

A THRIVING,
INTERDEPENDENT
COMMUNITY
WHERE LIVES ARE
TRANSFORMED.



ILLUMINATE. EDUCATE. ADVOCATE.

Annual Report 2023



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Dear Friends of Stars,

As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude for your steadfast support of Stars' mission to affirm, equip, and embolden Pasadena-area youth to pursue lives of purpose, service, and meaning.

At the core of our efforts lie our pillars of mentoring, afterschool initiatives, college success programs, wellness programming, and our newest counseling services. Through these essential channels, we provide pathways to empowerment, education, and personal growth.

As we reflect on the milestones achieved and the lives touched, we extend our deepest appreciation to each and every one of you who has contributed to these efforts. Together, we cultivate a community where dreams are nurtured, aspirations are realized, and futures are transformed. Looking ahead, let us remain united in our mission, fueled by the belief that every child deserves the chance to shine brightly and reach for the stars.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Hazel Perera
Chair, Board of Directors



2023 MILESTONES



High School Civil Rights Tour

Stars High School students participated in a 7-day Civil Rights Tour with the Center for Racial Reconciliation. The tour was an immersive learning experience anchored in storytelling that engaged students in the past, places, and people in the centuries-long fight for civil rights and human dignity.



Eric V. Johnson Scholarship Fund

Stars launched its EVJ Scholarship Fund, dedicated to honoring Eric Johnson, Stars Associate Director, for his exceptional dedication to serving urban youth dealing with trauma for over 40 years. The scholarship seeks to award high school seniors and students enrolled in trade schools or community colleges.



Mind-Body Wellness Fair

Stars Wellness Center hosted its first Mind-Body Wellness Fair. The event welcomed all community members and featured a range of wellness activities. Attendees enjoyed educational wellness games, participated in fitness and yoga classes, and explored resource tables offering information on accessing both health care and mental health services.



Matumaini “Matu” Taylor becomes Stars New Executive Director

Matumaini Taylor joins the Stars team as our new Executive Director. Matu brings with her an impressive 20-year career in ministry, nonprofit, and public administration. Matu aims to continue Stars’ legacy of educating, illuminating, and emboldening young people and their families.



SKILLZ Summer School Program

SKILLZ took place at Pasadena High School this year, allowing us to provide trauma-informed care in a school setting. SKILLZ aims to create a safe space for students to develop their math skills while also learning important life skills. Stars partnered with Day One, PUSD, CAP, and Stemulate Learning to facilitate this program.



Small Business Panel Discussion

Our College Program hosted its first Small Business Panel Discussion with Edgar Nava from Waterboy services, David from Sol de Colibri, and Nataly Gallo from Gallo Beauty Bar. Our students gained valuable insights on starting small businesses, staying motivated, standing out, and exploring nontraditional pathways to success.



New K-5 Location

The K-5 team, with the support of volunteers, board members, and parents, created a very intentional space at our Lake Ave. Church location. The space includes a reading station, a "How are you feeling?" station, and an affirmation station! All of which play an important role in our students' development.



Stars Counseling Program

Stars launched its Counseling Program, aimed at providing low-cost counseling services in both English and Spanish to individuals of all ages. Our counseling services offer trauma-informed care to help individuals with life transitions, stress management, relationship issues, and more.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

Our After-school programs play a crucial role in enriching students' education beyond the classroom, offering a diverse range of enrichment activities that foster personal growth, community engagement, and skill development.

For example, our K-5 students enjoyed hands-on experience with coding and game creation on Roblox under the guidance of our partner Hope IT. They learned how to cook delicious and healthy recipes with our volunteer Ms. Pam. Our middle schoolers embarked on summer adventures, hiking through Eaton Canyon, connecting with one another amidst outdoor exploration. Our high school students learned about food justice and sustainability through gardening and harvesting tomatoes. They also created "Blessing Bags", care bags filled with essentials for our unhoused neighbors, in partnership with Project I Am.

THERE ARE OVER **60**
STUDENTS ENROLLED
IN OUR AFTER-SCHOOL
PROGRAM



COLLEGE PROGRAM

In 2023 the Stars College Program soared to new heights of success. We not only achieved our goal of increasing male student participation but we also expanded our scholarship program, granting 33 students scholarships—a remarkable increase of 11 from the previous year.

