

INDEPENDENCE FOUNDATION

2025
ANNUAL
REPORT

FRINGE ARTS





A Year of Listening, Connecting, and Strategizing For The Future

By Reginald T. Shuford, President and CEO

2025 was a year like no other. The nonprofit sector faced myriad challenges, from disruptions in funding sources to disruptions in the communities served by our grantee partners. Through it all, Independence Foundation has done our very best to support the sector and maximize our impact in the greater Philadelphia region.

continued on the following page

Reginald T. Shuford, Esq., President & CEO

It was also my first year as president and CEO of the foundation. After a decades-long career in civil rights legal advocacy, I relished the challenge of joining the philanthropic space to provide the resources, both fiscal and programmatic, that organizations need. Our team and I have made it a point to spend time in listening sessions with our grantee partners and other stakeholders to gather feedback on what Independence Foundation is doing well and what more we can do to be as effective as possible.

We heard our partners and implemented programs beyond our normal grantmaking process. That included establishing the Resiliency Fund, which allowed us to make grants providing structural support across the sector and that are supplemental to our regular grantmaking program. As one example of what this fund has accomplished, we're funding the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations in building its capacity-support programming. PANO is providing guidance to its members on legal, advocacy, and organizational needs.

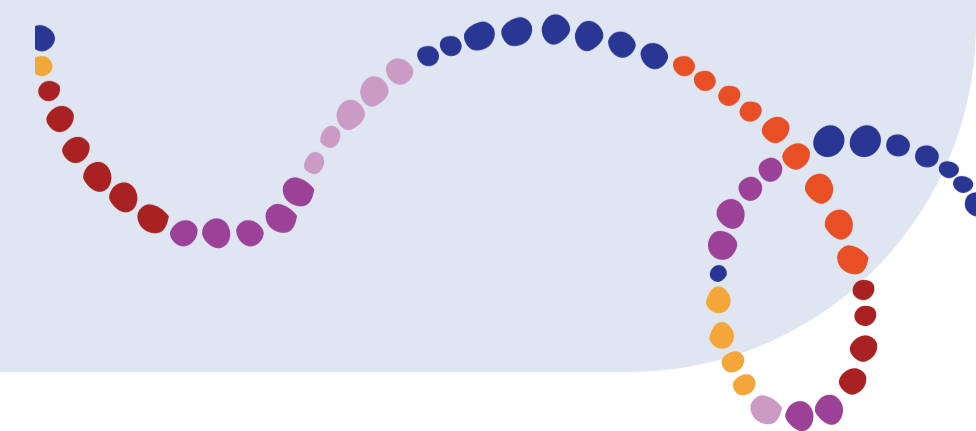
Our partners have also made clear that they want Independence Foundation to become a voice in the philanthropic community. With that in mind, we've been exploring new ways to collaborate, as well as keep our grantees and other key stakeholders updated on our programming and

our approach, including our long-held belief in trust-based philanthropy (TBP). Our commitment to TBP means that we listen to our stakeholders, recognize our grantee partners as the experts in their areas of work, and are transparent and collaborative in our interactions with them.

Finally, the foundation has spent the last year engaged in a strategic planning process. It was a challenge, with our team and our collaborators from Fairmount Ventures spending countless hours in conversation about our direction in the years ahead. It was also extremely rewarding, and we've crafted a plan to make deeper investments in systemic change. As the plan is implemented over the next two years, we'll be funding organizations and projects that challenge the inequitable systems that leave too many people in our communities in need and without the resources necessary to thrive.

We have a lot of work to do. And I'm confident that, by continuing to work together, we'll make great strides toward building the type of region, commonwealth, country, and world that we seek.

Onward,
Reggie



MISSION

The mission of Independence Foundation is to build leadership, provide services, and encourage systems and cultural change through the support of organizations in the fields of healthcare, human services, legal aid, and the arts. The Foundation invests in people and programs that protect, improve and enrich the life experiences of residents of Philadelphia and its surrounding Pennsylvania counties, with a focus on the vulnerable and excluded. Its work is based on the belief that a region that promotes physical well-being, provides equal access to justice and services, and appreciates the value of the arts will thrive for generations to come.

