

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



**FAMILIES FORWARD**  
C H A R L O T T E



# OUR MISSION

We partner with Charlotte area families experiencing poverty to achieve lasting economic stability. We provide educational opportunities, offer essential support, and foster long-term relationships through individualized mentoring.

# OUR VISION

Our vision is to empower Charlotte area families to overcome intergenerational poverty.

Our goal is that by building relationships and giving Charlotte's low-income families the tools and resources necessary to achieve long-term stability, we will change the landscape of poverty in Charlotte for generations to come.



Dear Friends of Families Forward Charlotte,

This was a big year for Families Forward Charlotte (FFC)! Not only did we celebrate 5 years of impact in the Fall of 2022, but we also opened our very first Program Center. The Program Center has given us the capacity to work with more families and meet our growth goals in the coming years. I am excited to share with you details of the impact FFC has made in this report.



On the following pages, we share success stories and goals accomplished like getting jobs and housing, but the reality is that families in our community are still facing many challenges. There are outside forces and systemic issues that are working against the forward progress that families in our program are trying to make. As a result, we have to work harder to support families as they overcome these challenges.

Charlotte families need our services. They need a mentor to guide and support them as they work to stabilize their lives. They need someone to advocate for them and help them advocate for themselves. They need a bit of financial relief to keep them from spiraling further into poverty. They need someone to help them think outside of their crisis and remind them that they can take steps FORWARD. This work isn't easy... if it was, poverty wouldn't be such a rampant problem in our community and beyond, but we can make a difference, one family at a time.

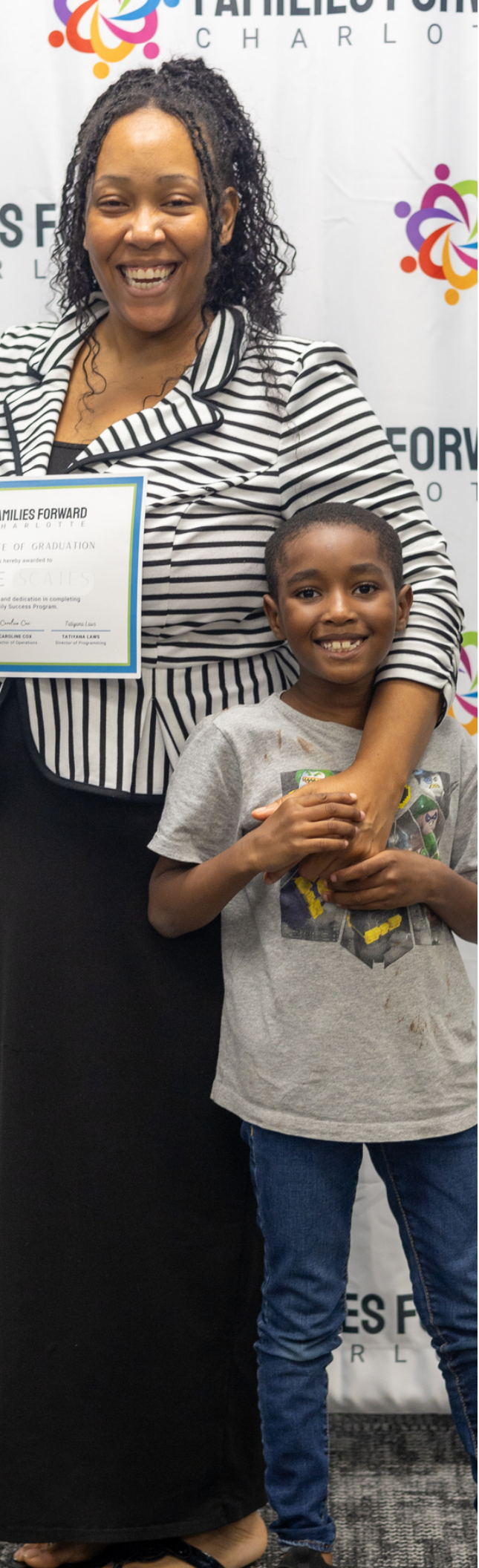
We grew to work with over 90 families this year in our Family Success Program, 5 in our STEPS Program, and engaged former participants through our Alumni Program. In each of these programs, we continue to fight barriers that are keeping families in poverty by building relationships, boosting life skills through workshops, and providing essential support as families work toward economic stability.