GRANTED 33
STUDENTS
SCHOLARSHIPS

The Stars College Program also organized highly successful social and informative events this year. These included a heartwarming Friendsgiving celebration and an enlightening Side Hustle/Small Business Panel discussion. Together we joyfully celebrated our 2 graduate and 2 transfer students. Additionally, we welcomed two new college committee members to our volunteer team, enhancing our ability to support and equip our students. Furthermore, we proudly connected six of our college students with summer jobs right here at Stars, providing valuable experience and opportunities. As we look forward to the 24-25 school year we are excited to continue our journey of affirming, equipping, and emboldening the Stars college students.



WELLNESS CENTER

In 2023 the Stars Wellness Center launched its Counseling Program. The program provides our students and families with affordable mental health care, facilitated by our social work interns from Cal State LA and Pacific Oaks College.

The Stars Wellness Center also provided nutritious food options and nutrition education to more than 30 local families through our weekly food distribution program. Additionally, we prepared healthy meals and snacks for our after-school program students as well as for students in our group mentoring programs on three Pasadena Unified School District campuses: Blair, John Muir, and Rose City High School. Finally, our weekly fitness classes in partnership with Rosifitjourney increased physical activity and understanding of wellness principles in the community we serve.

DISTRIBUTED
35,100 LBS OF FOOD
TO FAMILIES
&
**5,970 BALANCED
MEALS + SNACKS**
FOR STUDENTS



**150+ HOURS OF
FITNESS CLASSES**



GROUP MENTORING

In 2023, Stars continued its commitment to community engagement and mentorship, providing valuable support to young individuals within the Pasadena Unified District schools.

At Muir High School, Stars co-leads an all-girls mentoring group alongside Ms. Nadia, Muir's school counselor. This program aims to create a safe, supportive environment where girls can connect, share experiences, and foster a sense of community within the school. Throughout the sessions, we address important topics such as setting healthy boundaries, cultivating self-acceptance, and effectively managing school-related stressors.

At Rose City High School, Stars invites mentors from various fields to speak directly to students within their classrooms. From Salon Owners, Print Makers to District Representatives, these mentors provide valuable insights that inspire and empower our students.

200 GROUP MENTORING HOURS, AROUND 60 STUDENTS PER GROUP



STARS VOLUNTEERS

OVER 130
VOLUNTEERS
DONATED
12,532 HOURS



Our dedicated team of community volunteers play a vital role in making our mission at Stars possible.

Volunteers actively contribute to various programs across Stars. In our Wellness Program, volunteers play a key role in assembling produce boxes for our Food Distribution Program and preparing snacks for our After School Program.

