

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Spanish American
Committee

for a better community

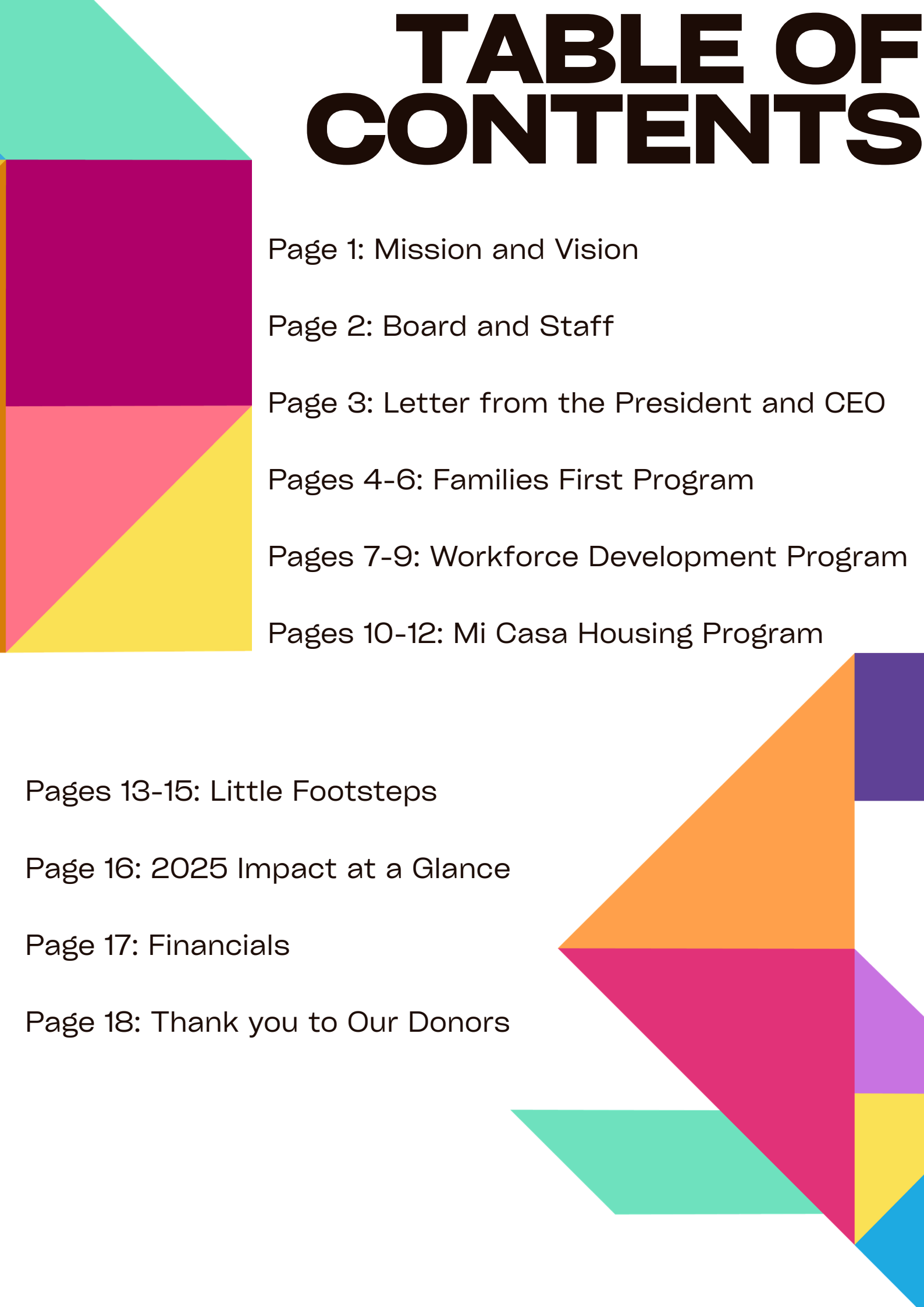


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MISSION

The Spanish American Committee's mission is to act as a gateway to socioeconomic success for Spanishspeaking individuals and families in Northeast Ohio while maintaining and celebrating a Latino perspective

VISION

Our vision is to be the keystone leader in providing and coordinating comprehensive social and economic services to the Latino community throughout Northeast Ohio by means of education, workforce development, and housing programs.