We are proud of what the families in our programs have been able to accomplish. As we grow, our goal remains to build relationships and give Charlotte families the tools and resources necessary to achieve long-term stability and to change the landscape of poverty in Charlotte for generations to come. We continue to be grateful for the support of our community, our sustainers, our partners, and everyone who has had a hand in making FFC a well-established and impactful community figure. On behalf of the entire staff and Board of Directors, I want to thank you so much for your continued confidence in us and your support of our organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Carrie Christian'.

Carrie Christian  
Executive Director and Founder



# OUR PROGRAMS

## FAMILY SUCCESS PROGRAM

Volunteer mentors (Family Liaisons) trained in Mobility Mentoring support their family partner in creating and achieving goals towards long-term stability.

Educational workshops are held monthly to provide tools and resources to help families achieve their goals.

Essential support is provided through cleaning supplies, toiletries, Holiday meals and gifts, school supplies, and \$1,000 in financial assistance.

## ALUMNI PROGRAM

Family Success Program graduates can remain engaged in on-going educational opportunities and give back by volunteering with FFC. Participants have the opportunity to earn funds through participation that supports their financial goals.

## STEPS PROGRAM

We cover the cost of living for Family Success Program graduates so they can return to school to complete their High School Diploma and post-secondary education.

## WEEKEND FOOD PACK PROGRAM

We coordinate, raise funds, collect donations, and provide volunteers to prepare food bags for children and families in food-insecure households. Each bag provides a child with food over weekends and holidays when they lack access to free breakfast and lunch at their school.

# A GENERATIONAL IMPACT

When our founders set out to make a difference in our community 5 years ago, the goal was to impact the children in our community by supporting their parents to break the cycle of poverty NOW.

After 5 years of equipping impoverished families with tools, resources, and guidance, we know that the impact on the children is immeasurable. Here are just some ways children benefit from being a part of our family:

- 1) Children see their parent(s) model goal setting and action step planning that is taught to them by Family Liaisons mentors. Parents are then able to support their children as they set goals of their own.
- 2) Children thrive when their parent(s) is empowered to set boundaries and advocate for their families. These important life skills, along with financial empowerment and parenting skills, are learned through our educational workshops.
- 3) Children are able to do better in school when they have a safe home to sleep in, clothes to wear to school, food to eat, and the stability of a working parent.
- 4) Children live in a more stable environment due to the toiletries, home goods, furniture, and other items given to families throughout the year.
- 5) Children have improved physical and emotional health when their parent(s) is no longer dealing with the daily stressors of poverty and are able to support their basic needs.

As our mission continues, we will be able to further measure the impact this programming has on local families and children's future success.



“For the last week or so I’ve been trying to find the right picture and the right words to really express my gratitude but you know what I came up with? ... Making sure I give this program and my goals my full attention and dedication, accomplishing them and setting a solid foundation for my family is the ultimate thank you and that’s exactly what I’m going to continue to do.”

-LaShawna,  
current Family Partner

# CYNTHIA'S SUCCESS

We pride ourselves on providing an individualized experience for the families we work with, and many graduates state that they have never before experienced the respect and grace that our organization provides. This story of Cynthia's journey embodies this tenet of our mission.

When Cynthia entered our Family Success Program in May of 2022, she was homeless and temporarily staying with a friend. She was matched with her Family Liaison mentor, Keri, and they hit it off right away. Together they set goals for Cynthia to secure housing and access mental health treatment. But after 2 months in our program, Cynthia was diagnosed with cancer. She had gone to the doctor for a routine check-up and was given this unexpected news, which ultimately changed her whole perspective on life. She was unsure about her ability to commit to our program but still needed support. Her Family Liaison, Keri, was happy to help and understood that things would look different for Cynthia. Keri assisted Cynthia with researching treatment plans, applying for financial aid to cover the cost of treatment, and ultimately helped her create a care plan.

Cynthia wasn't able to participate in our programming exactly like other Family Partners because her medical appointments and treatment took precedence over attending workshops, but she kept meeting with Keri whenever she could. Keri used phone calls and texts as touch points and supported Cynthia throughout her journey. After a year of working together, Cynthia has graduated from our program with a great prognosis, housing, and a lifelong friend in Keri!



