



safe

*accepted*

supported



2023 Annual Impact Report

# Report to the Community

Dear BFY commUNITY,

We are grateful you are here, sharing in the work and impact of The Bridge for Youth. We thank you for your generous support and partnership in 2023.

This report features the shared success of The Bridge and the youth we supported over the last year; successes that will impact our community for years to come as these youth continue to thrive in their families, in school, in work, and in our community.

Since 1970, The Bridge for Youth has been a safe refuge for youth experiencing family conflict, neglect, abandonment, exploitation, and violence. The Bridge for Youth centers youth voice, justice, and equity in all we do, and we empower youth experiencing homelessness through safe shelter, basic needs, and healthy relationships. When asked, youth at The Bridge have a vision of a community where all youth feel safe, accepted, and supported.

***With your generous support this year, The Bridge continued to expand our holistic health services, advanced racial justice and equity, initiated significant shelter renovations, and invested in our staff well-being and compensation.***

This is heart work and this is hard work. It takes a loving, committed staff, and a dedicated community of donors and partners. Thank you for being part of the supportive "commUNITY" walking alongside our youth experiencing homelessness today, for investing in their future, and being their beacon of hope.

In Gratitude,



*Lisa Mears*

Lisa Mears, MPA  
President



*Geoff Jones*

Geoff Jones  
Board Chair

## 2023 Board of Directors

- **Geoff Jones, Board Chairperson** - Director of Marketing & Leasing, CommonBond Communities
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- **Matthew Netland, Member** - State of MN (IT), Service Delivery Director
- **Jennifer Carter, Member** - Senior Director of Member Services, Minnesota State Bar Association

## Executive Leadership Team

- Lisa Mears, MPA, President
- Angela Alvarez, HR & Administration Director
- Thomas Craig, Finance Director
- Juli Gottschall, Clinical Director
- La'Kisha Hollmon-Griffin, Program Director
- Dr. Sheetal Kanse, Monitoring & Evaluation Director



# Programs



## Youth Housing Programs

### RESILIENCE HOUSE

Emergency shelter focused on family reunification whenever safe and possible. Provides temporary shelter, meals, access to healthcare, and case management for up to 14 youth, ages 10-17.

### GLORIA'S PLACE

The only emergency shelter in Minnesota for pregnant/parenting youth (ages 15-17) and their children (ages 0-3). Provides emergency shelter, case management, healthcare, and parenting education for up to six families.

### MARLENE'S PLACE

The only site-based transitional housing program specifically for pregnant/parenting youth (ages 16-20) and their children (ages 0-3) in Hennepin County. Provides housing, case management, healthcare, and parenting education for up to five families.

### RITA'S HOUSE

An intentional living community providing affordable rental housing, case management, and independent living skills for 12 youth (ages 18-21).



## MISSION

The Bridge for Youth centers youth voice, justice, and equity in all we do, and empowers youth experiencing homelessness through safe shelter, basic needs, and healthy relationships.

## VISION

All youth feel safe, accepted, and supported.

## Outreach & Support Services

Connects with youth in the community through street, site and mobile outreach.

### Youth Response Center

Available 24/7/365 provides immediate support and resources for youth and families. The Bridge also hosts YSNMN, a mobile app that connects youth with available shelter and resources in real time.

### Counseling & Aftercare

Free weekly support groups that give youth a safe place to talk about challenges and find peer support. Current groups include So What If I Am, crime victims, and general support. Individual, group, and family counseling that utilize positive youth development and trauma-informed approaches to promote awareness and personal growth.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

24/7

# Your support provided HOPE to nearly 6,000 youth.

## Here's a glimpse into the impact of your support



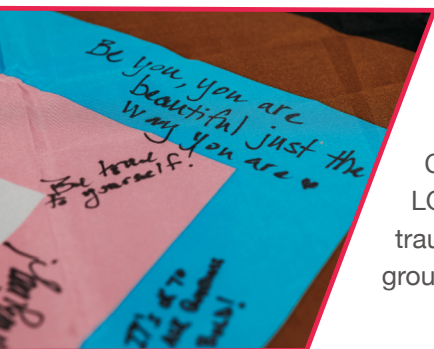
**Kristi** - Kristi and her son Bubba came to The Bridge after moving to Minnesota to leave an abusive household. She had \$40 to her name, nowhere to go, no vehicle, and her baby boy to care for. Kristi and Bubba moved into Marlene's Place transitional living program and found everything about it to be "a blessing". Having safe housing and support, a crib and infant supplies for Bubba, and a staff team to help her apply for resources, meant she could focus on her own healing and on parenting Bubba. Kristi appreciated that staff were empathetic, understood trauma response and recovery, and believed in her for who she was so she could show up as her authentic self as a parent and a young person with her own life goals.