BEARDED LADIES CABARET



CLAY STUDIO





CRADLES TO CRAYONS



VALUES STATEMENT

The following principles serve as important guidelines for Independence Foundation and reflect the values of our board and staff. We are aware of the immense responsibility we carry and the privilege we hold as grant-makers and want to ensure that our work reaches and benefits those in need through the prudent use of Foundation resources. We make a commitment to the community we serve that we will strive to uphold these values in all our decision-making.

TALLER PUERTORRIQUENO





VALUES STATEMENT (CONT)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND HUMANITY

We celebrate diversity, in all its broad definitions. We know that our work, and the work of our grantees, is stronger when it is informed by a rich diversity of individuals, perspectives, viewpoints, and lived experiences.

We value people above systems, and we understand that underlying and historical systemic barriers have barred many individuals from equal access to opportunities and resources. We strive to understand and re-imagine those systems and support those people and programs whose work seeks to change them, thus enriching our collective humanity and increasing equitable access for all people.

TRUST AND MUTUAL RESPECT

We rely on the unique knowledge and experience of our grantees in making Foundation decisions on how to utilize grant money and resources to best address their needs. We trust their wisdom, and approach all grantees as partners in a mutual and collaborative effort.

INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY

We strive to create a culture of openness and learning among our grantees and are adaptable and curious in our own thinking. We welcome the expertise and knowledge of others. We listen before we speak. We recognize the power that comes with our position as grant-makers and seek to understand and minimize the impact it may have on our honest and equal relationships with others.

LEADERSHIP BEYOND GRANTMAKING

We appreciate our unique position to facilitate opportunities for sharing knowledge, creating connections and collaboration, and building leadership. We facilitate forums in which individuals engaged in meaningful work learn from one another. We share our knowledge freely and believe that shared knowledge is beneficial for all.



INDEPENDENCE FOUNDATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catherine C. Carr, Esq., Chair