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Mi Casa Housing Manager

Alexandra Moya

LCP Career Coach

Yan Rodríguez

Receptionist

Luz Rodríguez

Receptionist

Meescha Gonzalez

Receptionist

Meescha Gonzalez

Workforce Development Specialist

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Financial Literacy Counselor

Raquel Albuez Paez

Bilingual Case manager

Carmen Valentin

Bilingual Case manager

Ruth Nieves

Bilingual Case manager

Rae Caruthers

Bilingual Licensed Social Worker

Andres Cruz Guzman

Bilingual Licensed Social Worker

Dalila Christian ILSW

EESOL Instructor

Evelio Rodríguez

Maintenance Technician

Derryo Pearl

School-Age Teacher

Jennifer Paris

Preschool Assistant

Anelisse Garcia

Support Staff

Jarilys Colon

Preschool Lead

Deborah Resto

Assistant Toddler Teacher

Alma Mazariegos Padilla

Toddler Lead

Mary Velez

Lead Infant Teacher

Yessika Nunez

Infant Assistant Teacher

Alejandra Figueroa

Infant Teacher

Angeleischa Benitez

Teacher

Janessa Lopez

Teacher

Rashelle McGregor

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD PRESIDENT

A Year of Reflection, Legacy, and Renewal

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on 2025, I do so with immense gratitude, pride, and a deep sense of responsibility to the community that has shaped both my life and the work of the Spanish American Committee for nearly six decades.

This year marks a profound transition, not only for our organization, but for me personally. After 53 years of service, I prepare to step away from my role as Chief Executive Officer. What began as a commitment to serve Cleveland's Latino community during a time when few resources existed has grown into a comprehensive network of programs that now reach thousands of individuals and families each year. It has been the honor of a lifetime to be part of this journey.

In 2025, even amid leadership transition, our mission remained unwavering. We continued to respond to increasing community needs with compassion, urgency, and innovation. Through our Mi Casa Housing Program, families found pathways to stable housing and homeownership. Our workforce development initiatives, including the Latino Construction Program and ESOL services, equipped individuals with the skills and confidence to access meaningful employment. Families First ensured that those facing crisis were met with dignity and comprehensive support, while Little Footsteps continued to nurture our youngest learners, preparing them for lifelong success and moved into a new building that will bring new life to our existing services that support our most vulnerable and precious clients, the children of our future.

This year also brought new challenges. Economic pressures, housing instability, and shifting public resources required us to deepen our commitment and strengthen our systems of care. Yet, what has always defined this organization is its ability to adapt without losing sight of its roots. Our strength has never been in programs alone, but in the relationships we build, the trust we earn, and the community we uplift together.

As we turn a new leaf, I am confident in the future of the Spanish American Committee. Our foundation is strong. Our team is dedicated. And our community continues to inspire us every day. While my role may be changing, my belief in this organization and its mission has never been stronger. To our staff, board, partners, and supporters, thank you. Your commitment has made this work possible, and your continued investment will ensure that the next chapter is even more impactful than the last.

With deep gratitude and enduring hope,

Ramonita Vargas

Chief Executive Officer
Spanish American Committee



FAMILIES FIRST PROGRAM



FAMILIES FIRST PROGRAM

The Families First Program at the Spanish American Committee provides comprehensive social services that help Latino and Hispanic families navigate complex challenges and stabilize their households. Through culturally and linguistically responsive case management, staff assist clients in accessing public benefits, basic needs support, community resources, and vital documentation services. The program focuses on addressing immediate hardships while helping families build long term stability and resilience.

Beginning in Summer 2026, Families First will expand its services to include mental and behavioral health support, strengthening the organization's ability to serve community members experiencing trauma, stress, and other behavioral health challenges. With the addition of one on one counseling and behavioral health services, SAC will deepen its support for some of the community's most vulnerable individuals and families, ensuring care that is culturally responsive and accessible in Spanish.

