



VICTORY  
INSTITUTE

# 2021

## *Annual Report*







“

*Victory Institute welcomed me into their Victory Empowerment Fellowship and helped launch my political journey. When I questioned if I was good enough, they reaffirmed I was excellent.”*

**MARIAH MOORE, 2021 WOMAN OUT TO WIN FELLOW**

*Above: Mariah Moore, 2021 Victory Empowerment Fellow*

*On the Cover (from left to right): California Assemblymember Evan Low, California Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins, Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Venezuelan National Assemblymember Tamara Adrián, Pernambuco (Brazil) Assemblymember Robeyoncé Lima and Illinois state Senator Mike Simmons.*



# ***A Note From Mayor Annise Parker & Ruben J. Gonzales***

Along with the United States, our community is becoming younger and more diverse. Black and Latinx people are identifying as LGBTQ in greater numbers, more trans and non-binary people are coming out, and one-fifth of Generation Z is LGBTQ. Our mission, at LGBTQ Victory Institute, is to bring these voices into our governments—in school boards, state legislatures and parliaments around the world.

In 2021, thanks to your support, we expanded and launched new efforts to grow a pipeline of LGBTQ leaders that reflects the full diversity of our community. Our internship program brought more young people to Capitol Hill. Our fellowship program designed for leaders of color and trans leaders accepted more applicants. We created a new mentorship program to provide critical support to women running for office. And around the globe, our programming prioritized trans and non-binary leaders who bravely face injustices and violence to be part of the political process.

When President Joe Biden won the presidential election, we immediately put forward groundbreaking LGBTQ leaders for political appointments. From Cabinet considerations to lower-level agency positions, we recommended qualified LGBTQ leaders who bring unique and vital perspectives. The result is the most LGBTQ-inclusive administration in history, but we continue to push for more appointments, especially for LGBTQ people of color, trans people and LGBTQ women.

This is not representation for the sake of representation, however. LGBTQ people grow up facing discrimination and harassment and that experience translates to uncompromising dedication to equality issues. LGBTQ elected and appointed officials in the U.S. and around the globe are the ones defending us at the decision-making tables and advancing our issues through policies and legislation. When they reflect our entire community, that impact is even greater.

Victory Institute is perfectly positioned to build and support this new generation of LGBTQ leaders, but none of it is possible without your support. Thank you for contributing to Victory Institute and for helping to create LGBTQ-friendly governments in the U.S. and around the globe.

Onward,



**Mayor Annise Parker**  
*President & CEO  
LGBTQ Victory Institute*



**Ruben J. Gonzales**  
*Executive Director  
LGBTQ Victory Institute*

# 1000+ *LGBTQ Elected Officials*

LGBTQ people are better represented than ever before—with both elected officials and appointed officials reaching historic numbers. Election victories for LGBTQ candidates in 2021 helped us achieve a new milestone: surpassing 1000 LGBTQ elected officials serving in the United States for the first time. And President Biden, with our support, has appointed more than 300 LGBTQ people to his administration. These LGBTQ elected and appointed officials are now changing America and its politics by leading on the most pressing issues facing the nation.



## Impact of LGBTQ Leaders

### *Aldo Dávila, Congress of Guatemala*

*International Training Alum*



Congressman Dávila went from activist to elected official in 2019 when he became the first out gay man and first out HIV-positive person elected to the Congress of Guatemala. As one of the most outspoken members on fighting corruption and advancing equality, he became a target for threats of violence from both inside and outside government. Yet throughout the pandemic, he's continued to demand that those most vulnerable to COVID—including indigenous people, LGBTQ people and those living with HIV/AIDS—receive increased access to care.

### *Robert Garcia, Mayor of Long Beach, CA*

*Candidate & Campaign Training Alum*

Mayor Garcia—the nation's first out LGBTQ Latinx mayor of a major U.S. city—was a leading force in responding to the pandemic and is widely hailed for making Long Beach a model for other cities across the country. He oversaw the creation of one of the best COVID testing operations in California and its successful vaccine rollout led to it being the first city to provide vaccines to people other than healthcare workers. In summer of 2020, Mayor Garcia lost his mother, Gaby O'Donnell, and stepfather, Greg O'Donnell, to COVID.





