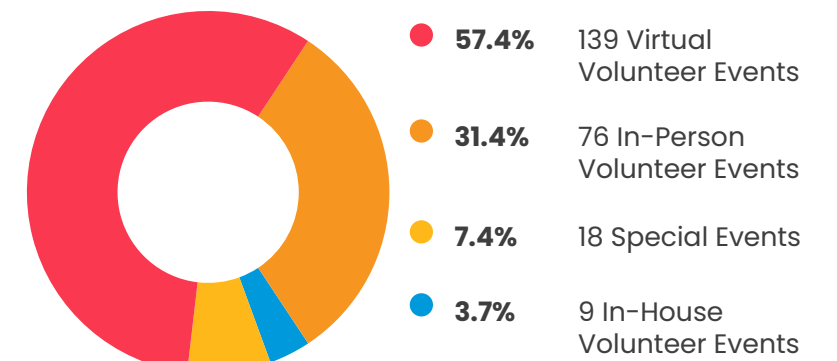
Breakdown

| | | |
|----------------------|----|-----------|
| Total Income | \$ | 7,600,000 |
| Net Assets | \$ | 9,600,027 |
| Programs & Expenses | \$ | 7,164,921 |
| General & Admin | \$ | 300,471 |
| Fundraising Expenses | \$ | 263,313 |

Allocation of Expenses



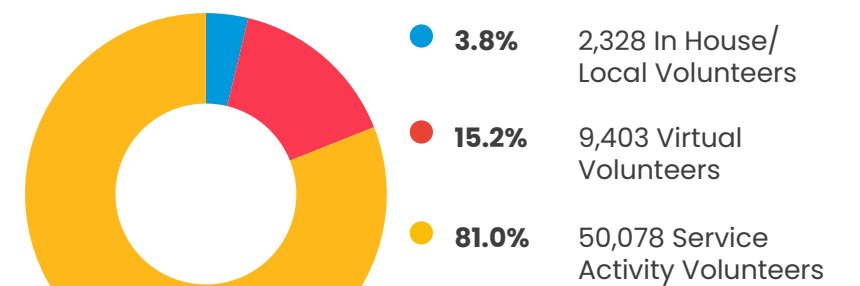
Distribution of Events



242

TOTAL EVENTS

Distribution of Volunteers




61,809

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED




www.fosterlove.com

Formerly known as Together We Rise

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