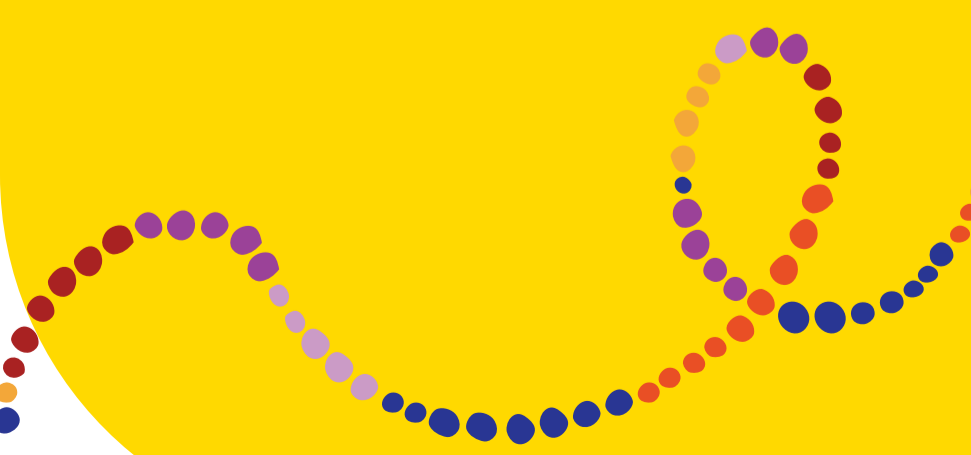
Vikram H. Dewan

Derick Dreher, PhD, Secretary

Loree D. Jones Brown

David Logan, Vice President & Treasurer

Joyce Wilkerson





INDEPENDENCE FOUNDATION

STAFF

Reginald T. Shuford, Esq., President & CEO

Jennifer Bohnenberger, Chief Operating Officer & Director of Programs

Katherine Fritz, Administrative Associate

Heather McDanel, Senior Program Officer

Kate Tejada, Administrative Director and Board Liaison



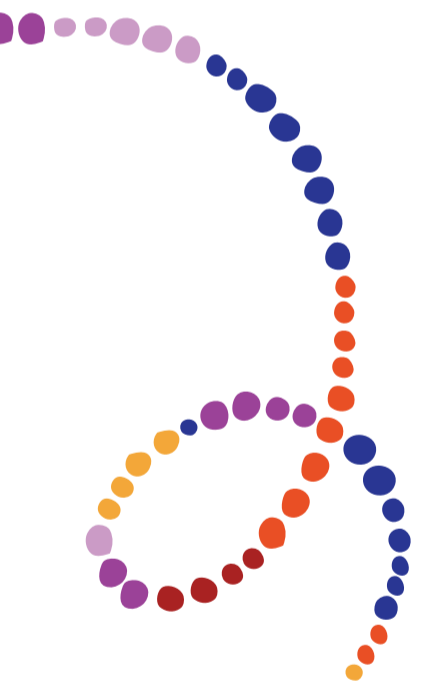
MURPHY'S GIVING MARKET



PHILABUNDANCE

TOTAL PAID IN 2025

\$3,960,806





arts & culture

\$792,500

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

arts & culture



AL-BUSTAN SEEDS OF CULTURE

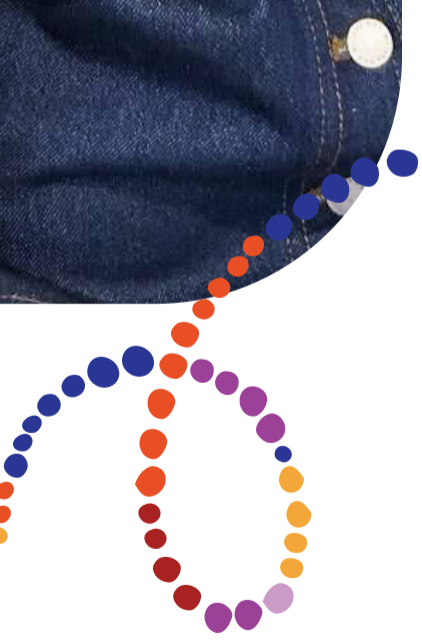
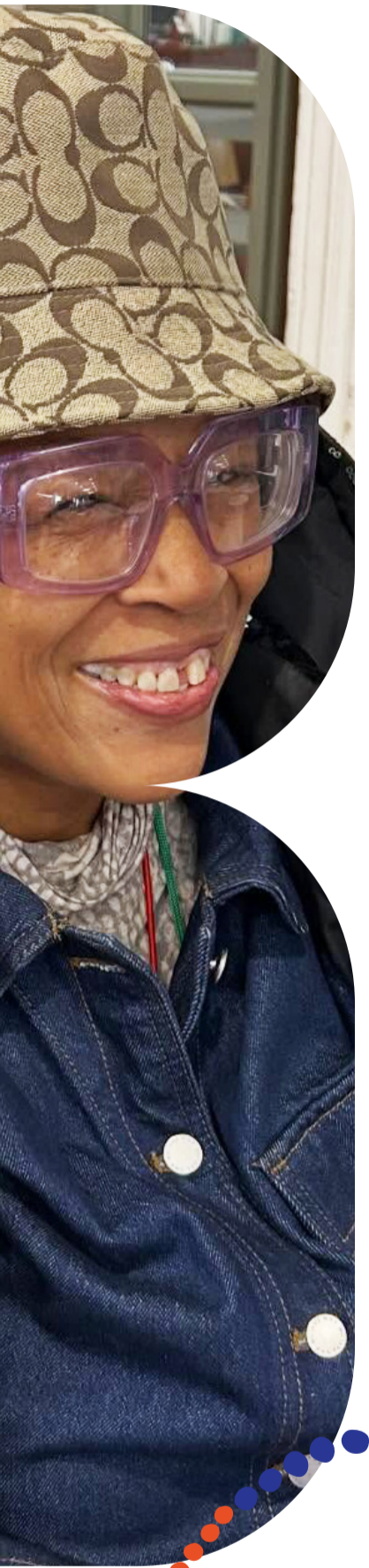


AL-BUSTAN SEEDS OF CULTURE

Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture presents Arab arts programming through performances, education, and community-based events. Their work creates opportunities for cultural exchange and brings diverse audiences together around shared artistic experiences. Through concerts, school-based programs, and public events, Al-Bustan engages participants of all ages in learning and experiencing Arab culture in ways that foster connection and understanding.

