

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



**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 to build relationships and give Charlotte's low-income families the tools and resources necessary to achieve long-term stability, effectively changing the landscape of poverty in Charlotte for generations to come.



Dear Friends and Supporters,

This past year has been one of meaningful progress and reflection for Families Forward Charlotte as we supported 99 families in our Family Success Program. Each family's journey is unique and deeply rooted in strength, resilience, and determination. It is an honor to stand alongside them, and I am proud to share the impact of this work with you in our Annual Report.

A major milestone of the 2024-25 fiscal year has been our dedication on a comprehensive strategic planning process to set us up for success in the coming years. This effort allowed us to step back, listen closely, and design a clear path forward that strengthens our foundation while positioning us for long term success. Through this process, we identified the most effective ways to deepen our support, strengthen our partnerships, and respond to the needs we see every day.

As we look ahead, we are excited to launch several initiatives shaped by what we have learned. These include refining our family support model to offer more intentional and individualized guidance, expanding our focus on workforce development and career pathways, strengthening volunteer engagement, and investing in the mental health needs of the families we serve. Each of these efforts reflects our commitment to walking beside families in a way that is purposeful, responsive, and grounded in trust.

We also continue to be mindful of the realities many families face. Rising costs, complex systems, and limited access to stable resources create ongoing challenges. Yet every achievement a family makes reminds us of what is possible when support, opportunity, and community come together. Their courage and perseverance inspire us to keep growing and improving.

Thank you for being part of this work. Your belief in our mission and your continued partnership make everything we do possible. As we move into the year ahead, I am filled with gratitude for the community that surrounds Families Forward Charlotte and the hopeful future we are building together.

With gratitude,



Carrie Christian  
Executive Director and Founder



# The Big Picture - Charlotte, NC

In Charlotte, NC, families with children face severe economic challenges that threaten their stability and well-being. Rising housing costs, paired with stagnant wages, have left many households unable to afford basic necessities. As a result, thousands of children are growing up in poverty, and hundreds of families are without stable housing. The persistent gap between income and the cost of living places an urgent need on the community to support these families, ensuring they have access to safe housing, economic opportunities, and resources that can break the cycle of poverty and promote long-term stability.



## Childhood Poverty

32,713 children are living in poverty

[censusreporter.org](https://www.censusreporter.org)



## Median Rent

Up \$436/month since 2020 to \$1,986

[wbtv.com](https://www.wbtv.com), Feb. 23, 2024



## Minimum Wage

Has not moved from \$7.25 in North Carolina since 2008

[labor.nc.gov](https://www.labor.nc.gov)



## Housing Insecure

291 households with minor children (975 people) experiencing homelessness

[mecklenburghousingdata.org](https://www.mecklenburghousingdata.org)





# Our Programs

## Family Success Program

Volunteer mentors (Family Liaisons) trained in Mobility Mentoring® support their Family Partner in creating and achieving goals toward 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 Path To Economic Mobility

## Onboarding

A volunteer Family Liaison is recruited and completes Mobility Mentoring® training, while a Family Partner is referred from a partner and is interviewed to determine their readiness for the program.



## Orientation

The Family Liaison & Family Partner attend orientation. Together, they complete a Bridge to Self-Sufficiency® assessment and set a goal..



## Mobility Mentoring

The Family Liaison & Family Partner continue monthly face-to-face meetings and weekly touch bases, focusing on goal achievement and resource connections.

Workshops are held monthly to provide skills and resources as Family Partners work towards goals.

## Assistance

As financial barriers arise, Family Partners work with their Liaison to request financial assistance .

This can be used for rent, utilities, childcare, transportation, education, emergency food assistance, and other needs to ensure families can continue to focus on their goals.



## Graduation

After two years, Family Partners attend a graduation ceremony. As graduates, they can participate in our STEPS and/or Alumni Program to continue their work towards economic mobility.



# Natashia's Success

“After everything I have been through these past seven years, I would have never thought I would have had the great opportunity to be in the position that I am now. All I can say is never give up!”  
-Natashia

This year we celebrated achievements of many families in our Family Success Program, including graduates like Natashia, whose progress reflects both her personal determination and the power of community support.

