

2023

Community Report | Solid Ground





Dear friends,

For the last 50 years, Solid Ground has been guided by a dual purpose: **to solve poverty in our communities and in the individual lives of every person we serve.**

We wish we could report that our work has become less urgent in the last five decades, but in reality, the opposite is true. Today, more people than ever struggle to pay their rent, feed their families, and invest in their children's future. And yet we're proud to say that the Solid Ground community continues to rise to the challenge despite its growing scale, providing life-changing support for our neighbors every single day.

Every time we welcome a family experiencing homelessness into a new apartment, help someone who uses a wheelchair get to a doctor's appointment, or provide fresh produce for a parent struggling to get their children healthy food, we make a meaningful difference in yet one more life – and open the door for hope, joy, and possibility.

In this report, you'll find stories about just a few of the 65,000 people Solid Ground served in 2023. And because the challenges confronting our community are constantly changing, you'll find stories about how we're responding to the new and unmet needs identified by the folks we serve.

Our ultimate goal is to build a community beyond poverty, so you'll also find stories about the ways we've worked to adapt to changing needs and address the systemic barriers that keep our neighbors from thriving.

We do this work because we believe everyone deserves to live a life beyond crisis – to feel safety, share joy, and dream of a future beyond next month's rent. We're grateful to be able to share these victories with you, and for your support in making them possible.