## ***Andrea Jenkins, President, Minneapolis City Council***

*Victory Empowerment Fellow  
Candidate & Campaign Training Alum  
David Bohnett Leaders Fellow*

Council President Andrea Jenkins made history as the first out Black trans woman elected to a city council in the U.S.—but that is not where the history-making ended. In 2018, she became Vice President of the council and in January 2022 was unanimously elected President. In office she led the council to ban conversion therapy, increase city services to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and hire the city's first full-time coordinator for the transgender community. Jenkins is a national leader on racial justice, speaking forcefully after George Floyd was killed in her district and pushing to declare racism a public health emergency. As leader of the council now, President Jenkins is pushing forward an agenda focused on affordable housing, living wages and holding police accountable to the community.



## ***Admiral Rachel Levine, Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services***

*Presidential Appointments Initiative Participant*



The U.S. Senate confirmed Admiral Levine in March 2021, making her the first out trans Senate-confirmed presidential appointee in history. She now plays a critical role in America's response to the pandemic and is making addressing health disparities—including among LGBTQ people—a priority. As co-chair of the Health Disparities Council, Admiral Levine is working to improve data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity and ensure health insurance companies do not discriminate against LGBTQ people.

## ***Sarah McBride, Delaware state Senate***

*Candidate & Campaign Training Alum  
Victory Fund Intern*

Less than one year after becoming the first out trans state senator in U.S. history, Sen. McBride was made chair of the Health and Human Services Committee and played a critical role in the state's dissemination of vaccines. She's also the lead sponsor and advocate for an ambitious paid family and medical leave bill that is positioned to pass in 2022. It would make Delaware one of just 10 states to have a family and medical leave insurance program. Sen. McBride also joined Victory Institute at World Pride in Copenhagen to help unite LGBTQ elected leaders around the globe.



# ***Empowering & Supporting LGBTQ Leaders***

When LGBTQ elected and appointed officials are in the room, it changes hearts and minds, influences debates and leads to more inclusive policies and legislation. That is why LGBTQ Victory Institute is building and supporting a diverse pipeline of LGBTQ public leaders through a comprehensive suite of programs. From college students to active candidates to the U.S. Congress and the White House—our programming empowers and supports LGBTQ leaders at every point in their careers.

## **WE DO THIS BY:**

- 1. Preparing New Leaders*
- 2. Mentoring Current Leaders*
- 3. Training Candidates & Future Candidates*
- 4. Securing Presidential Appointments*
- 5. Supporting Elected Officials*
- 6. Building Global Political Inclusion*
- 7. Advancing Representation Research*

## **1. Preparing New Leaders**



We hosted our largest class of Victory Congressional Interns ever in 2021, providing 20 college students with the opportunity for an eight-week internship with an LGBTQ or allied member of Congress and a 40-hour Victory Institute leadership development program. Our spring and summer interns participated in virtual or hybrid internships because of the pandemic and our fall interns received in-person placements on Capitol Hill. Despite the program's exponential growth in recent years, the internship remains extremely competitive, with only 10 percent of applicants admitted in 2021.

**80%**

**PEOPLE OF COLOR**

**45%**

**WOMEN-IDENTIFIED**

**25%**

**TRANS, NON-BINARY OR  
GENDER NON-CONFORMING**





*The pictured 2021 Victory Empowerment Fellows, from left to right, are: Oklahoma Representative Mauree Turner, Vermont Representative Taylor Small, Jin-Soo Huh, Brandon Wolf, Adriano Perez, Kendall Martinez Wright and Jaylin McClinton. Not pictured is Deja Alvarez.*

## 2. Mentoring Current Leaders

### *Victory Empowerment Fellowship*

Eight LGBTQ leaders made up the 2021 class of Victory Empowerment Fellows—a program that supports LGBTQ people of color and/or trans people seeking a career in public service. The year-long fellowship includes mentorship from other LGBTQ leaders, participation in our Candidate & Campaign Training and monthly programming with elected officials and political leaders who can help support their careers.

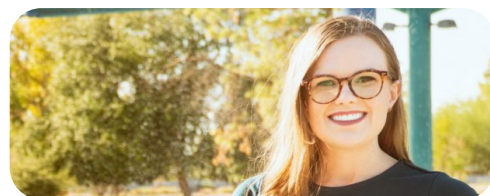
### *Women Out to Win*

Our groundbreaking 2021 “Decision to Run” report found a major barrier to LGBTQ women running for office is not having an LGBTQ woman mentor versed in campaigns or politics. We tackled that barrier directly by launching our Women Out to Win Mentorship Program in 2021. The advanced campaign training provides personalized coaching from past and current LGBTQ women elected officials and quarterly convenings to address challenges specific to women candidates, including imposter syndrome, safety concerns and fundraising support.