The Foundation's general operating support helps expand access to arts programming that reflects the region's cultural diversity.





health
care

\$531,880

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

health care



LCH HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



LCH HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES



LCH Health & Community Services provides primary care, behavioral health, and support services to individuals and families in Southern Chester County. Their work improves access to affordable, culturally responsive care. Through integrated care models, LCH combines medical, behavioral health, and social support services, helping patients navigate complex needs and access coordinated care in one place.

The Foundation's general operating support helps ensure continuity of care for individuals and families.





**human
services**

\$734,500

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

human services



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

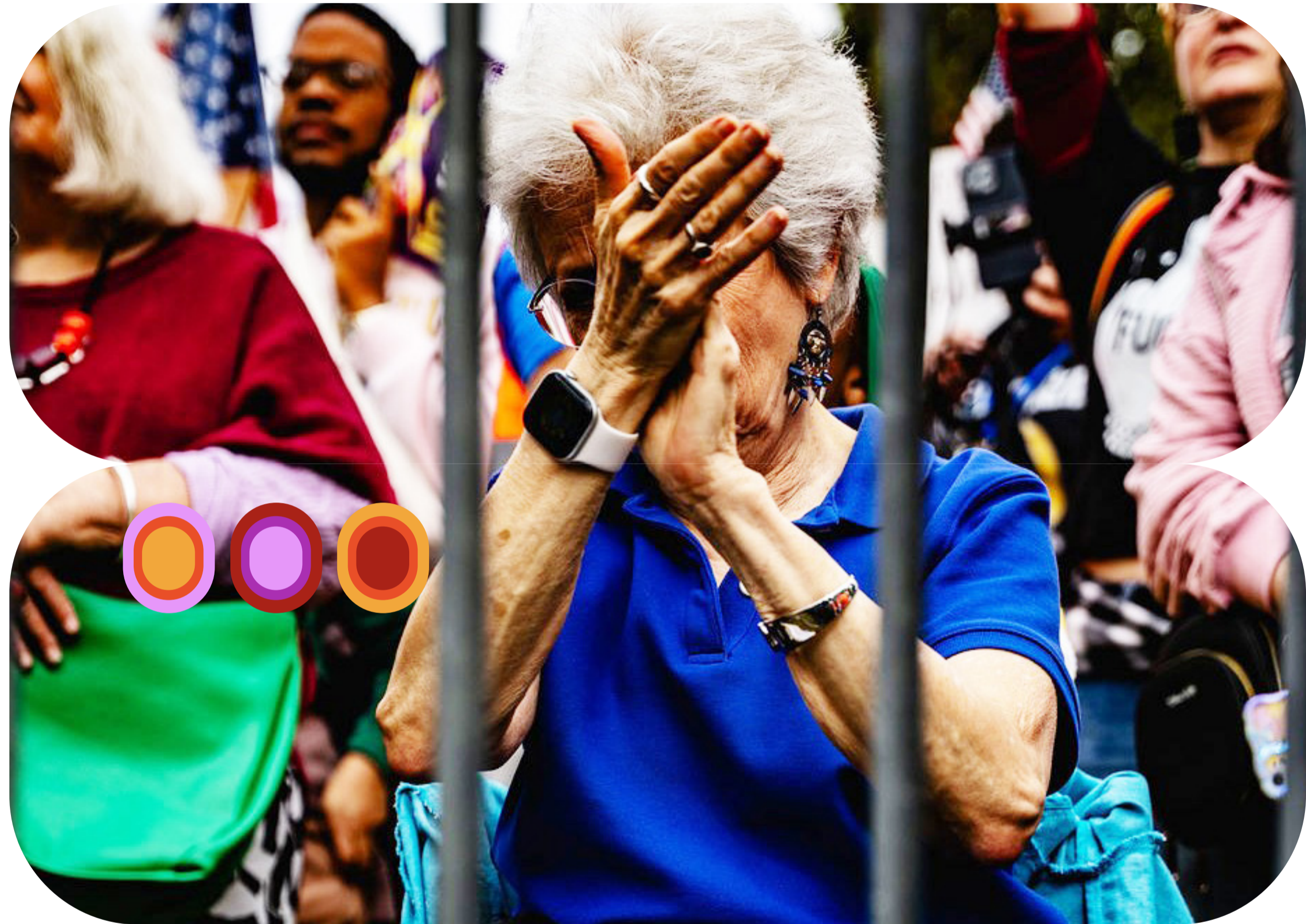


NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Neighbors Helping Neighbors on the Main Line provides food access, educational programming, and resource navigation for individuals and families in the Greater Philadelphia region. Their work takes a holistic, community-based approach to meeting immediate needs and supporting longer-term stability. Through food distribution, classes, and individualized support, the organization helps participants address urgent challenges while building skills and connections that support stability over time.

The Foundation's general operating support helps individuals and families achieve greater stability.