Vital Document Assistance

- Support obtaining birth certificates, passports, and state IDs
- Help replacing Social Security cards
- ID vouchers for eligible clients

Weekly Walk-In Services

- Open hours for urgent client needs
- Immediate service guidance

Domestic Violence Support

- Referrals for survivor support services
- Partnership with the Journey Center for Safety and Healing

Client Support and Case Management

- Identifying barriers and prioritizing client needs
- Guidance toward stability and self-sufficiency

Community Referrals

- Connecting clients to local services
- Referrals for housing, healthcare, employment, and basic needs

Public Benefits Assistance

- Help applying for SNAP, Medicaid, PRC, and Unemployment
- Support with Social Security, childcare vouchers, and utilities

Basic Needs Distribution

- Essential household items and toiletries
- Baby supplies, school materials, and fresh produce

Language Access and Advocacy

- Advocacy for Spanish-speaking clients
- Interpretation and translation for service access

Technology Support

- Help navigating online systems
- Email setup and benefits portal access



FAMILIES FIRST



MARIELA'S STORY

Mariela came to the Spanish American Committee seeking help after facing repeated disruptions to her state healthcare coverage. The constant renewals, denials, and uncertainty left her unable to schedule critical medical appointments and unsure if she would remain insured.

With support from a licensed social worker at SAC, Mariela successfully renewed her benefits and, after another denial, filed an appeal. Her social worker accompanied her to the hearing, advocating on her behalf before a judge and county representatives. As a result, Mariela's healthcare coverage was reinstated.

Today, Mariela can access the medical care she needs and expects more stable coverage moving forward. Her story reflects the vital role SAC's social services team plays in advocating for clients and ensuring community members can obtain essential healthcare.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

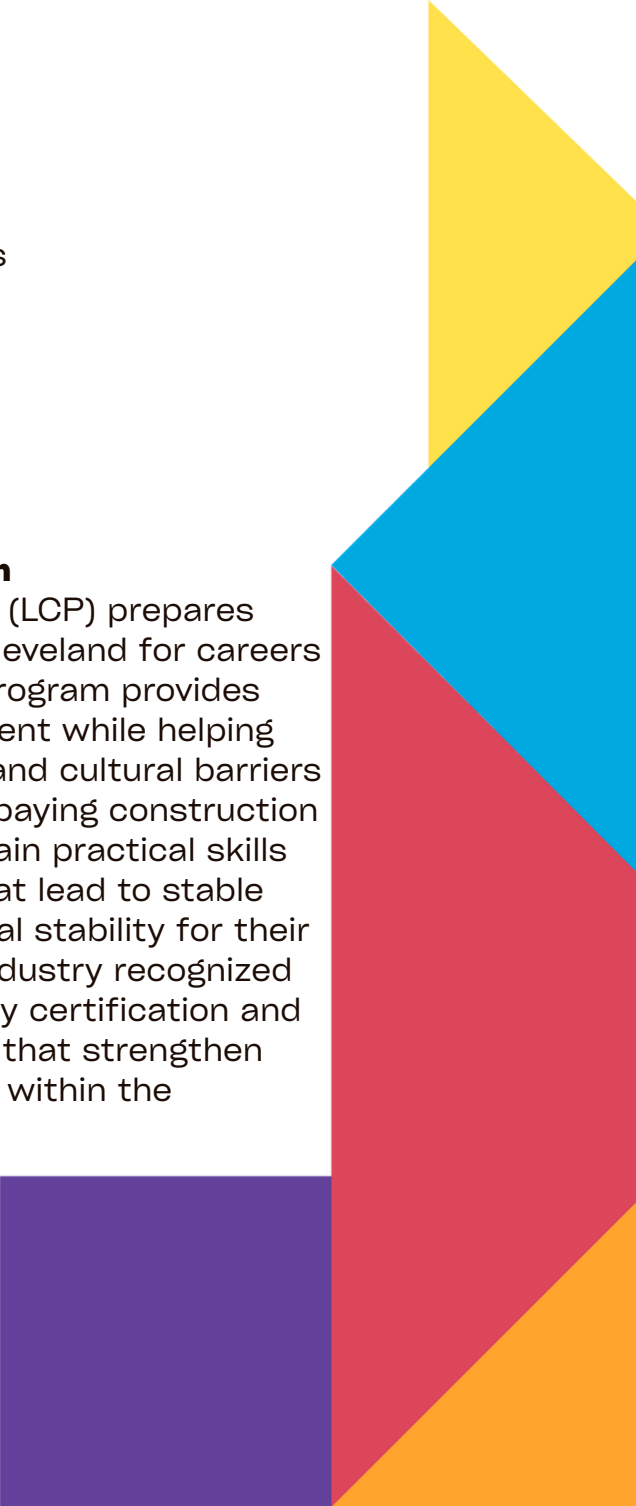
The Workforce Development Program provides bilingual education, skills training, and employment support designed to help Latino individuals overcome barriers to stable employment. Many participants face challenges such as limited English proficiency, gaps in formal education, or difficulty navigating the workforce, and the program offers culturally and linguistically accessible services to address these barriers. Through Spanish language instruction, job readiness training, and direct job placement support, participants gain the tools needed to enter and succeed in the workforce. By combining education with individualized guidance and ongoing support, the program helps individuals build the confidence, skills, and stability needed to achieve long term economic self sufficiency.