The four members of the 2021 cohort were Casey Clowes, Mariah Moore, Janelle Perez and Allison Scott. They received regular mentorship from eight LGBTQ leaders, including California state Senate Pro-Tem Toni Akins, former Houston Mayor Annise Parker, Ohio state Senator Nickie Antonio and Kansas state Representative Susan Ruiz.

“

*My public speaking abilities have improved tremendously thanks to the Women Out to Win program. People who previously criticized my voice, pitch and delivery called me after the televised forums to compliment me on my performance.”*



**CASEY CLOWES**

### 3. Training Candidates & Future Candidates

#### Candidate & Campaign Trainings

We held four multiday Candidate & Campaign Trainings throughout 2021—two on a virtual training platform and one each in Boston and San Diego—and trained 131 LGBTQ leaders to run for office.

**131**

LGBTQ PEOPLE  
TRAINED

**100**

TRAINEES PLAN TO  
RUN IN THE NEXT  
TWO YEARS

**52%**

OF TRAINEES ARE  
PEOPLE OF COLOR

**18%**

ARE TRANSGENDER,  
NON-BINARY, TWO SPIRIT  
OR GENDER  
NON-CONFORMING

While the virtual trainings began out of necessity in 2020 because of the pandemic, they have proven to be an exceptional opportunity for aspiring candidates who are unable to dedicate the time or resources to travel for an in-person training. The virtual trainings will continue to be a key part of our Candidate & Campaign Training arsenal so we can reach people from a broader range of economic and demographic backgrounds, as well as people with varied career and family situations.

#### Candidate & Campaign Training Alum Who Won

*More than 25 Candidate & Campaign Training alum won elected office in 2021, including:*



**Liliana Bakhtiari**

Atlanta City Council (District 5)

*First LGBTQ Muslim  
elected in Georgia.*



**Erik Bottcher**

New York City Council (District 3)

*Maintained an LGBTQ legacy  
seat in District 3.*



**Crystal Hudson**

New York City Council (District 35)

*First Black LGBTQ woman  
elected to the Council.*



**Kirk McPike**

Alexandria (VA) City Council

*Restored LGBTQ representation  
to the Council.*



**Lynn Schulman**

New York City Council (District 29)

*One of the first LGBTQ women  
elected from Queens.*



**Alex Wan**

Atlanta City Council (District 6)

*Restored LGBTQ AAPI representation  
to the Council.*



## 4. Securing Presidential Appointments

### *Presidential Appointments Initiative*

Our Presidential Appointments Initiative—a coalition of more than 30 LGBTQ and allied organizations led by Victory Institute—worked with the Biden transition team and then administration to help create the most LGBTQ-inclusive administration in American history. Fifteen percent of President Biden’s appointments—nearly 300 people—identify as LGBTQ and at least half are LGBTQ people of color or LGBTQ women. Many also broke new ground with first-of-their-kind nominations and appointments.

**15%** *of President Biden’s appointments identify as LGBTQ*

Victory Institute provided coaching, training and other support to hundreds of LGBTQ people looking for appointments, including more than half of the nearly 300 currently appointed. This included monthly webinars with former appointees or administration officials and guidance for a successful Senate confirmation process. We also regularly worked—and continue to work—with administration officials on recruiting and vetting qualified LGBTQ candidates and matching them to open positions provided by the White House. When helpful, we organize relevant coalitions and send letters of support to the administration or committees considering an LGBTQ nominee’s confirmation.

The work of the Presidential Appointments Initiative is unique to many other appointment projects in that our program continues throughout the life of the administration. We continue to put forward qualified LGBTQ candidates for new or newly open positions at every level of the administration.