In community,



Shalimar Gonzales, CEO



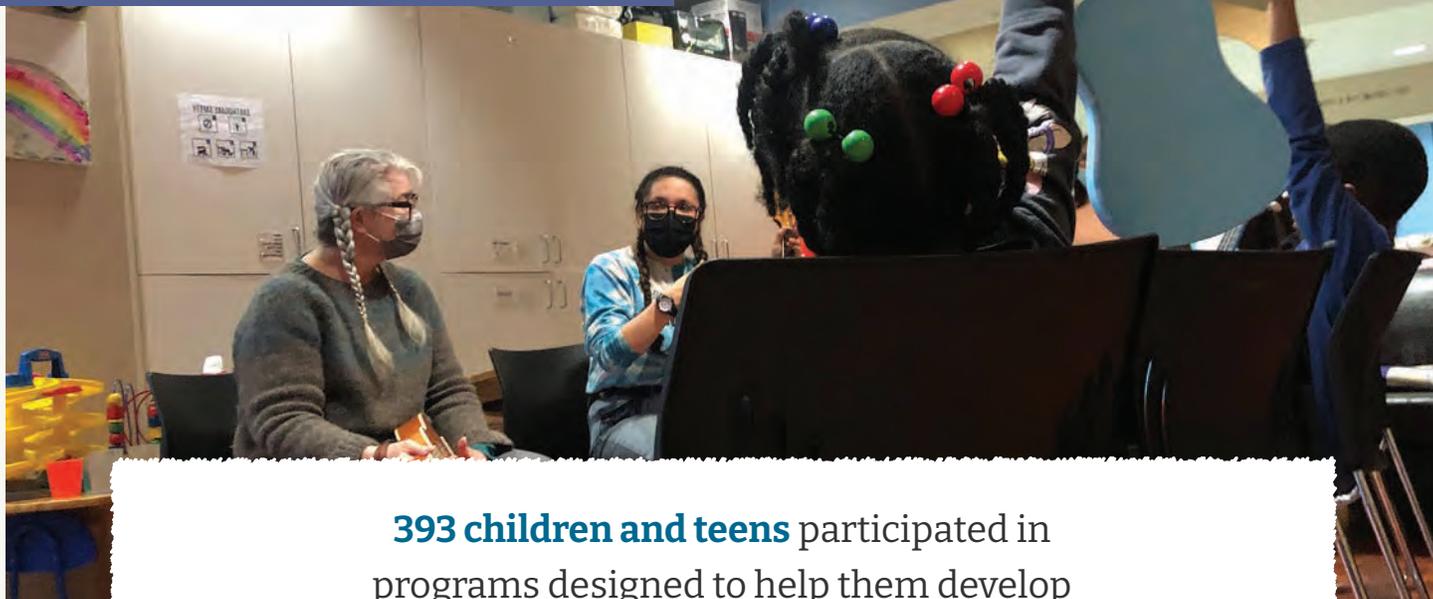
Mary Ruffin, Board Chair



Shalimar Gonzales, CEO



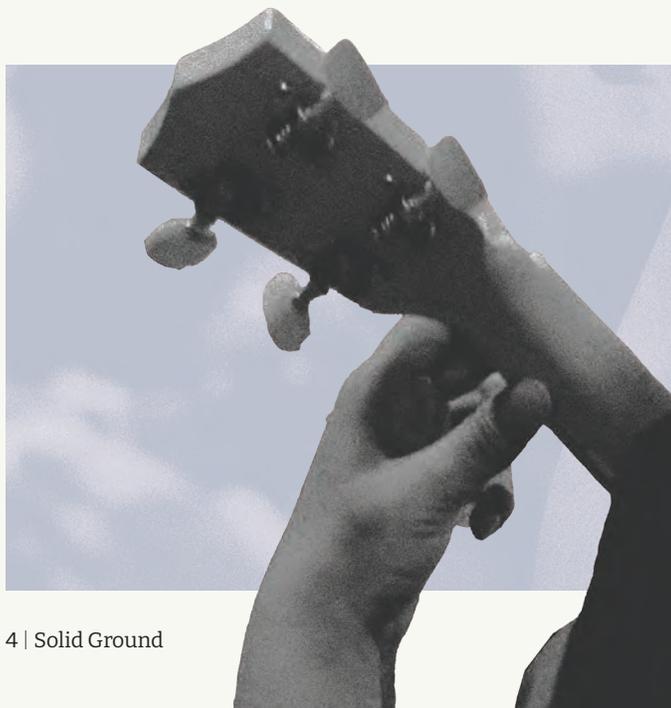
Mary Ruffin, Board Chair



393 children and teens participated in programs designed to help them develop **social and behavioral skills for life.**

Childhood experiences with homelessness, domestic violence, and other traumatic conditions often have lifelong consequences impacting health, wellbeing, and financial security. Fortunately, studies show that participating in positive youth development programs can lead to better outcomes later in life and help disrupt generational cycles of poverty.

That's why Solid Ground works to embed evidence-based youth development best practices in our programs. We started with Sand Point Housing and Broadview Shelter and Transitional Housing: From homework help to ukulele classes, we use every interaction as an opportunity to help kids build social skills and values they can rely on throughout their lives.



“*These are kiddos who aren't having the smoothest time at school. They've had some really rough experiences that are disruptive to feelings of safety. We want to give them a space to explore activities they haven't had a chance to experience before.*”

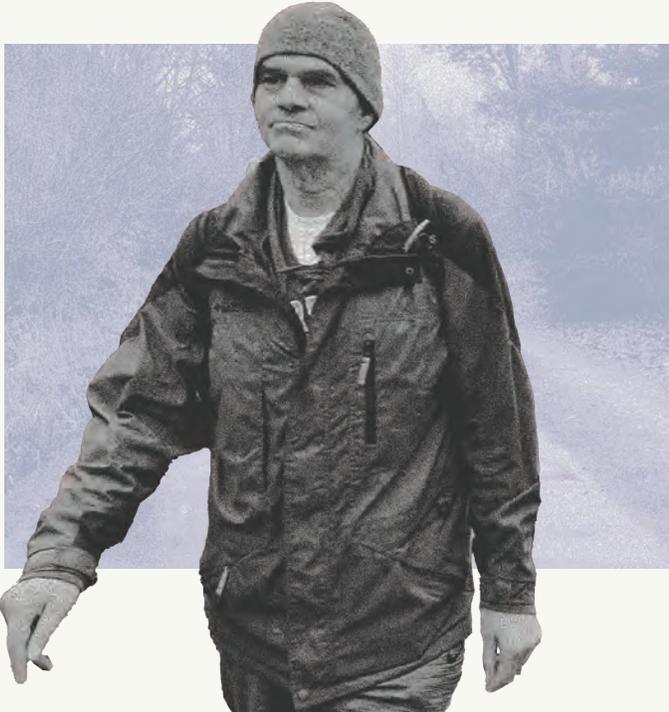
— Amy H., Broadview Children's Program Supervisor



78 onsite behavioral health sessions supported Sand Point Housing residents to **improve their mental wellbeing** and work toward goals they set for themselves.