“My Family Liaison (Keri) did a great job providing me with resources to better my family. The finance part of the program helped me save money which I had never done. I love the program very much....I would do it all over again.”

-Cynthia,  
past Family Partner



## OUR NEW HOME

In November of 2022, FFC opened our first Program Center. For the families that we work with, having a space of our own is a game-changer. Here's why.

Jessica arrives at our Program Center to learn about our program and watch a video that shows her exactly what to expect with our unique approach. As a single mom, she is relieved that she can bring her kids with her to all FFC events. As they play in our child watch area, our staff notes Jessica's information on an iPad and the intake process is complete.

Jessica confides that she has been out of bath soap and laundry detergent, and without childcare she hasn't been able to work. While she is at the Program Center she can shop for the items she needs in our essentials closet. Her kids can now shower and have fresh clothes to wear to school.

It's cold outside and while meeting with staff, she shyly mentions that her house is without heat. Our staff gathers warm blankets from our storage closet while we work to get her heat turned back on.

When Jessica comes back to orientation a week later, she enjoys a meal while meeting with her new mentor. They spend time chatting and getting to know each other surrounded by messages of support. Her mentor encourages Jessica to take a few days to gather her resume and employment information so she can apply for jobs. For the first time in years, Jessica has hope.

The next week, Jessica comes back to the Program Center to meet with her mentor. They spend time using a laptop in our tech room to search and apply for jobs. Jessica beams with excitement for her family's future.

On the way out, Jessica picks up a meal for her family, provided by a local service group that supports families in our program. This meal means her children will be nourished for school the next day.

And this is just the beginning. Having a central location to meet with our families and continue to walk with them on the path to stability will have an immeasurable impact. Beyond meeting families' basic needs and providing a space to meet with their mentors, we have future plans to maximize the Program Center by offering mental health offerings, self-care opportunities for these hardworking parents, and even day camps so parents can still work on teacher work days.

We appreciate every gift that made this big step in our journey possible!

# Forward PROGRESS

Results from the 2022-23 Family Success Program

## FAMILY SUCCESS PROGRAM

**93** total families participated in our Family Success Program (FSP).

**33** new Family Liaison Mentors (volunteers) trained. Each worked with their Family Partners for an average of 5 hours per month.

**42** educational workshops offered yearly covering topics such as financial literacy, career readiness, parenting skills, mental health, first time home buying, and other life skills.

**171** Essential Baskets of cleaning supplies and toiletries distributed.

**185** book bags filled with school supplies given to local children.

**3,103** holiday gifts provided to program families.

**\$172,257.57** of direct support provided to program families including, but not limited to: housing needs, phone/internet, transportation, childcare, and emergency food assistance.



# Forward PROGRESS

Results from the 2022-23 Family Success Program



**Participants accomplished targeted, obtainable goals toward long-term stability with 164 total goals completed.**

**These include, but are not limited to:**

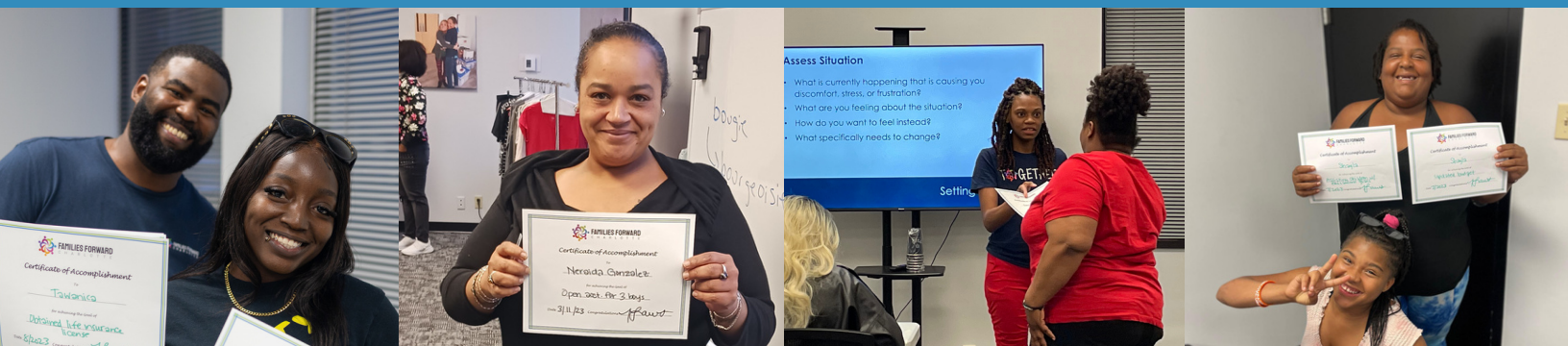
**36** obtained new jobs or got a promotion