legal
aid

\$513,000

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

legal aid



HIAS PENNSYLVANIA

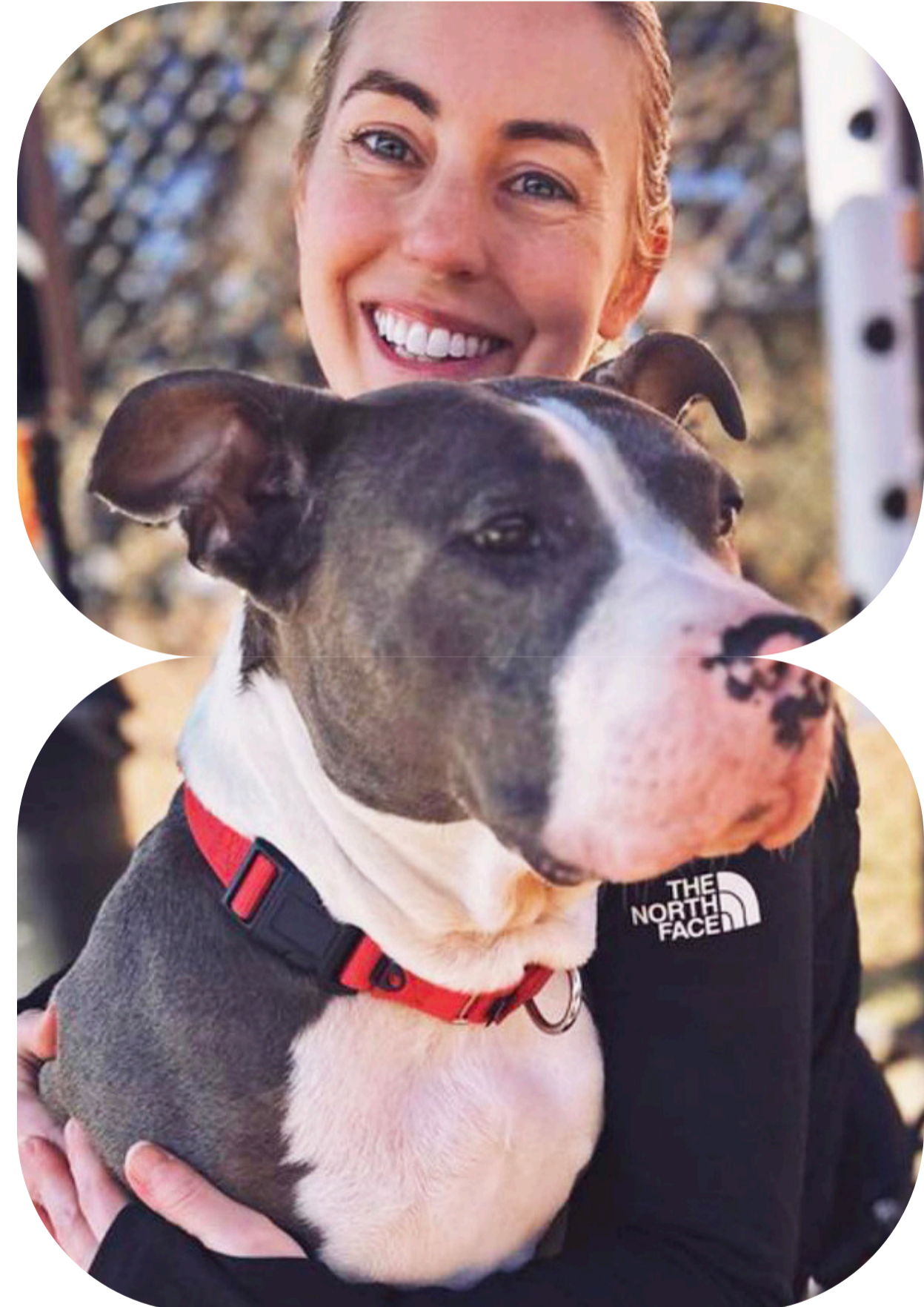


HIAS PENNSYLVANIA

HIAS Pennsylvania provides immigration legal services and supportive programs for low-income immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Philadelphia region. Their work includes legal representation in asylum and other immigration cases, helping individuals secure status and remain in their communities. Attorneys and staff provide direct representation, legal guidance, and case support, helping clients navigate complex immigration processes and access protection under the law.

The Foundation's general operating support helps protect access to legal representation.