Program Services

- Bilingual job-readiness
- Soft skills training
- Resume writing assistance
- Interview techniques and mock interview sessions
- Follow up on 30-, 60-, and 90-day placements
- Assistance with online job applications
- Individual career counseling
- Job fairs
- ESOL classes

The Latino Construction Program

The Latino Construction Program (LCP) prepares Spanish speaking individuals in Cleveland for careers in the construction trades. The program provides hands on training and job placement while helping participants overcome language and cultural barriers that often limit access to higher paying construction jobs. Through LCP, participants gain practical skills and connections to employers that lead to stable employment and stronger financial stability for their families. Participants also earn industry recognized credentials, including OSHA safety certification and other trade related certifications that strengthen their ability to enter and advance within the construction workforce.



Christopher Martinez, a participant in the 21st cohort of the Latino Construction Program (LCP), quickly distinguished himself through his dedication, strong work ethic, and consistent engagement in the program. From the beginning, Christopher maintained excellent attendance and actively participated in training, demonstrating a strong commitment to building a future in the construction industry.

Through LCP's employer partnerships, Christopher was initially offered a temporary contract with Service Tech Corporation. Despite facing language barriers and still developing his English skills, Christopher's determination and performance impressed his employer, leading to a full-time job offer. He began his new role on July 7 alongside another LCP participant.

Service Tech Corporation has become a valuable partner to the program, hiring three LCP graduates after meeting them at a job fair hosted at CentroVilla25. The company has also taken meaningful steps to support multilingual workers by investing in AI translation earbuds to improve communication on job sites, reflecting a strong commitment to creating inclusive workplaces.

Christopher's journey did not stop there. In October 2025, he secured investors to launch his own home renovation contracting business. Today, Christopher is not only employed but also a small business owner, demonstrating the transformative potential of workforce development programs like LCP. His story reflects how access to training, supportive employer partnerships, and determination can open doors to long-term economic mobility and entrepreneurship.

CHRISTOPHERS STORY



MI CASA HOUSING PROGRAM



MI CASA HOUSING PROGRAM

The Mi Casa Housing Program is a HUD Certified housing counseling program and an affiliate of UnidosUS, the nation's largest Latino civil rights and advocacy organization. Through Mi Casa, the Spanish American Committee provides comprehensive, bilingual housing counseling and financial capability services designed to help individuals and families achieve and maintain stable housing while building long term financial security.

Serving both English and Spanish speaking community members, Mi Casa ensures that culturally and linguistically accessible support is available to individuals navigating complex housing and financial systems. The program focuses on education, individualized counseling, and practical tools that empower clients to make informed financial and housing decisions.