**11** moved into stable housing

**30** established savings, paid off debt, and/or created budgets

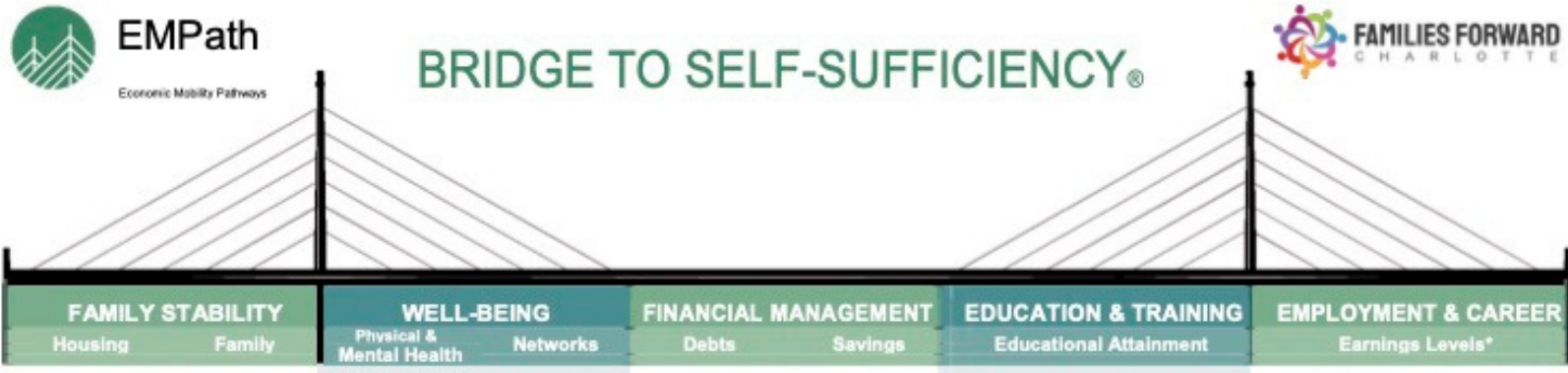
**16** enrolled in or completed courses to advance their education (college courses, training programs, or certifications)

**6** secured childcare so they could work



# Forward PROGRESS

Results from the 2022-23 Family Success Program



## For all graduates who completed our End of Program Survey:

100% progressed forward on the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency assessment in at least one pillar, with an average +8.16 point change (on 100 pt. scale)

100% stated that their knowledge of & access to services/resources improved.

83% stated that their employment or training for employment improved.

83% stated their ability to handle their finances improved.

83% stated that they feel more confident in themselves.

78% stated that they feel like they have a better support system.

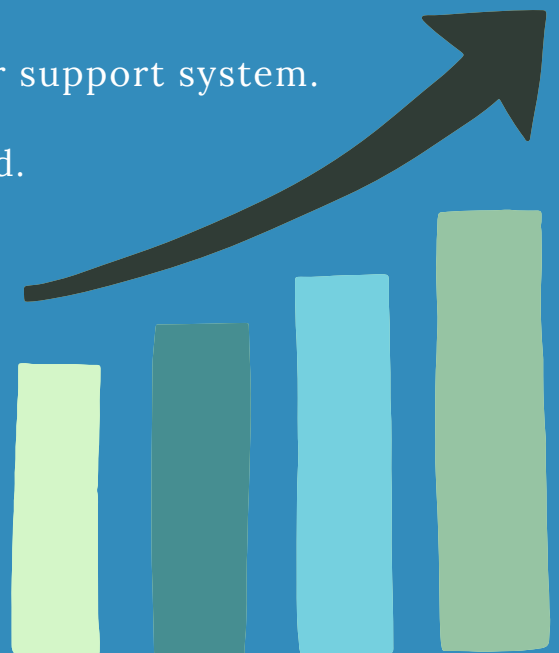
78% stated that their housing stability improved.