Natashia joined Families Forward Charlotte in March with a clear motivation to build a stable future for herself and her daughter. In just a short time, she embraced every opportunity available to her through her Family Liaison mentor, our workshops, and the network of partners who walk beside our families. Her dedication led to an extraordinary list of accomplishments, including:

- Securing employment
- Opening her first bank account
- Saving \$250 in her first three months
- Increasing her credit score by 50 points
- Completing a financial literacy course
- Earning a promotion to Corporate Internet Sales Consultant

She also successfully graduated from the Family Success Program and earned more than two thousand dollars in banked funds through our partners at Crossroads, a powerful step toward lasting financial stability.

The photo to the right shows Natashia at our program graduation, a symbol of how far she has come and how hard she has worked to achieve her goals.

Reflecting on her journey, Natashia shared:

“After everything I have been through these past seven years, I would have never thought I would have had the great opportunity to be in the position that I am now. All I can say is never give up!” Her words capture the spirit of resilience we witness every day. Natashia's story is not only a celebration of her success but also a reminder of what is possible when determination meets opportunity and support.

We are incredibly proud of Natashia and all she has achieved. Her accomplishments illuminate the heart of our mission and inspire the work ahead.



# Our Success Is Yours!

Families Forward Charlotte relies on the hard work and dedication of volunteers who support our work in many ways. We are grateful for the time and energy spent by all volunteers and have highlighted some below.



We appreciate the volunteer support of groups that packed Weekend Food Packs like Ally Bank, Aprio, Charlotte Country Day, Elliott Davis, Opkalla, and Park National Bank.

The dedication of Family Liaison mentors is unmatched. They dedicate 4-6 hours a month to work with a family in our program for at least 1 year. Thank you to all 70+ Family Liaisons!



Thank you to the groups and individuals who held donation drives and packed essentials baskets, such as Charlotte Christian, Cranfield Academy, St. Matthews School, and Sardis Presbyterian Church.

Special appreciation is extended to those who volunteer to work with the children in the families we work with, such as Sardis Presbyterian Church and the Junior League.





# 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. Without volunteers, FFC wouldn't be able to fulfill its mission and we want to recognize their dedication and commitment to our organization.

The Federal value of a  
volunteer hour is: \$34.79



103 individuals volunteered as  
Family Liaisons during our 2024-  
25 program year

Each individual contributed  
approximately 5 hours per month



Total value of their volunteer time =  
\$215,000

# Forward Progress

## Results from the 2024-25 Family Success Program

99 Family Partners matched with a volunteer Family Liaison mentor.

42 New Family Liaison mentors trained. Each worked with their Family Partner for an average of 6 hours per month.

46 Educational workshops offered covering topics such as Financial Literacy, Career Readiness, Goal Setting, Parenting, and Life Skills.

231 Backpacks of school supplies given to local children.

181 Essential baskets of cleaning supplies and toiletries were distributed.

2,225 Holiday gifts provided to FSP families.

**\$99,662.34** 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 2024-25 Family Success Program



Participants accomplished targeted, obtainable goals toward long-term stability with 156 **total goals** completed.

These include, but are not limited to:

40 participants obtained new jobs or got a promotion

28 participants completed goals addressing their debts and savings

22 families moved into stable housing

9 participants gained stable transportation

9 participants completed goals to improve their mental or physical well-being

8 participants accomplished goals related to completed courses to advance their education

4 participants secured childcare so they could work



# Forward Progress

Results from the 2024-25 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 +13 point change (on 100 pt. scale)**

93.33% stated their knowledge of and ability to access services and resources improved.

92.9% stated that their employment and/or training improved

84.6% stated that their ability to handle finances improved

93.4% of graduates stated that their housing stability improved

# Forward Progress

## Alumni Program

22 total families participated in our Alumni Program

**\$3,000** of direct financial support provided to program families including, but not limited to: housing needs, phone/internet, transportation, childcare, and emergency food assistance.

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## STEPS Program

4 total families participated in our STEPS Program

**\$24,244.49** of direct support provided to program families including: housing needs, transportation, childcare, and emergency food assistance.

\*This program is being phased out in lieu of a new workforce initiative we will begin in Fall 2025.