Mi Casa Housing Program services include:

- First Time Homebuyer Education
- Pre Purchase Housing Counseling
- Tenant and Rental Counseling
- Mortgage Delinquency and Foreclosure Prevention
- Credit Repair
- Budgeting and Savings Counseling
- Consumer Protection Education



MICHAEL'S STORY

When Michael first came to the United States, homeownership felt out of reach. With no established credit history and limited understanding of the U.S. financial system, he connected with the Mi Casa Housing Program seeking guidance toward a better future for his family. Through bilingual homebuyer education workshops and personalized financial coaching, Michael began building the foundation for long term stability. Starting with a secured credit card and a customized savings plan, he worked consistently over the next two years to strengthen his financial profile, improve his credit score to over 680, and prepare for the responsibilities of homeownership.

With continued support and counseling, Michael achieved mortgage readiness and successfully purchased his first home in the United States. His journey reflects the transformative impact of culturally responsive housing counseling and demonstrates how sustained guidance can help immigrant and Latino families move from financial uncertainty to long term economic stability and homeownership.





LITTLE FOOTSTEPS BILINGUAL CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER

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The Spanish American Committee has long been an anchor within Cleveland's West Side Latino community. Our bilingual childcare program was first created in 1974 to offer families a reliable, affordable, and culturally responsive childcare option for Spanish-speaking parents and their children. Over the decades, the program has grown into a trusted resource for local families, with many returning generation after generation. Today, our center proudly welcomes children from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, providing a nurturing environment where they can learn and develop in both English and Spanish.

We Provide From infants to toddlers, and through preschool we are interested in the process of learning. At Little Footsteps we believe that children should be provided with a meaningful early childhood education that stimulates their inquisitive nature, and ultimately sets the stage for their future success. We provide a variety of modalities for children to learn:

- Language
- Reasoning
- Experience
 - Math
 - Science
- Alphabet and numbers
- Painting, crafts, and open ended art
 - Dramatic play
 - Provocations
- Active and quiet play

LITTLE FOOTSTEPS BILINGUAL CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER

Enrolling our children at the Little Footsteps Bilingual Child Enrichment Center was one of the hardest transitions for our family, especially with an infant and toddler. As parents, there is always fear and uncertainty about leaving your children in someone else's care, but from the very beginning, the staff welcomed us with warmth, compassion, and genuine care. What started as childcare quickly became a community that truly felt like our village.

Watching both of our children thrive has been incredible. Our youngest lights up every morning when he sees his teachers, and the daily updates reassure us how loved and engaged he is throughout the day. Our oldest has grown tremendously in confidence, independence, and language development. He now teaches us new Spanish words and songs at home and proudly takes initiative in ways we never expected at his age. Those moments may seem small, but as parents, they mean everything.

Little Footsteps has provided so much more than a safe place for our children. The nurturing environment, dedicated teachers, and culturally responsive approach have helped shape our children during some of the most important years of their development. Knowing our children are cared for with love, patience, and encouragement has given our family peace of mind and a true sense of belonging.

LAUREL'S STORY



2025 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



1,992 Unduplicated Individuals Served



1,015 Meals Distributed



**360 Workforce
Clients Served**



**62 Latino Construction
Graduates**



107 Students Provided Quality Early Childhood Education



**502 Clients Recieved
Housing Services**



**\$21.00/Hour Wage at
Placement
for LCP Graduates**



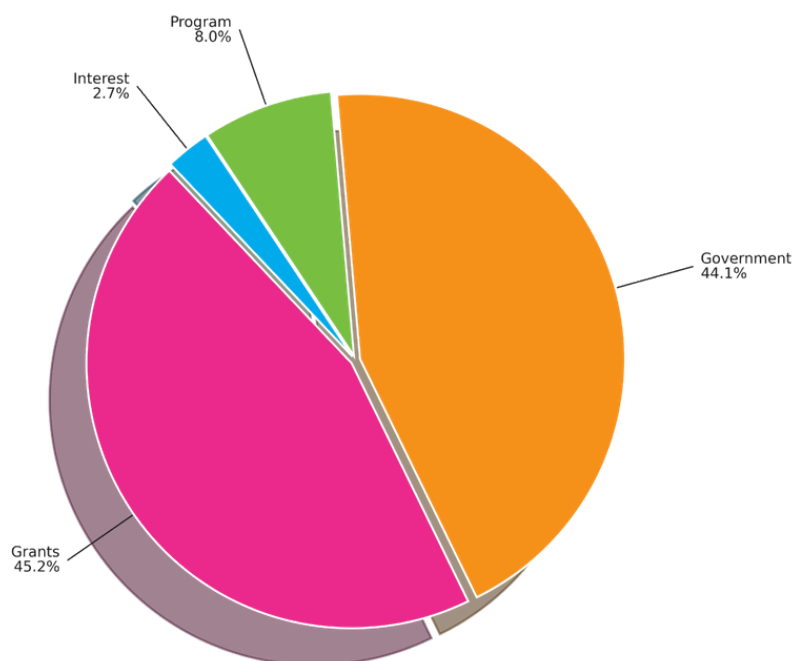
**800+ Referrals Made to
Community Partners**