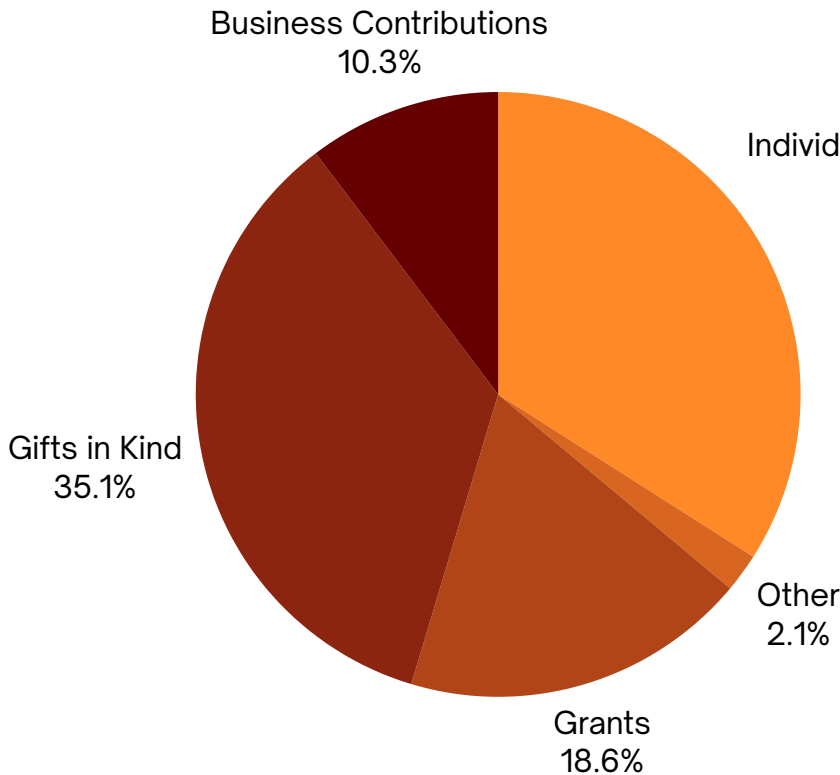
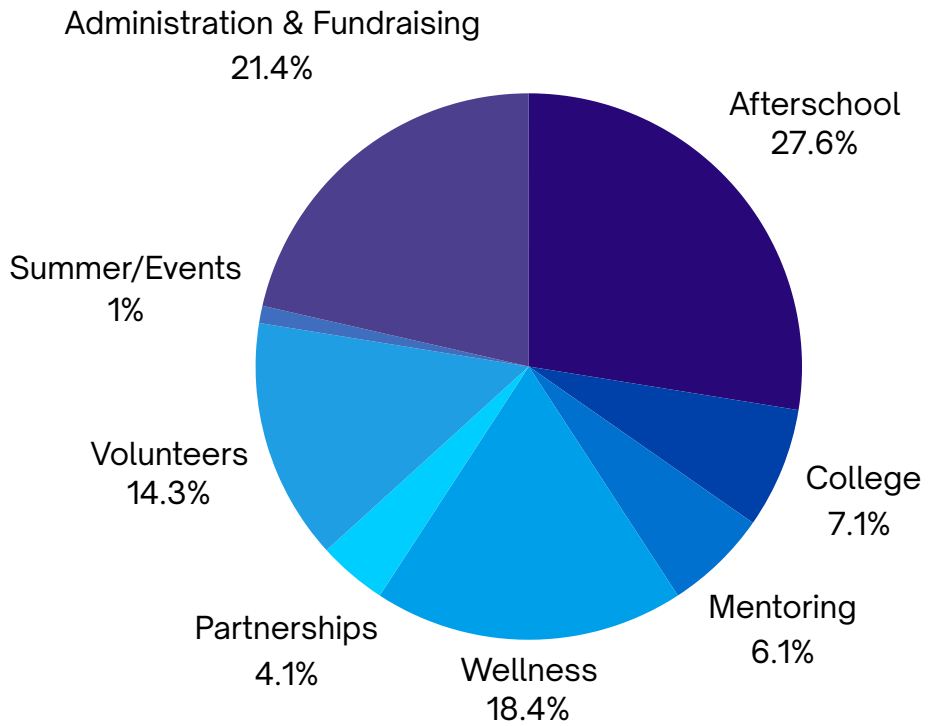
Within the afterschool program, volunteers provide tutoring assistance, support students with homework, and lead specialized workshops. In our college program, volunteers lead career and finance workshops, participate in the assembly of college care packages, and provide guidance to students through iGraduate coaching. In our mentoring program, volunteers lead group mentoring sessions and share their expertise with students and foster long-lasting relationships with them.



2023 FINANCIALS

EXPENSES

TOTAL: 2,354,693.25



REVENUE

TOTAL: 2,067,788.54

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HAZEL PERERA, BOARD CHAIR

Realtor, Sarkissian + Perera Group, Berkshire Hathaway

ANTHONY ENG, BOARD TREASURER

Strategic Finance, Pinterest

NICOLE WEAVER-GOLLER, BOARD SECRETARY

Senior Director of Development, Regional Major Gifts and Student Affairs, Caltech

CARLOS VALLES

Vice President and Relationship Manager, Wells Fargo Capital Finance

JODEAN GIESE

Former Engineer at the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

CARLA BOYKIN

Former Commissioner for City of Pasadena, Northwest Commission

ADAABI GWACHAM

Owner/Operator of Chick-Fil-A Pasadena

CHARLIE PLOWMAN

President and Publisher, Outlook News Group and LCM-News

CLARISSA WEIRICK

Corporate Attorney

CONTACT US

500 E. VILLA ST.
PASADENA, CA 91101

(626) 449-4960

INFO@GOSTARS.ORG