78% stated that their access to stable

transportation improved.

72% stated that their employment

became more stable.



# *Forward* PROGRESS

## ALUMNI PROGRAM

**14** total families participated in our Alumni Program

**\$10,327.91** of direct financial support provided to program families including, but not limited to: housing needs, phone/internet, transportation, childcare, and emergency food assistance.

Alumni events hosted in partnership with and supported by Family of Faith Christian Center

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## STEPS PROGRAM

**5** total families participated in our STEPS Program

**\$34,778.31** of direct support provided to program families including, but not limited to: housing needs, phone/internet, transportation, childcare, and emergency food assistance.

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## WEEKEND FOOD PACK PROGRAM

**120** children impacted

**2,400** bags of food provided to two Title 1 CMS Elementary Schools for food-insecure children.





# THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteer Family Liaison mentors make our Family Success Program possible. The number of families we can support is directly dependent on the number of Family Liaisons we are able to recruit. These volunteers dedicate numerous hours each year providing support and guidance to their Family Partners as they work towards achieving long-term stability. The cost to FFC without these volunteers would be significant and we want to recognize their dedication and the value of their time.

The Federal value of a  
volunteer hour is: \$31.80



73 individuals volunteered as  
Family Liaisons during our 2022-23  
program year

Each individual contributed  
approximately 5 hours per month



**Total value of their volunteer time  
= \$139,284**

## FROM PARTICIPANT TO PROGRAM DIRECTOR



By now, many of you know our Director of Programming, Tatiyana Laws, but what you might not know is that Tatiyana used to be a participant in our Family Success Program. Tatiyana joined our Family Success Program in the fall of 2020 and was paired with Family Liaisons Lee and Kristin. She committed herself to our program, showing up to educational workshops and working with her liaisons on her goals of setting a budget and establishing savings, which were aspects of her larger target of securing a better job and owning a home. When FFC was ready to hire a new program manager in the fall of 2021, Tatiyana applied and could not have been a better fit for our FFC family. Since beginning her role as a Program Manager, she has made a significant impact on the success of our programs through her leadership, experience, and thoughtful recommendations. In January of 2022, Tatiyana transitioned into the Director of Programming role and now oversees our Family Success Program, STEPS Program, and Alumni Program, as well as two new Program Managers.

Here is what Tatiyana had to share about her experience going from a program participant to full-time staff member:

*“I never imagined I would be a single mom of two, let alone someone with a master’s degree barely making ends meet. I felt like I couldn’t take a better paying job even if I was qualified because the hours didn’t work with my kids’ schedule. I needed an employer who understood that I was a mom before anything. If something came up with the kids then I had to go – no questions asked. It was me or me! To this day, very few employers understand that and/or maybe they couldn’t care less.” Continued on the next page...*

*“My liaisons, Kristin and Lee, were the ones who sent me the link to apply for Families Forward Charlotte when they posted a Program Manager position. I remember telling Kristin I wasn’t sure if it would work out. I wasn’t worried about whether my resume would be sufficient or if I could get through the interview; as a single mom, I needed flexibility. We had previous discussions about my work experience and necessities when it came to my children, so she understood my concerns. She encouraged me to apply anyway (which I did) and volunteered to look over my resume and/or help in any way she could. I think she may have been even more excited than I was. She checked in every few days to see if I had heard anything, so of course she was one of the first people I texted when I was offered the position.*

*I won’t lie. I was a little nervous, ha! Accepting the position meant losing the little bit of assistance that was keeping me afloat like SNAP benefits, childcare vouchers, and Medicaid. It was the whole concept of the benefits cliff. As soon as I started making more money everything would be discontinued without grace, so the reality was that the money needed to equate to the amount of assistance I was receiving. I wasn’t sure how I was going to supplement food, childcare, or insurance if I decided to take the job. However, I knew I had two amazing liaisons who would help me budget and keep me accountable if I wasn’t following through. Also, I knew if I wanted to grow, I had to be uncomfortable. It was a matter of how bad I wanted the change. Knowing what we had been through and looking at those two beautiful little girls of mine was all it took. I was ready and willing to take the risk (a well-planned one) and I’m so glad I did!*