**Reentry,
Recidivism &
Restorative
Justice**

\$176,000

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

reentry,
recidivism &
restorative
justice



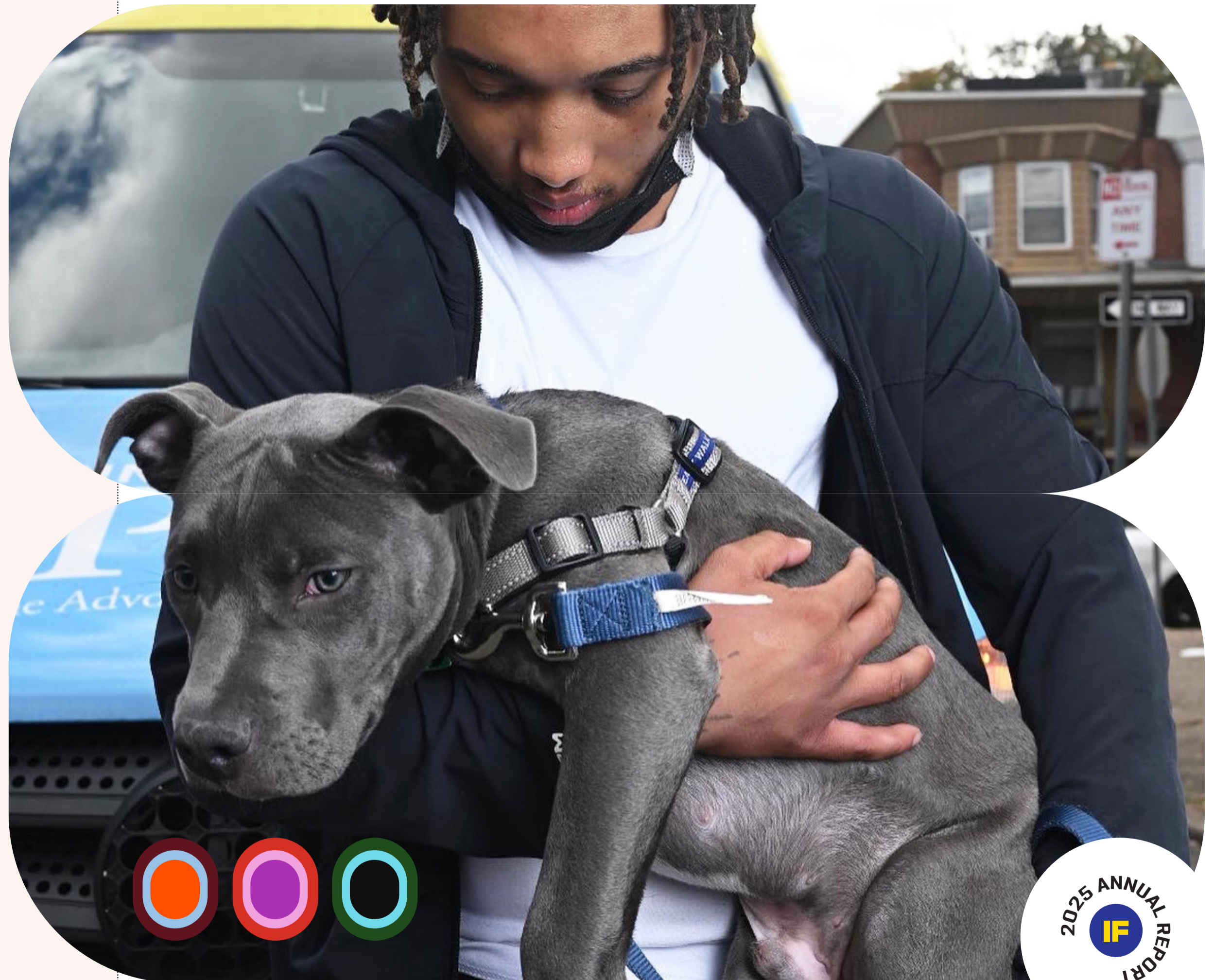
YEAH PHILLY



YEAH PHILLY

YEAH Philly works with teens and young adults impacted by violence and the juvenile justice system through programming that includes peer-led conflict resolution, mentorship, and workforce development, along with safe spaces for connection and support. Participants engage in group sessions, one-on-one mentorship, and skill-building opportunities designed to interrupt cycles of violence and support positive pathways forward. Their work helps young people navigate court involvement, build skills, and access opportunities that reduce involvement in violence.

The Foundation's general operating support helps advance community-based approaches to safety and accountability.



ROSE JARBOE



\$65,000

**PERFORMING
ARTS FELLOWSHIPS**

YANNICK LOWERY



**VISUAL ARTS
FELLOWSHIPS**

\$50,000



**HONORABLE PHYLLIS W.
BECK PUBLIC INTEREST
LAW FELLOWSHIPS**

\$637,926

JOANNE WERDEL, PHILADELPHIA LEGAL ASSISTANCE



**SENIOR ATTORNEY
SABBATICAL**

\$25,000



MEETING THE MOMENT

In response to sweeping changes in government funding and their impact on nonprofits across our region, the Foundation launched the Resiliency Fund—a three-year, \$1 million investment in the nonprofit ecosystem. Multi-year grants support coordinated programs and resources, equipping organizations with the tools and guidance to navigate ongoing challenges. The Foundation also contributed to regional pooled funds and funder collaboratives to address emerging, sector-specific needs.

**RESILIENCY
FUND**

PHILLY GIVES

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IF



\$435,000

2025 GRANTEEES

arts & culture

1812 productions
act ii playhouse
al-bustan seeds of culture
arden theatre company
artists u
artreach
azuka theatre
balletx
bearded ladies cabaret
bristol riverside theater
carpenters' company
center for emerging visual artists
chester children's chorus
clay studio
conservation center for art & historic artifacts
cosacosa art at large
eastern state penitentiary
egopo productions
elmwood park zoo
enchantment theatre company
free library of philadelphia
first person arts
fringearts
greater philadelphia cultural alliance
hedgerow theatre
inis nua theatre company
interact theatre company
journeyarts
lantern theatre company
mann center for the performing arts
mighty writers
ministry of awe
montgomery theater
mural arts philadelphia
network for new music
new paradise laboratories
opera philadelphia
partners for sacred spaces
people's light
philadelphia ballet
philadelphia folklore project
philadelphia orchestra
philadelphia theatre company
philadelphia young playwrights
pig iron theatre company
power street theatre
rosenbach museum & library