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## Weekend Food Pack Program

**At least 120** children and their families impacted each month

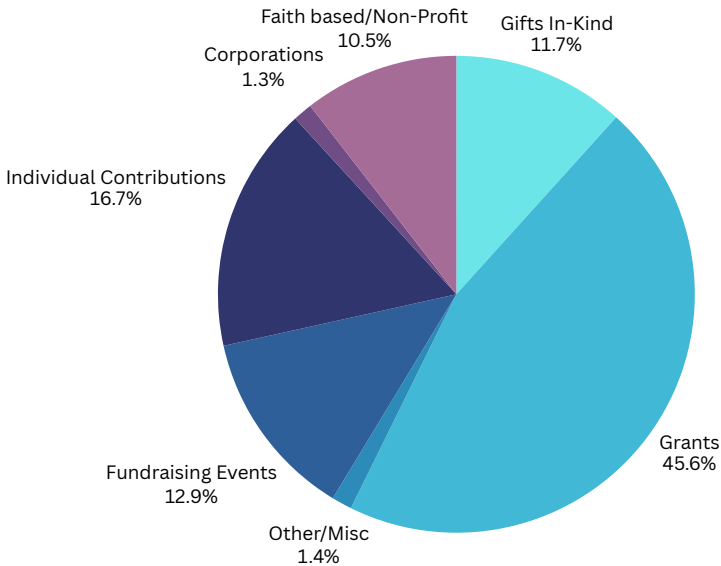
**2,400** bags of food provided to two Title 1 CMS Elementary Schools for food-insecure children.



# 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 FY2025



“ This program is amazing. Very friendly and helpful. They have workshops that are very informative and easy to follow along with. Staff is awesome and down to earth. I've never met such an amazing group of individuals that understand and can relate to others because they've experienced the same obstacles in life as we have. So it makes it that much easier to open up and share things with them. They are regular people just like me. It's like having the friend you never had that you can talk to and ask their opinion on things.” -Family Partner

## EXPENSE PERCENTAGE BY TYPE

- 76% Program
- 15% Fundraising
- 9% Operating

## FY2025 REVENUE - \$1,385,445

\$631,821	Grants
\$230,790	Individual Contributions
\$178,181	Fundraising Events
\$145,502	Faith based/Partner
\$161,978	Gifts In-Kind
\$18,133	Corporate Sponsors
\$19,050	Other

## TOP EXPENSES - \$1,207,629

\$727,601	Family Success Program
\$41,420	STEPS Program
\$18,099	Alumni Program
\$182,092	Fundraising (mostly salary)
\$108,477	Management and General
\$38,029	Weekend Food Pack Program

[Click To View FY25 990 & Audit](#)



These are life-long tools that I can use for any situation that comes up - financially, emotionally, in any parts of my life."

- Neraida, program participant

# Funder Recognition

We extend 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.

Agia Elpis Philoptochos Society/Holy Trinity

Aprio

Bank of America

Barings

Canopy Foundation

Char-Meck Community Foundation - Social Capital

Christ Church Charlotte

Duke Energy Foundation

Gene Haas Foundation

George W. and Ruth R. Baxter Foundation

Global Endowment Management (GEM Investments)

GreerWalker LLP

Hall Foundation, Inc

Jack and Jill of America, Inc.

Junior League of Charlotte

KPMG

Lucille P and Edward C Giles Foundation

Opkalla

O'Reilly Automotive Foundation

Park National Bank

RSM US Foundation

Simple Generosity

Sisters of Mercy NC Legacy

SteelFab, Inc.

The Lotus Campaign, INC

The Merancas Foundation INC

The PNC Financial Services Group

Truliant FCU

United Way of Central Carolinas

Wells Fargo Foundation

## FAITH BASED PARTNERS

Advent Lutheran Church

Christ Church Charlotte

Living Saviour Lutheran Church

Providence Baptist Church

Saint Mark Catholic Church

Sardis Presbyterian Church

## CORPORATE PARTNERS

Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group

Bridge Investment Group

Jack and Jill of America

Park National Bank

PNC Bank

SteelFab



# 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.

Ally

Answer Scholarship

Arts+

Bank Of America

Canopy Foundation

Come Home Collective

Dr. Ana Marie Temple

Dr. Carrie Graham

Dr. Tamara Davis-Jack

Dream Key Partners

Fiercely Changing The Game

Hyacinth Holistic Health

Jarett Evans with Revision Counseling

Love Speaks Out/Meck Co. Public Health

Luxe Life

Makeda Pennycooke

Melissa Gary

Michael Woodard

Mpact Board Game

PNC Bank

Promise Resource Network

Sandra Jones

Sharonview Federal Credit Union

Teen Connection

Thompson Child and Family

Truliant FCU

Women of Purpose

Youth Meditation





## Staff

Carrie Christian, *Executive Director*  
Taylor Justice, *Director of Advancement*  
Daniel Bentley, *Program Manager*  
Emma Privitera, *Volunteer & Partnerships*