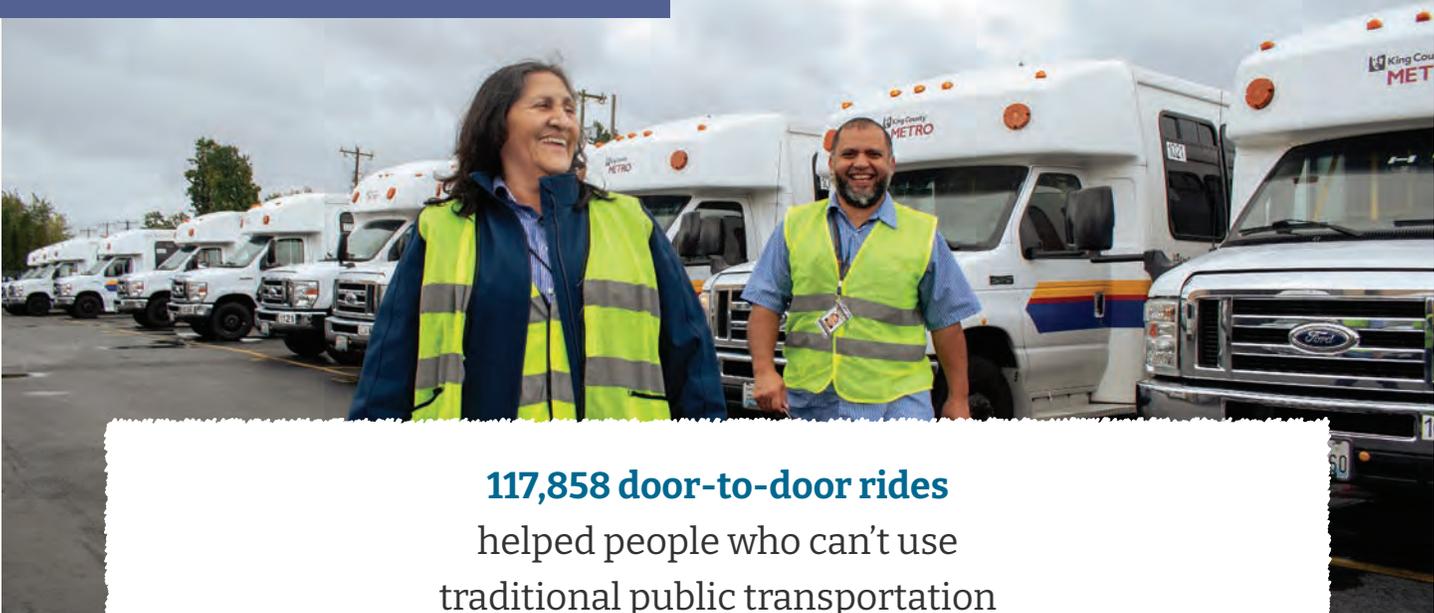
When we asked community members about their most pressing needs for our 2022 Community Needs Assessment, the thing we heard most often was that people are struggling with their mental health – and they’re unable to access the kinds of services that might give them hope.

So in 2023, we launched an initiative to partner with providers and bring behavioral health services directly to Sand Point Housing residents. First, we brought on Ruben Rivera-Jackman, a behavioral health counselor with more than two decades of experience, to provide onsite support for residents who can schedule an appointment or just drop by. Other partners brought behavioral health classes and peer-to-peer counseling to the campus.



“*Ruben is a great example of the incredible dedication of the people who work here. What he does is very important and helpful.*”

— David Grech, Sand Point Housing resident



117,858 door-to-door rides
helped people who can't use
traditional public transportation
get where they needed to go.

After pivoting to deliver meals to people who couldn't get to food banks or hot meals programs during the pandemic, in 2023 Solid Ground Transportation (SGT) fully transitioned back to its original work of providing rides for people who can't use traditional transit services.

And to meet the need for rides, we increased driver wages, implemented hiring bonuses, and redoubled our efforts to connect with potential drivers in their communities. All new SGT drivers received specialized hands-on training on how to best support people with a range of physical and cognitive disabilities while also respecting their humanity and independence.