### *Groundbreaking Appointments*



#### **Sam Brinton**

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Spent Fuel and Waste Disposition in the Office of Nuclear Energy for the Department of Energy

*First nonbinary Deputy Assistant Secretary in history.*



#### **Pete Buttigieg**

Secretary of Transportation

*First LGBTQ-Senate confirmed Cabinet secretary.*



#### **Gina Ortiz-Jones**

Under Secretary of the Air Force

*First out lesbian to serve as undersecretary of a military branch.*



#### **Admiral Rachel Levine**

Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health and Human Services

*First trans Senate-confirmed appointee.*



#### **Beth Robinson**

United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

*First LGBTQ women appointed to a federal circuit court.*



#### **Shawn Skelly**

Assistant Secretary for Readiness, Department of Defense

*First trans Senate-confirmed Department of Defense appointee.*



#### **Chantale Wong**

U.S. Director to the Asian Development Bank

*First out LGBTQ woman confirmed for an ambassador-level position.*



*Guatemalan Congressman Aldo Dávila accepts the Global Trailblazer Award.*

*(Below) Oklahoma state Rep. Mauree Turner speaks on the plenary panel: "The Experiences of Non-Binary Candidates and Elected Officials."*

## 5. Supporting Elected Officials

### 37th Annual International LGBTQ Leaders Conference

LGBTQ elected officials, appointed officials, advocates and leaders were ecstatic to be in-person for the International LGBTQ Leaders Conference—the first in-person conference since the pandemic. More than 450 were in attendance for the four-day experience to hear plenary speakers, attend workshops and network with friends and colleagues. Before the conference, 75 elected officials joined a full-day closed-door summit to build skills and discuss strategies for the coming year.

### Building and Maintaining a Network of LGBTQ Leaders

With more than 1000 LGBTQ elected officials serving nationwide, our collective power is stronger than ever. Victory Institute facilitates this by growing and strengthening our network of LGBTQ elected officials and hosting events and programming to build community and exchange best practices.

*(Right) Venezuelan Assemblywoman Tamara Adrián speaks about the work to advance LGBTQ rights in Latin America.*



*(Above) Maine House Speaker Ryan Fecteau accepts the Tammy Baldwin Breakthrough Award from past recipient Florida state Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith.*

### Quarterly Convenings

LGBTQ elected officials gathered for virtual quarterly convenings that addressed issues important to their well-being and success. One convening focused on how to address and cope with anti-LGBTQ political attacks and others addressed the pandemic, redistricting and issues important to Latinx people.



## 6. Building Global Political Inclusion

### *Advancing Equality Around the World*

As of 2021, Victory Institute has provided in-depth campaign and political inclusion trainings to more than 500 people around the globe. From Peru to the Dominican Republic to South Africa and India, our trainees are now parliamentarians and mayors, government and party leaders, and advocates for political and social change. These leaders are working to fulfill the ambitious goals of Victory Institute and our in-country partners: to ensure LGBTQ people are included in state institutions and political parties so they can advance equality within their countries.

### *Building Connections at World Pride*

As an executive partner at World Pride and its Inter-Parliamentary Plenary Assembly, Victory Institute brought together LGBTQ elected officials from around the world to initiate conversations on increasing cooperation globally. Victory Institute staff moderated multiple panel conversations throughout the assembly and connected leaders who are part of the Victory Institute network.



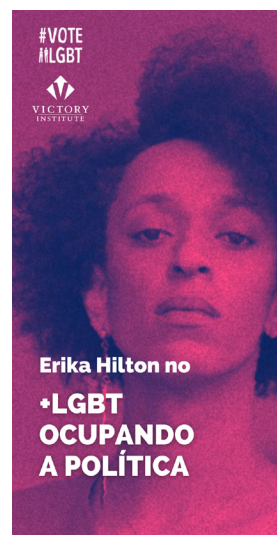
### *LGBTI Political Leaders of the Americas and the Caribbean Conference*

More than 1100 participants registered for our fifth LGBTI Political Leaders of the Americas and the Caribbean Conference, held in partnership with Caribe Afirmativo (Colombia), Promsex (Peru), Yaaq (Mexico), Diversidad Dominicana (The Dominican Republic) and SOMOS CDC (Honduras). Across three days of virtual plenaries, workshops and networking sessions, 63 speakers from 17 countries helped unite LGBTQ leaders across the hemisphere around a common vision for achieving equality. The 6th conference will be held in Mexico City in 2023.



### *Empowering Brazilian Leaders*

Victory Institute held country-focused virtual trainings for Colombia and Peru, and for the first time, Brazil. Twenty-one previous candidates attended the Brazil training, which focused on how to run successfully and safely in a nation where LGBTQ people face increasing vitriol and attacks. Erika Hilton—the first trans woman elected to the city council in São Paulo—was one of the trainers, and our partner organization #VoteLGBT provided a realistic assessment of the current environment. More than half the trainees will run in 2022.