*It was never a matter of if I could do it, but when and who was going to give me the opportunity to truly thrive. Well, Families Forward Charlotte did just that! A special thank you to Kristin and Lee for providing me with resources, holding me accountable, playing sports with the girls, celebrating all our WINS and so much more! They have both been a great addition to my family. Now here we are two years later: I’m making a sustainable wage, I’m in a better mental space, I have money saved for emergencies and vacations, AND WE HAVE A HOME TO CALL OUR OWN!*

*I could say a million things, but I’ll save it for my book. For all the single mamas out there—you got this! Get focused on what you want to accomplish, eliminate the things (and people) that keep you stagnant, and go after everything you deserve! There’s light at the end of the tunnel.”*

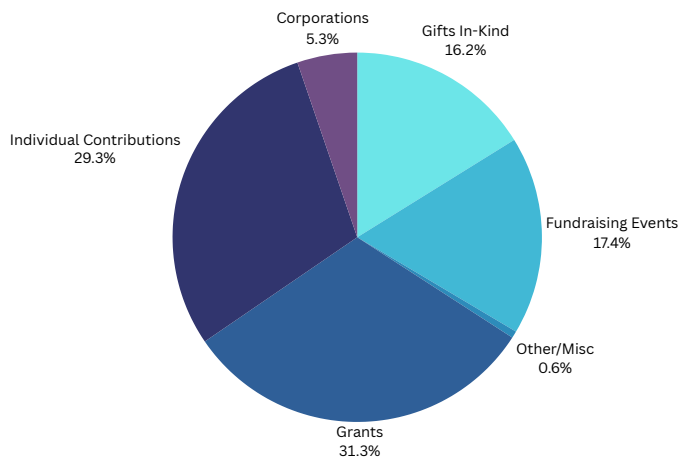


FFC appreciates Tatiyana being so open and willing to tell her story! She is the perfect example of what can be accomplished if provided the right support, tools, and opportunities, and we hope she is the first of many former program participants we can hire!

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Families Forward Charlotte engaged an accounting firm to perform our annual audit. These numbers have been pulled directly from the audited financial statements.

## REVENUE PERCENTAGE BY TYPE FY2022



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"I want to thank all of you all from the absolute bottom of my heart. I am not just grateful for the material gifts, but the countless hours you all invest in just supporting the program and the participants. FFC has been one of the greatest gifts my family could have ever received. This time last year I didn't have much to smile about, and 2022 has come with its challenges. However, with the knowledge and support I've gained from FFC workshops and resources I was able to handle them in a way than before." -Family Partner

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## EXPENSE PERCENTAGE BY TYPE

77% Program  
16% Fundraising  
7% Operating

## FY2022 REVENUE - \$1,134,634 TOTAL

\$354,536	Grants
\$339,800	Individual Contributions
\$180,316	Gifts In-Kind
\$194,804	Fundraising Events
\$58,567	Corporate Sponsors
\$6,611	Other

## EXPENSES - \$1,084,092

\$760,822	Family Success Program
\$40,181	STEPS Program
\$16,842	Alumni Program
\$175,351	Fundraising (mostly salary)
\$75,111	Management and General
\$15,785	Weekend Food Pack Program



"If it weren't for Families Forward Charlotte and their helping partners, my son & I would be homeless & carless. I can't thank everyone enough for all the help & support, kindness & generosity they've shown! I am truly grateful and blessed. Thank you."  
-Family Partner