Through her resiliency, ability to advocate for her needs, and trust in her staff team, Kristi was able to graduate from the Marlene's Place program early. Now, she and Bubba have found safety and stability in their own home and have even welcomed a cat into their family. In the words of Kristi, ***"I am a successful, happy mother, a college student, and my son is in daycare. We are just so happy and healthy."***

**Emma** - Emma was referred to The Bridge for Youth's Program Outreach Coordinator for a housing assessment, as she was currently living in her car with her one-month-old son, Mikael, after fleeing an abusive partner. The Outreach Coordinator was able to provide Emma and Mikael with diapers, gas cards, and other supplies while providing case management. Soon after, Emma received a housing referral and was able to secure an apartment of her own. The Bridge provided her with an air mattress, a Home for Good bin from United Way, and gift cards to buy household supplies to make their new place a home. The day Emma signed her lease, she texted the Program Outreach Coordinator; ***"Hey, just wanted to say a huge thank you. I'm signing my lease today at 1:30. I was very embarrassed to ask for help but glad I did! Super glad it was you! You're such a wonderful person, and I needed this relief getting back on my feet"***.



The Bridge for Youth's Program Outreach Coordinator has continued to support Emma and Mikael as they've settled into their new place. Emma has already secured employment and childcare, and her next goal is to go back to college to pursue a degree in Elementary Education.



**Sia** - Sia, a seventeen-year-old transgender youth, came to The Bridge for safety and support after living with his mother who was struggling with alcohol use and depression, and was unable to accept Sia's gender identity. After being placed in Resilience House by Child Protective Services, Sia found acceptance. He joined The Bridge's support group for LGBTQ+ youth called "So What If I Am?", where he bonded with other youth facing similar trauma. Despite being an introvert, Sia came out of his shell, participating in and even leading groups and activities.

Sia has started working at his first job and is transitioning into Rita's House, an intentional living community and supportive housing program at The Bridge. He is attending online school and is working towards graduating next spring. He plans on pursuing journalism or the arts, with interest in getting into the film industry. Sia is excited to have this sense of accomplishment and to take these huge steps into adulthood. Sia and his mother have also grown to accept each other more and are working on rebuilding their relationship.



## Impact In 2023, The Bridge...

**80%**

Youth engaged  
in holistic health  
& wellness  
services

**74%**

Youth exited  
emergency shelter  
to safe and stable  
housing

**17%**

Youth served  
identified as  
LGBTQ+

**6,981**

Youth were engaged  
through outreach  
services

**\$726,987**

Donated by 1,248 Individuals

**35**

Young families found  
safety and stability  
through emergency  
shelter & transitional  
housing for pregnant  
and parenting youth

**90%**

Youth have a positive  
relationship with a caring  
adult at exit

**305**

Youth were provided  
safe and stable housing  
through emergency  
shelter and housing  
programs

**85%**

Youth served  
identified as  
BIPOC



**145**

Volunteers



**\$248,834**

In-Kind Donations



**1,803**

Hours Donated



# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Activities

October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023

### Support & Revenue

Contributions & Grants	\$1,785,378
Government Contracts/Grants	\$2,641,965
United Way	\$297,427
Special Events	\$34,316
Investment Income	\$27,078
Miscellaneous Income	\$140,095

**Total Support & Revenue \$4,926,259**

### Expenses

Program Services	\$3,910,222
Management and General	\$583,929
Fundraising	\$470,099

