



Carpenter's  
Shelter

# More than just a roof...

2024 Annual Report



# Shannon and Jonathan's Letter

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on this remarkable year, we are honored to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Carpenter's Shelter. This milestone is more than a measure of time—it is a testament to the resilience of our community, the dedication of our board members, volunteers, and staff, and the unwavering support of people like you who believe in our mission to serve those experiencing homelessness.

**Over the past year, we have experienced significant programmatic growth, expanding our operations to meet the evolving needs of our community. From enhancing our outreach efforts to strengthening pathways to stable housing, our work has been guided by a deep commitment to dignity, compassion, and lasting impact.**

This year has also been one of reconnections. We've had the privilege of re-engaging with past supporters and champions whose beliefs in our work laid the foundation for all we've achieved. These renewed partnerships, alongside the continued dedication of our long-standing supporters, have been both inspiring and humbling.

As we look ahead, we do so with gratitude for the journey thus far and with renewed determination to build a future where everyone has a place to call home. Thank you for standing with us—your support makes all the difference.

With heartfelt appreciation,



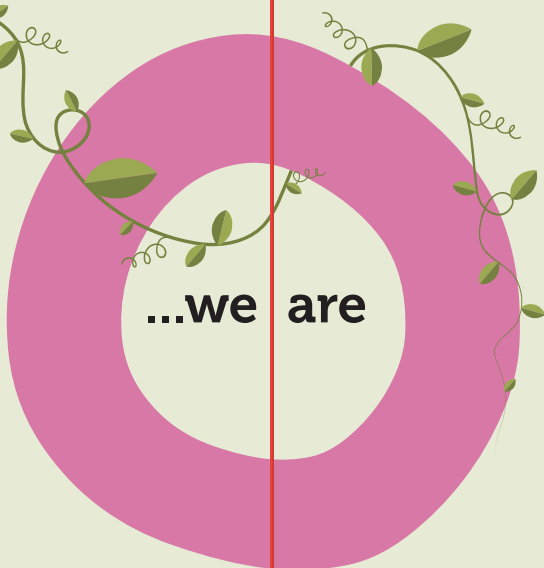
*Jonathan I. Wolcott*

**Jonathan Wolcott**  
Chair, Board of Directors



*Shannon Steene*

**Shannon Steene**  
Executive Director



# Carpenter's Shelter is more than a roof—it's a gateway to what's possible.

## MISSION

Carpenter's Shelter supports people experiencing and at risk of homelessness to achieve sustainable independence through shelter and housing placement and guidance, education, and advocacy.

## VISION

For homelessness to be eradicated in the communities we serve.

## SEED VALUES

In 2015, a dedicated team of staff members collaborated to reimagine the Carpenter's Shelter's core values, which we now proudly refer to as the SEED Values. These values embody the mission and vision of Carpenter's Shelter. Our goal is to share these values across all aspects of the organization including staff, residents, volunteers, donors, and the community as a whole.



**SOLUTIONS**  
**EDUCATION**  
**EMPOWERMENT**  
**DEDICATION**

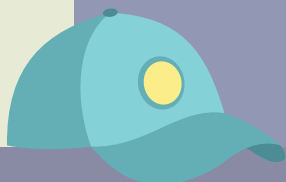


## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jonathan Wolcott, **Chair**  
Jennifer Poersch, **Vice Chair**  
Simone Putnam, **Treasurer**  
Masharia Holman, **Secretary**  
Willie Bailey  
Nicole Bradley  
Nancy DiPaolo  
Yolonda Higdon  
Lindsay Hutter  
Katherine McCarron  
Michelle Millben  
Kisha Perkins  
Tracey Pilone  
Judy Geli Robinson  
Ankur Shah  
Jim Taylor  
Donald Thomas

...we are

G



## STAFF LEADERSHIP

Shannon Steene, Executive Director

Jamie Ergas, Deputy Director

Monise W. Quidley, Director of Development

Lawrence Smith, Senior Director of Programs



"I feel honored to work for an organization that has been helping the homeless in our community for the past 35 years. This could not have been accomplished without the hard work of so many people including our volunteers, donors, and staff. There's no better feeling than knowing I'm part of an organization that is helping people every single day."

Mary-Esther Dattatreyan  
HR & Operations Manager

# Programs and Services

In 2024, all  
programs served  
a total of

**909**  
**ADULTS**

**128**  
**CHILDREN**

**30%**

**INCREASE  
SINCE 2023**





**The  
Hoffman  
Center**

**168**  
**FAMILIES SERVED**

**Alexandria  
Community  
Shelter**

**113**  
**INDIVIDUALS  
SERVED**

**45**  
**PEOPLE IN  
FAMILIES**

# Emergency Shelters

1

## THE HOFFMAN CENTER (MAIN OFFICE)

The Hoffman Center emergency shelter is a families-only shelter located in Old Town Alexandria. When a family walks through the doors of The Hoffman Center's 64-bed emergency shelter, they can finally take a breath because they have a safe place to sleep at night. **Carpenter's Shelter helps families meet their basic needs by providing a warm and welcome space for clients to call their temporary home.** The case managers encourage their clients to keep moving forward, focusing on their housing and employment goals with housing plans tailored to their needs. Families at The Hoffman Center are with us 95 days on average.