# 2022-23 TIMELINE

- July** Family Liaison recruitment & new family interviews
- July** Four educational workshops
- August** Volunteer Family Liaisons trained & new families joined our FSP
- August** Four educational workshops
- August** School supplies and Essential Baskets provided by community partners
- September** Four educational workshops
- September** Fall graduation for FSP Families
- October** Four educational workshops
- November** Three or four educational workshops
- November** Thanksgiving meals & Essential Baskets provided by community partners
- December** Holiday gifts, & holiday meals distributed to families
- January** Family Liaison recruitment & new family interviews
- January** Four educational workshops
- January** Volunteer Family Liaisons trained & new families joined our FSP
- February** Hearts for Hope fundraiser
- February** Two educational workshops
- March** Four educational workshops
- March** Essential Baskets provided by community partners
- April** Four educational workshops
- April** Anti-racism training for staff, board members, & Family Liaisons
- April** Family Liaison recruitment & new family interviews
- May** Volunteer Family Liaisons trained & new families joined our FSP
- May** Four educational workshops
- May** Spring graduation for FSP Families
- June** Anti-Racism training for staff, board members & Family Liaisons
- June** Annual Family Fun Day



# FUNDER RECOGNITION

We would like to give a special thanks to the foundations and corporate partners who help make our mission possible. We are so grateful for your support in addressing economic mobility.

## 2022-23 GRANTS

A Resting Place Ministries  
Albemarle Foundation  
AmeriHealth Caritas NC  
Bank of America  
Canopy Housing Foundation  
Economic Mobility Pathways  
Erie Insurance  
Equitable Foundation  
Gene Haas Foundation  
Foundation For The Carolinas  
International Paper  
LPL Financial  
Lucille P. and Edward C. Giles  
Foundation  
Murgitroyd Foundation  
PNC Bank  
Principal Foundation  
Providence Baptist Church  
Reemprise Fund  
Sardis Presbyterian Church  
Sisters of Mercy Foundation

## 2022-23 GRANTS CONT.

Social Venture Partners  
Truliant Charitable Contributions  
United Way- United Neighborhoods  
Wells Fargo Foundation

## CORPORATE PARTNERS

Ally Financial  
AmeriHealth Caritas NC  
Burrow Welchel & Culp  
Coca-Cola Consolidated  
Concorde Construction  
Company  
Falcon Charter Bus  
JLL  
NASCAR  
Nadine Morgan, Realtor  
Park National Bank  
Performance Staffing Solutions  
Pinpoint Patient Recruiting  
Show Up Social Volunteering  
Truliant Federal Credit Union



## WORKSHOP PARTNERS

The monthly educational workshops provided through our Family Success Program are presented in collaboration with wonderful community partners and other local nonprofits who serve as our subject matter experts on topics like financial literacy, parenting skills, first time home buying, career readiness, mental health, and setting boundaries. We want to recognize and thank these partners who provide invaluable knowledge and tools that our program families use in achieving their stability goals.