## Board of Directors

Telitha Hight, *Chair*  
David Privitera, *Vice Chair*  
Jason Reinfriend, *Treasurer*  
Nadine Morgan, *Secretary*  
Elaine Brown, *At-Large*  
Dr. Carrie Graham, *At-Large*  
Niki Koesel, *Vice Chair*  
Jack Lange, *At Large ('24)*  
Peggy Lipps, *At Large*  
Stephanie Simpson, *At-Large ('24)*  
Phil Toupin, *At-Large ('24)*

## A Note From Our Board Chair

As we reflect on the past year, one theme stands out: partnership creates possibility. We witnessed families taking bold steps toward stability, supported by liaisons who showed up with encouragement, consistency, and compassion. These relationships are not transactional; they are built on mutual respect and shared hopes for the future.

We heard from one family partner who recently completed the program and shared that her liaison “made me feel seen in a way that changed how I saw myself.” Another liaison shared that she continues to stay in touch with her former family partner because “the relationship we built became part of my life, not just my volunteer role.” These stories remind us that true partnership extends far beyond a single program year.

The future holds exciting growth in how we support families. Through stronger collaboration with organizations across Charlotte, more families will be connected to mental health services, financial education, job opportunities, housing support, and other essential resources that help them build long term stability. As we deepen these partnerships, we strive for a community united around one vision: a Charlotte where all families have the opportunity to thrive.

To our donors and community partners: thank you for investing in this mission and believing in the promise of our families. To the organizations who work alongside us: your expertise and collaboration make our ecosystem of support stronger every year. To our staff: your commitment to walking with families through every triumph and challenge is remarkable. And to our volunteer liaisons: you are the heartbeat of Families Forward Charlotte. Your dedication transforms lives.

Sincerely,  
Telitha Hight  
Board of Directors, Chair

## Learn More

[info@familiesforwardclt.org](mailto:info@familiesforwardclt.org) | (704) 659-1833

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

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

# Forward Together: Building the Next Chapter

We recognize that strong, thoughtful planning is essential to carrying our mission into the future. This past year has been a pivotal one for Families Forward Charlotte as we embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to clarify our vision, strengthen our foundation, and position us for long term impact.

Our strategic plan is rooted in listening—listening to families, volunteers, partners, and community voices who walk alongside us every day. By taking a step back to reflect on our growth and evolving community needs, we created a roadmap that honors what has made our work strong while also identifying the innovations and investments needed to deepen our support in the years ahead.

Across months of collaboration and conversation, several priorities emerged. Each reflects our belief that families deserve consistent, high quality support and that our organization must grow with intention:

- Leadership & Capacity – Strengthening our team, operations, and long-term sustainability
- Volunteer Management – Enhancing training, support, and engagement for our dedicated volunteers
- Supportive Services – Expanding access to mental health, housing, and workforce development resources
- Annual Engagement – Setting bold goals to deepen our program reach and outcomes each year

This strategic plan is more than an internal roadmap. It is a commitment to move forward with clarity, purpose, and unity. Just as our families rely on trusted partners, our success depends on collaboration—with local organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals who share our vision for a stronger and more equitable Charlotte.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this planning process and to all who continue to walk forward with us as we begin this exciting new chapter.

[Link to full Strategic Plan](#)



**LEADERSHIP &  
CAPACITY**



**VOLUNTEER  
MANAGEMENT**



**SUPPORTIVE  
SERVICES**

# Looking Ahead

## FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET

\$11,000	STEPS Program (phasing out)
\$652,800	Family Success Program:
\$405,463	Program Staff
\$20,000	Weekend Food Pack Program
\$9,000	Alumni Program
\$69,500	Program Hub
\$370,834	Operations and Fundraising

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**\$1,538,597.00 TOTAL EXPENSES**

76% Program  
16% Fundraising  
8% Operating

## UPCOMING GOALS & PROJECTS

- Strengthen organizational effectiveness through leadership development, staff training, and strong board governance.
- Recruit, train, and engage diverse volunteers with meaningful support and recognition.
- Expand access to mental health, housing assistance, and workforce development to meet holistic family needs.
- Achieve defined service delivery and engagement targets across all programs to ensure measurable community impact.



"My family liaison was wonderful and very supportive, understanding and encouraging. He was always there and able to provide any information that would be beneficial for myself and my family."  
-Family Partner