“
It was always a blessing, having someone to pick me up and get me safely to where I had to go. You know, your mobility is precious.

— Mike Sapiens, SGT driver who received rides himself while in cancer treatment

198 households with past homelessness experience built new lives in **supportive housing**.

344 domestic violence survivors and their children found **safe refuge and healing support**.

On any given night, there are an estimated 16,000 people living without shelter in King County. For several years, Michelle Flickinger was one of them. But after becoming pregnant with her son Kaylan, Michelle was determined to escape a violent and abusive relationship and provide a better life for them both. She connected with Broadview Shelter and Transitional Housing, where she found safety and the chance to heal and build a stable life.

Michelle and Kaylan later moved into Solid Ground’s supportive housing, where she pursued her dream to earn an associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education with a Certificate in Fine Arts. Now Michelle is working to bring therapeutic art classes to Broadview for kids just like her son.



“

They had more compassion and kindness for my really tough days than anyone ever has. My gratitude runs deep.

— Michelle Flickinger, former Broadview resident now living in Solid Ground supportive housing



1,241 adults and children received **free fresh produce** and **recipe ideas** through community health clinics.

With inflation sending grocery prices skyward in 2023, a growing number of families in King County struggled to put food on the table. By the end of the year, almost 118,000 households in the county relied on the Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program (SNAP) to get enough to eat – a 21% increase from the months before the pandemic.

To respond to this need, the Seattle Food Committee, staffed by Solid Ground, delivered nearly 7.7 million pounds of food to Seattle food banks in 2023. Solid Ground also expanded our FARMacia program, which provides fresh, local produce and samples of healthy meals to patients visiting Sea Mar Community Health Clinics in South Park and White Center.



“

Last week all the produce was gone within 45 minutes. It just goes to show how great the need is.

— Maddi Rinehart, Sea Mar Health Educator



17 listening sessions and **2 Social Justice Salons** engaged nearly **320 community members** in transformative visioning and conversations.

We know we can't solve poverty without the input and expertise of people who've experienced it. In 2023, we asked members of Solid Ground's Community Accountability Council to guide development of our new Vision 2030 strategic plan, which included community input through 17 listening sessions. We also traded ideas with partners across the county at two Social Justice Salons focused on equity in our local food systems and women of color leading change in our most critical safety-net nonprofits.



“*It means a lot to me to sit on this stage and talk about Black liberation – my people and our hopes and visions – and not leave this room and feel like my life is being threatened because I’m talking about that. We have come a long way.*”

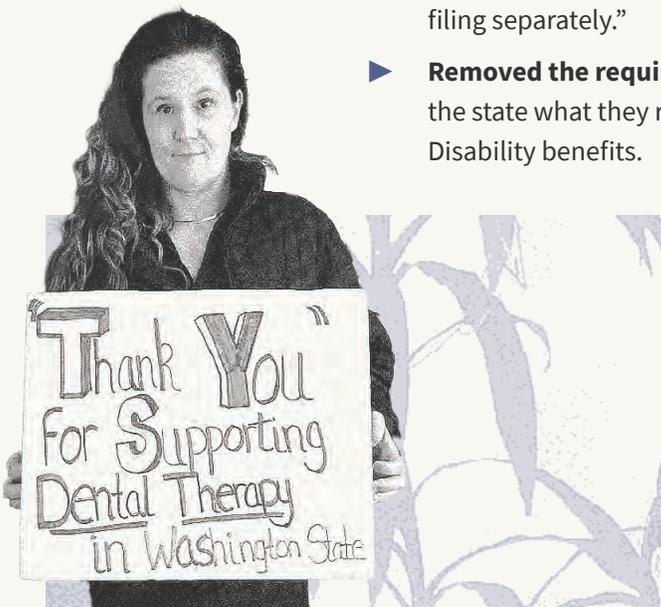
— Andrea Caupain Sanderson, BIPOC Executive Directors Coalition Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director, speaks at our June Social Justice Salon.