Anuvia Recovery & Prevention

Arts+

Common Wealth Charlotte

CT Anderson with Spring Clean

Dr. Ana Marie Temple

Dr. Jeffrey Shears

ECPAT

Fifth Third Bank

Frank Crawford

Joyce Marchione

Kendra T. Allison

Laurie Ford Counseling & Consulting

Lisa Charde

Makeda Pennycooke

Malorie Nicole

Park National Bank

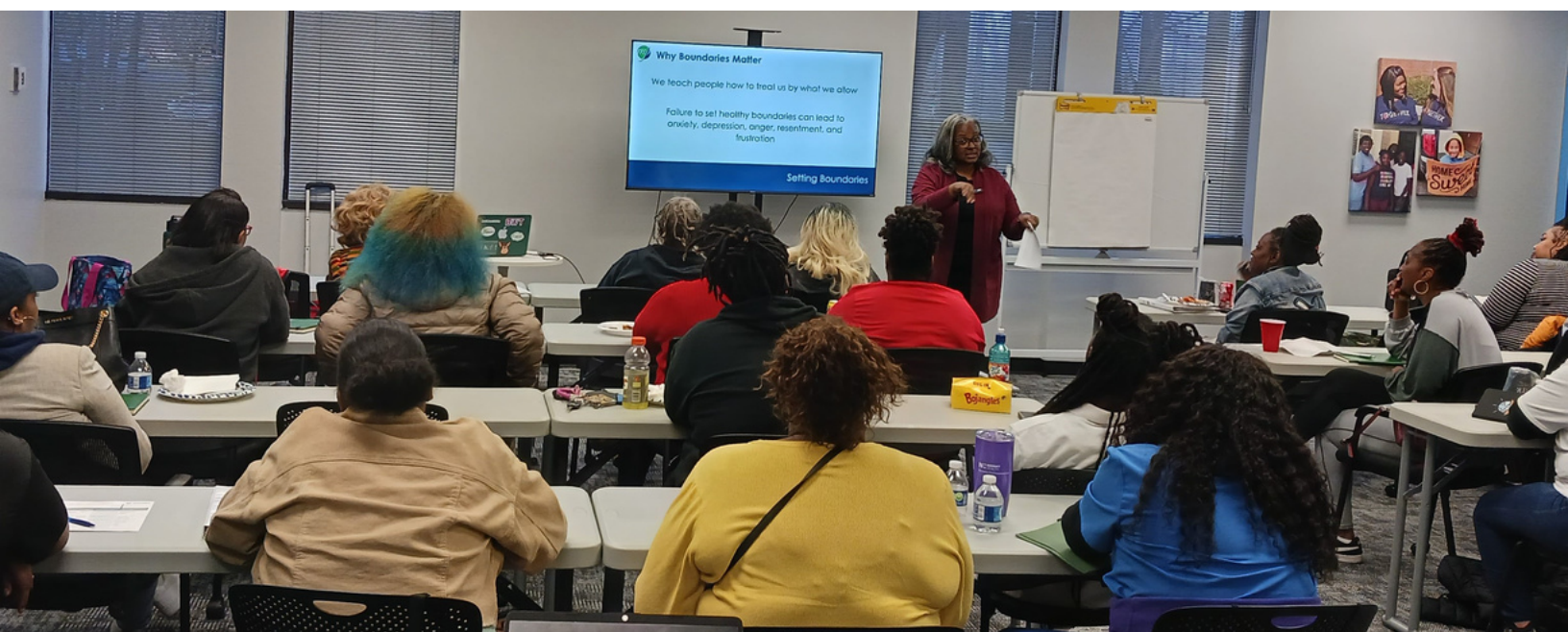
PNC Bank

Shashanah Ward

StarMed

Teen Connection

Wellcare NC





## STAFF

Carrie Christian, Executive Director

Caroline Cox, Director of Operations

Tatiana Laws, Director of Programming

Daniel Bentley, Program Manager

Shelby Lewis, Program Manager

Becky Cathcart, Operations Manager

Hannah Kesig, Volunteer & Partnerships Coordinator

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Telitha Hight, President

Jack Lange, Vice President

Ursula Felder, Secretary ('22)

Andy Krafft, Treasurer ('22)

Jason Reinfriend, Treasurer

Deja Coney, At-Large

Lucas Fisher, At-Large ('22)

Niki Koesel, At-Large

Travluss Mickens, At-Large

Stephanie Simpson, At-Large

Jazmin Hazbun, At-Large

Rajan Merchant, At-Large

Phil Toupin, At-Large

## A Note From Our Board Chair

A volunteer recently wrote, "It's not always easy, but it's so rewarding", and I couldn't say it better myself! Our staff and volunteers walk with families at some of the lowest points in their lives, while they are facing homelessness, job loss, and systemic issues that work against the progress they want to make. It's hard. It's messy. But it's all worth it when we see the results that come from working together.

We work with families that don't qualify for other programs in Charlotte. They don't have anywhere else to turn. They need something different and truly life-changing. They want to be seen and heard. That's where we come in, thanks to your support.

You make it possible for us to train mentors to work with each family. You opened the doors to our new Program Center where we provide life-skills education. You make it possible for us to provide transportation or childcare for newly employed parents. You make it possible for us to provide a roof over someone's head. You make it possible for us to provide for over 120 children in our Weekend Food Pack Program, over 90 families in our Family Success Program, and 5 moms in our STEPS Program.

As we wrap up this program year, I want you to know we are incredibly grateful for everyone that has helped us fulfill our mission. Thank you to every volunteer, mentor, donor, and friend of our organization. We are only able to accomplish the success outlined in our annual report because of you.

Sincerely,  
Telitha Hight  
Board of Directors, President

## LEARN MORE

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[www.familiesforwardcharlotte.org](http://www.familiesforwardcharlotte.org)

Facebook: @familiesforwardcharlotte | Instagram: families\_forward\_charlotte