## 7. Advancing Representation Research

### *The Decision to Run*

While more LGBTQ people are running for office than ever before, LGBTQ women continue to run at lower rates. To uncover the barriers LGBTQ women face, we surveyed 289 LGBTQ women who had been candidates or had seriously considered running for office. We also held four focus groups with 21 participants to further explore the survey findings.

The result was a first-of-its-kind report: *The Decision to Run: Uncovering the Barriers and Motivators for LGBTQ Women Running for Office*. It found that LGBTQ women face many—if not all—the same barriers as cisgender heterosexual women, but are often uniquely affected by those barriers and have additional challenges that prevent them from running. Among them are fear of anti-LGBTQ threats and violence on the campaign trail, a lack of access to donor networks and the absence of LGBTQ women mentors.

Victory Institute is working to address many of the barriers uncovered in the report.

The complete report and findings are available at [victoryinstitute.org/decisiontorun](https://victoryinstitute.org/decisiontorun).



#### Barriers to Running

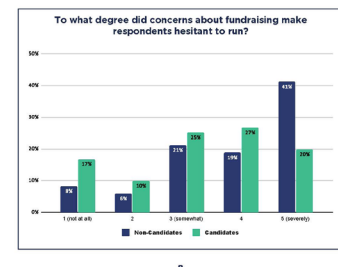
From the survey respondents and focus groups, six common themes emerged about the barriers LGBTQ women face when considering a run or running for office. While some barriers are similar to those that cisgender heterosexual women report, LGBTQ women often view or experience those barriers differently because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity—or face entirely new barriers not reported by cisgender heterosexual women.

The barriers presented are far from exhaustive but represent the themes most prevalent in both the survey responses and focus group discussions. In the sections below, “candidates” refers to survey respondents and focus group participants who have run for office or were actively running for office—including candidates who lost

and those who won. “Non-candidates” refers to those who have not yet run but have either considered it or are actively considering it. At times, the percentage of respondents reported in graphs will be less or more than 100 percent due to skipped questions related to non-applicability and/or rounding approximations.

##### 1. Finances—both campaign-related and personal.

Among the greatest barriers to running for office were concerns about fundraising and a perceived lack of access to a donor network. The high cost of running seemed daunting to many, with 60 percent of non-candidates hesitating to run because they worried about raising enough money to have a viable campaign.



### *Out for America Report*

Our annual census of LGBTQ elected officials found 986 serving nationwide in June 2021—a 17 percent increase from the previous year. The *Out for America* report also found that LGBTQ elected officials of color grew at a much faster pace than white LGBTQ elected officials, that queer-identified officials grew faster than all other sexual orientations and that non-cisgender elected officials increased at higher rates than cisgender elected officials.

The complete report is available at [victoryinstitute.org/outforamerica](https://victoryinstitute.org/outforamerica).

**0.2%**

OF U.S. ELECTED  
OFFICIALS ARE LGBTQ

**5.6%**

OF U.S. POPULATION  
IS LGBTQ

**28,116**

MORE LGBTQ PEOPLE MUST BE ELECTED  
TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION



# Documenting Our History

*In 2021, we launched two ongoing efforts to honor LGBTQ political history and the trailblazers who made it happen.*

## Pride & Progress

Our new Pride & Progress website includes more than 150 stories of groundbreaking moments since the 1950s—from the first LGBTQ person to run for office to the presidential candidacy of Pete Buttigieg. While exploring the site, you'll find rare photos of history-making elected officials, memorabilia from the campaign trail and videos from candidates. It also lists all LGBTQ candidates endorsed by LGBTQ Victory Fund and their win and loss record.

Pride & Progress is available at [prideandprogress.org](https://prideandprogress.org).

## LGBTQ Victory Hall of Fame

Our new LGBTQ Victory Hall of Fame honors the LGBTQ elected officials, appointed officials and candidates who made significant contributions to advancing LGBTQ political power and equality. When launched in May, we inducted 20 founding members. In December, we inducted our 2021 class. Each year, we will induct several new members into the Hall of Fame.

You can view and learn about all the inductees at [victoryhalloffame.org](https://victoryhalloffame.org).



LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT  
INDUCTEE

TAMMY  
BALDWIN

the first out  
LGBTQ  
U.S. Senator



# Our Team

## LGBTQ Victory Institute Board of Directors

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*Catherine Pino, **Vice Chair***  
*David Reid, **Secretary***  
*Neil Giuliano, **Treasurer***

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*Claire Lucas*  
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*Alex Slater*  
*Campbell Spencer*  
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*Rhett Wilson*

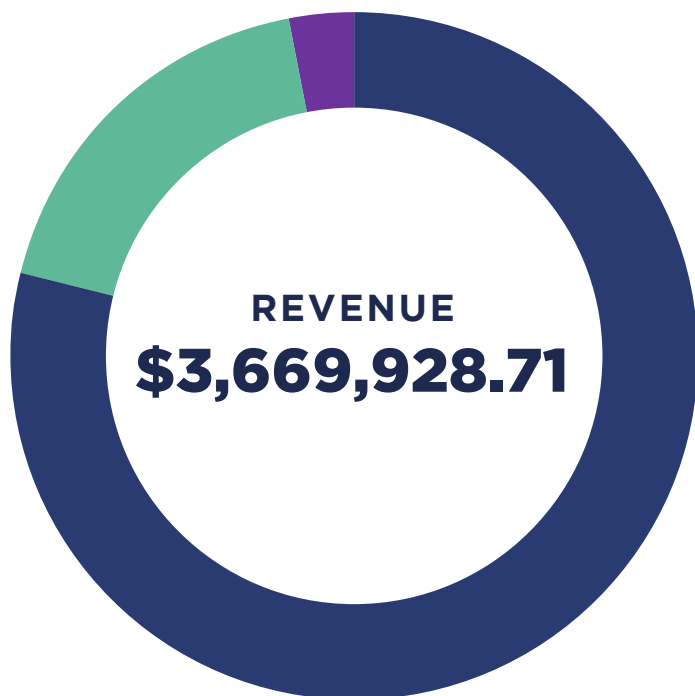
## LGBTQ Victory Institute Staff

*Mayor Annise Parker, **President & CEO***  
*Ruben Gonzales, **Executive Director***  
*Seth Schermer, **Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer***  
*Andrea Hernandez, **Chief Financial Officer***  
*Elliot Imse, **Vice President of Communications***

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*Alheli Partida, **Director of International Programs***  
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*Josh Roth, **Victory Cabinet Manager***  
*Curtis Sakow, **Corporate & Institutional Giving Officer***  
*Ryan Schaefer, **Development Associate***  
*Kristen White, **Events Manager***



# Our Financials



- **Contributions**

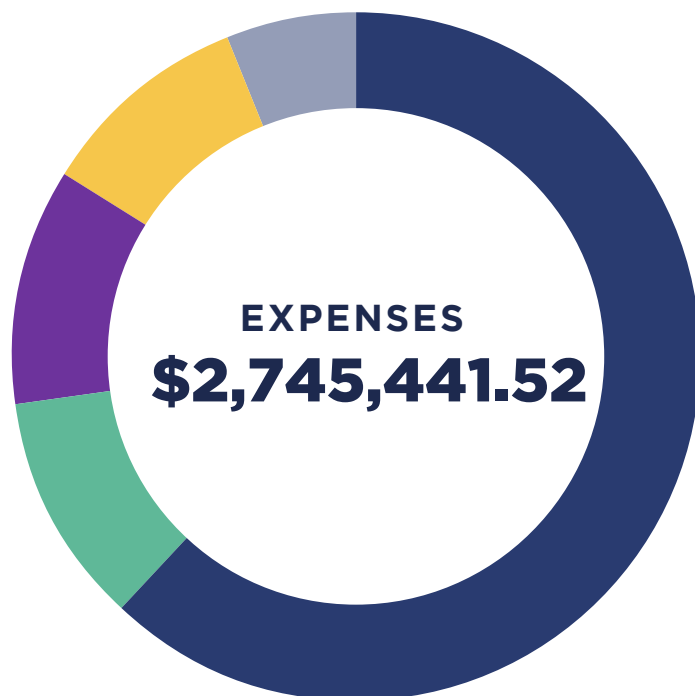
**\$2,911,645.35** | 79% of total revenue

- **Grants**

**\$665,000.00** | 18% of total revenue

- **Program Revenue**

**\$93,283.36** | 3% of total revenue



- **Leadership Development**

**\$1,705,629.27** | 62% of total expenses

- **Trainings**

**\$300,405.72** | 11% of total expenses

- **Fundraising**

**\$313,592.57** | 11% of total expenses

- **Research and Communications**

**\$268,854.15** | 10% of total expenses

- **Management and General**

**\$156,959.81** | 6% of total expenses