simpatico theatre
smith memorial playground and playhouse
spiral q puppet theater
taller puertorriqueno
team sunshine corporation
theatre exile
theatre horizon
theatre in the x
theatre philadelphia
village of arts and humanities
walnut street theatre company
weitzman national museum of american jewish history
wilma theater
world café live
zoological society of philadelphia

health care initiative

children first pa
community college of phila. foundation (nursing dept)
face to face
lch community health
penn's village
pennsylvania health access network
prevention point
puentes de salud

human services

achieveability
american red cross se pa (red cross house)
bernardine center
bethesda project
broad street love
canine partners for life
center for the blind & visually impaired
chester county food bank
chester eastside
community action agency of delaware county
cywa (community youth & women's alliance)
connectedly
covenant house pa
cradles to crayons
deaf-hearing communication centre
domestic abuse project
domestic violence center of chester county
episcopal community services
family promise of montgomery county
family service of chester county
food trust

friends association
habitat for humanity philadelphia
handi-crafters
hopephl
hope springs equestrian therapy
housing alliance of pa
integrate for good
ivins outreach center
lutheran settlement house
manna
manna on main street
multicultural community family services
murphy's giving market
neighborhood gardens trust
neighborhood land power project
neighbors helping neighbors
network of victim assistance (nova)
norris square neighborhood project
pennsylvania horticultural society
philabundance
planned parenthood keystone
planned parenthood of s.e. pa
project home
quest therapeutic services
rolling harvest
seamaac
share food program
sparc services
special equestrians
urban creators
visionlink
women's center of montgomery county
women's resource center

legal aid

aclu pennsylvania
aids law project of pennsylvania
committee of seventy
community legal services
consumer bankruptcy assistance project
disabilities rights network of pa
education law center of pennsylvania
esperanza immigration legal services
hias pennsylvania
homeless advocacy project
justice at work
juvenile law center
legal aid of southeastern pennsylvania

legal clinic for the disabled
montgomery county child advocacy project
nationalities service center
pennsylvania health law project
pennsylvania innocence project
pennsylvania institutional law project
pennsylvanians for modern courts
philadelphia lawyers for social equity
philadelphia legal assistance center
philadelphia vip
public interest law center of philadelphia
regional housing legal services
seniorlaw center
support center for child advocates
women against abuse legal center
women's law project

reentry, recidivism & restorative justice

ardella's house
beyond the bars
books through bars
deafcan!
level up philly
making a change group
new leash on life
par recycleworks
pennsylvania prison society
sankofa healing studio
students run philly style
team up philly
uplift solutions
why not prosper
youth art & self-empowerment project
youth empowerment for advancement hangout (yeah philly)
youth sentencing & re-entry project

resiliency fund

coordinated capacity strengthening initiative
immigrant and refugee emergency fund
nonprofit repositioning fund
pa association of nonprofit organizations
pa fire
philly gives
regional food fund

2025 STATS

Organizations Funded

Arts & Culture	71
Health Care	13
Human Services	72
Legal Aid	33
Reentry, Recidivism & Restorative Justice	19
Resiliency Fund	7

TOTAL 215

Grants

Arts & Culture	77
Health Care	15
Human Services	79
Legal Aid	40
Reentry, Recidivism & Restorative Justice	19
Resiliency Fund	9

TOTAL 239

Total funded

Arts & Culture	\$792,500	
Arts Fellowships	\$115,000	paid in support of 12 fellows (7 performing, 5 visual)
Health Care	\$531,880	
Human Services	\$734,500	
Legal Aid	\$513,000	
Beck Fellowships	\$637,926	paid in support of 11 fellows
Reentry, Recidivism & Restorative Justice	\$176,000	
Resiliency Fund	\$435,000	
Senior Attorney Sabbatical	\$25,000	

Total funded \$3,960,806



thank you