FINANCIALS

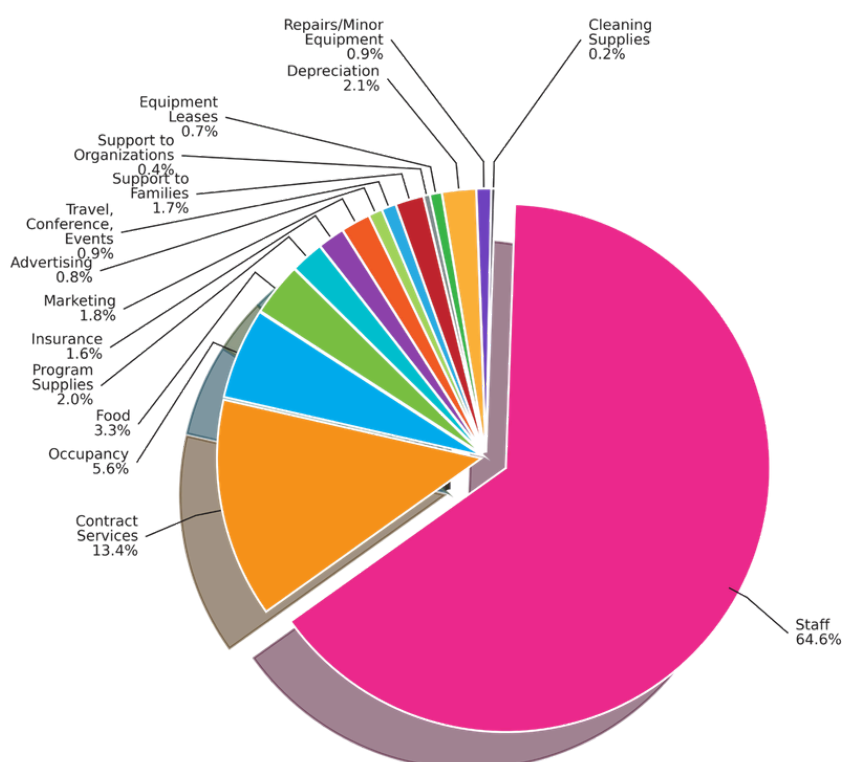
Revenue

Government	\$797,482.14
Grants	\$816,308.18
Interest	\$49,079.81
Program	\$143,774.48
Total Revenue	\$1,806,644.61



Expenses

Food	\$60,040.69
Contract Services	\$247,504.35
Occupancy	\$102,729.42
Insurance	\$30,212.46
Program Supplies	\$37,000.89
Cleaning Supplies	\$4,468.95
Staff	\$1,190,266.46
Marketing	\$32,865.15
Advertising	\$15,413.20
Travel, Conference, Events	\$16,226.00
Support to Families	\$31,677.59
Support to Organizations	\$6,925.07
Equipment Leases	\$13,315.04
Depreciation	\$38,004.00
Repairs/Minor Equipment	\$16,365.28
Total Expenses	\$1,843,014.55



Net Revenue \$(36,369.94)



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS, FUNDERS, AND SUPPORTERS

Individuals

Flennoy Family
Anna Smith
O'Brien Family
Adrian Maldonado

Foundations and Community Partners

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CareSource
PNC bank
Case West Reserve University
Dollar Bank
MetroHealth
Humana
Flagstar Bank
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Thatcher Family Fund
Cleveland Foundation
Three Arches Foundation
Deaconess Foundation
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Dollar General Literacy Foundation
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