**Total Expenses \$4,964,250**

**Total Change in Net Assets (\$37,991)**

## Statement of Financial Position

### Assets

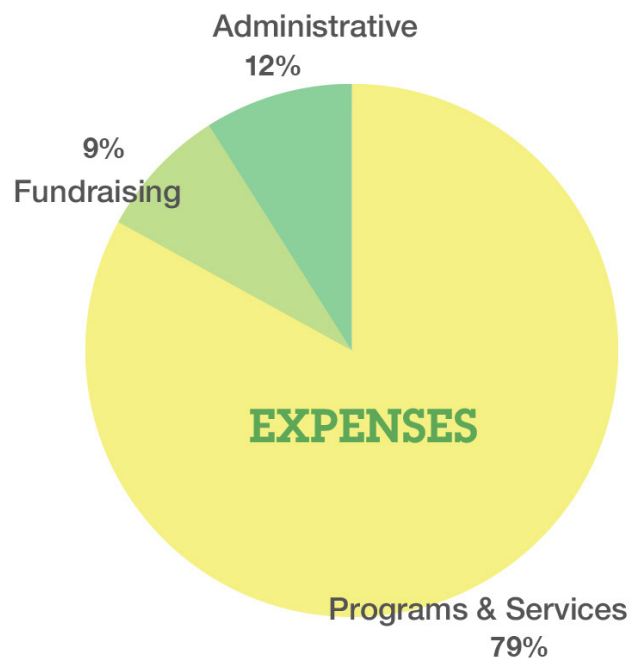
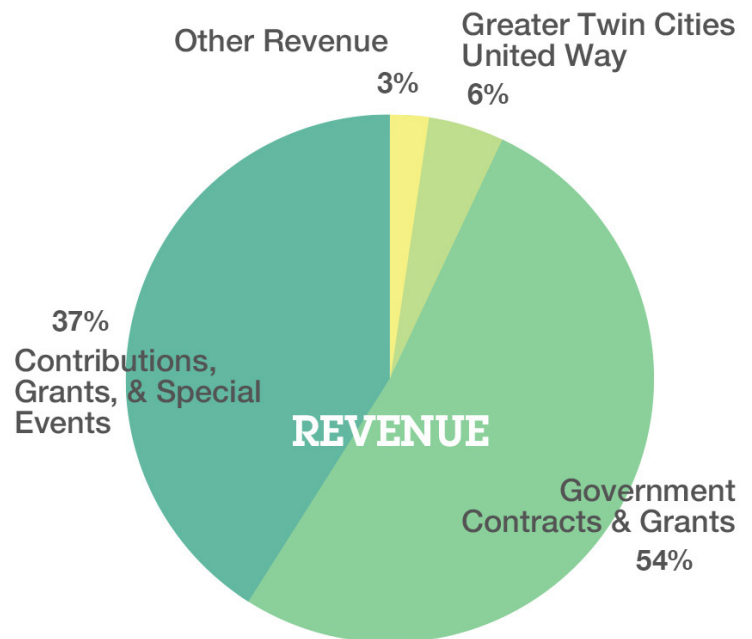
Current Assets	\$2,939,092
Property & Equipment (Net)	\$5,712,777
Other Assets	\$708,617

**Total Assets \$9,360,486**

### Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$355,750
Long-Term Liabilities	\$2,556,061
Net Assets	\$6,448,675

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$9,360,486**



# Engaging in commUNITY in 2023

Throughout 2023, The Bridge for Youth hosted three events to Amplify, Elevate, and Inspire Action through youth voice that raises awareness about programs at The Bridge and, more importantly, the resiliency of youth in our community.



Love and laughter filled the room as we gathered in commUNITY at Sprout, a celebration of families and a glimpse into the strength and journey of pregnant and parenting youth. Alongside our board members, commUNITY partners, and generous supporters, we heard powerful stories of hope and resiliency from youth, and were provided a glimpse into program expansion for pregnant and/or parenting youth at The Bridge.



On Sunday, June 11th we commemorated Black Liberation, and we celebrated our BFY commUNITY at the 2nd annual Juneteenth Celebration Block Party at The Bridge. Liberation is love when we create intentional spaces, celebrations, and communities where we can show up as our true and authentic selves and be celebrated, supported, and loved. When one of us thrives, we all thrive – especially youth. Our vision is a community where all youth feel safe, accepted, and supported. Over 500 youth, staff, neighbors, supporters, board, and partners attended the celebration and joined us in furthering our vision.



This cherished annual event truly embodies our commUNITY's united commitment to our youth! Together, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of "So What If I Am?" – a safe and welcoming place for all LGBTQ+ youth.

Our guest speakers shared a message of hope and a renewed commitment to our youth, and the venue was decorated with beautiful and heartfelt youth art. This commUNITY event encourages everyone to share their unique perspectives, while celebrating inclusivity and diversity that strengthens and unites our commUNITY.



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**The Bridge invites you to engage in commUNITY throughout 2024.**

Learn more at [bridgeforyouth.org/events](https://bridgeforyouth.org/events)



" You loved me when  
no one else did "

– Former youth  
at The Bridge

PATIENCE

LOVE & CARING

COMMUNICATION

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY

CO-CREATION

COMMUNITY



THE BRIDGE  
FOR YOUTH

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