1,083 emails were sent to state lawmakers to **advocate for policies** that support **people living on low incomes.**

Our advocacy partners at Statewide Poverty Action Network also spent the year listening to low-income communities and working alongside them to advocate for change in Olympia. Together, we secured several big victories toward making Washington state a more just place for people living on low incomes. We:

- ▶ **Improved access to oral health care** by expanding dental therapy to community health clinics across Washington state.
- ▶ **Created a more effective pathway out of poverty** by letting families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) save and earn more while accessing the program.
- ▶ **Supported domestic violence survivors** by allowing them to apply for the Working Families Tax Credit when filing taxes as “married filing separately.”
- ▶ **Removed the requirement that people with disabilities** repay the state what they received after they qualify for Social Security Disability benefits.



“*Hearing your experience, perspective, and values can open a lawmakers’ mind and convince them to advocate for good policies. Legislators look to you to be the expert in your life, which you are!*”

— Amy Roark, Poverty Reduction Work Group Steering Committee member



**In 2023, more than 65,000 people connected with Solid Ground's services.
Here are just a few of our 2023 community impacts.**

- ▶ **393 children and teens** participated in programs designed to help them **develop social and behavioral skills for life**.
- ▶ **78 onsite behavioral health sessions** supported Sand Point Housing residents to **improve their mental wellbeing** and work toward goals they set for themselves.
- ▶ **117,858 door-to-door rides** helped people who can't use traditional public transportation **get where they needed to go**.
- ▶ **198 households** with past homelessness experience built new lives in **supportive housing**.
- ▶ **344 domestic violence survivors** and their children found **safe refuge and healing support**.
- ▶ **806 households** avoided eviction and the trauma of homelessness **via rental assistance and case management**.
- ▶ **7,694,094 pounds of food** were delivered to area food banks.
- ▶ **1,241 adults and children** received **free fresh produce and recipe ideas** through community health clinics.
- ▶ **1,228 adults and children** learned about **healthy foods and cooking** through classes and farm field trips.
- ▶ **1,246 volunteers** contributed **38,350 hours** of their time, valued at more than **\$1.4 million**.
- ▶ **17 listening sessions** and **2 Social Justice Salons** engaged nearly **320 community members** in transformative visioning and conversations.
- ▶ **129 households** got legal help to secure or maintain **critical state benefits**.
- ▶ **1,700+ renters** became better equipped to **advocate for their tenant rights**.
- ▶ **1,083 emails** were sent to state lawmakers to **advocate for policies** that improve the lives of **people living on low incomes**.

2023 ORGANIZATIONAL DONORS

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 - Adobe Employee Community Fund
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 - Albertsons Companies Foundations
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- Wyncote Foundation Northwest

DONOR KEY

- ⚙ UNRESTRICTED
- | ✳ IN-KIND
- | ❖ MULTIYEAR



Operating Support & Revenue

Government Contracts & Grants	\$24,480,561
Private Grants & Contributions	\$3,127,937
In-Kind Contributions	\$172,736
Earned & Other Revenue	\$1,982,993
Administrative Fee Charged	\$3,399,764
Total Operating Support & Revenue	\$33,163,991

Operating Expenses

Transportation	\$12,217,125
Homelessness Prevention	\$7,718,109
Housing & Services	\$4,271,752
Food Access & Education	\$2,509,278
Advocacy	\$1,569,947
Management & General	\$3,475,785
Retired & Senior Volunteers	\$388,331
Fundraising	\$1,563,538
Total Operating Expenses	\$33,713,865

NET INCOME	(\$549,874)
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Balance Sheet

Current Assets	\$11,006,353
Fixed Assets	\$4,297,928
Other Assets	\$9,030,737
Total Assets	\$24,335,018
Current Liabilities	\$1,351,724
Long-term Liabilities	\$3,240,741
Total Liabilities	\$4,592,465
Shareholder Equity	\$19,742,552
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$24,335,018





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- ▶ **BLOG:** solid-ground.org/groundviews
- ▶ **FACEBOOK:** [SolidGroundWA](https://www.facebook.com/SolidGroundWA)
- ▶ **INSTAGRAM:** [solid_ground_wa](https://www.instagram.com/solid_ground_wa)
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- ▶ **PHOTOS:** Michelle Flickinger, Rachael Green, Clarissa Magdich, Converge Media | Jordan Somers, Michael B. Maine, and Neal Simpson
- ▶ **DESIGN:** Mx. Jessica Miller | Private/ Public, LLC
- ▶ **PRINTING DONATED:** DCG ONE | July 2024

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