The shelter provides a community room, computer lab, classroom, private outdoor courtyard, laundry facilities, indoor and outdoor play areas for children and teens, and living quarters where families can stay together. Our shelter is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



168

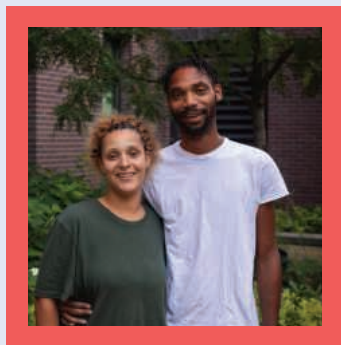
PEOPLE SERVED

67

ADULTS

101

CHILDREN



...we are  
**DIGNITY**



...we are

**S T A B L E**



2

## ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY SHELTER

On December 13, 2023, Carpenter's Shelter assumed the operation of the Alexandria Community Shelter (ACS) after signing a multi-year contract with the City of Alexandria. ACS is a 64-bed emergency shelter that serves both families and individuals. The shelter is fully staffed by Carpenter's Shelter employees, and groups of volunteers serve lunch and dinner every day.

The shelter provides a community room, computer lab, laundry facilities, and living quarters for families and individuals. ACS is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **Nearly 50 percent of single individuals and families that exited ACS moved into permanent housing.**

The Alexandria Community Shelter is a partnership funded by the City of Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services' Office of Community Services.



**131**  
ADULTS

**158**  
PEOPLE SERVED

**27**  
CHILDREN

# 3

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Through our Lee Fifer Jr. Educational Scholarship Fund, current and former residents may apply for assistance to access a wide range of academic and job training programs. **These programs enable our clients to find permanent housing and sustain themselves financially.**

Carpenter's Shelter also provides the Employment Income Pilot program. This new approach, which launched in 2024, matches income earned through employment up to a pre-determined amount, incentivizing participants to increase their earned income and further supporting them in maintaining permanent housing.

**FIVE CLIENTS RECEIVED  
ASSISTANCE THROUGH  
THE LEE FIFER JR.  
EDUCATIONAL  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND  
FOR A TOTAL OF  
\$20,367.**

# 4

## RAPID RE-HOUSING

During their stay at Carpenter's Shelter, residents work with their housing stabilization case managers and housing locators to identify housing options, apply for short-term rental subsidies or financial assistance to cover application fees, security deposit, and other costs. **The ultimate goal is for residents to become self-sufficient**, so the financial help they receive for rent gradually decreases as their income increases. The financial assistance provided for Rapid Re-Housing is funded through state and federal sources in addition to the Bezos Day One Families Fund. Carpenter's Shelter provides rapid re-housing for all people in shelters in Alexandria.

Housing stabilization case managers continue working with residents after they transition from the shelter, helping them address new challenges and maintain long-term housing stability.

**333**

PEOPLE SERVED

**181**  
ADULTS

**152**  
CHILDREN



# 5

## WINTER SHELTER

The Winter Shelter is a partnership funded by the City of Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services' Office of Community Services.

Every winter, in collaboration with the City of Alexandria, Carpenter's Shelter operates an overnight winter shelter at Alexandria Community Shelter (ACS) to prevent injury, illness, and death. The Winter Shelter is open every day from November 1 through April 15, from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. We offer support services to help connect clients to community assistance. **The program has 50 beds and is low barrier, ensuring that people have a safe place to stay out of the freezing cold.**



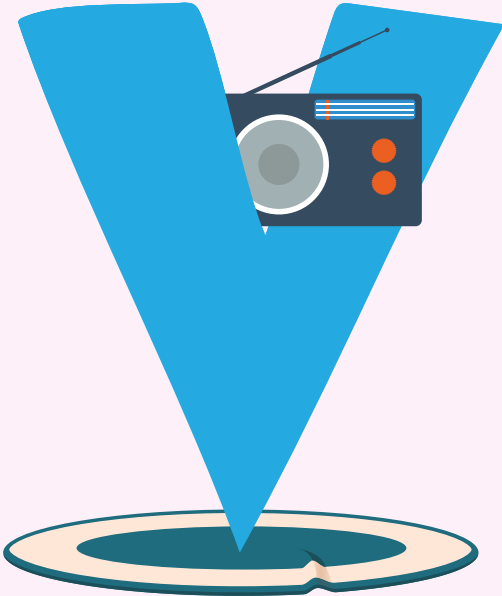
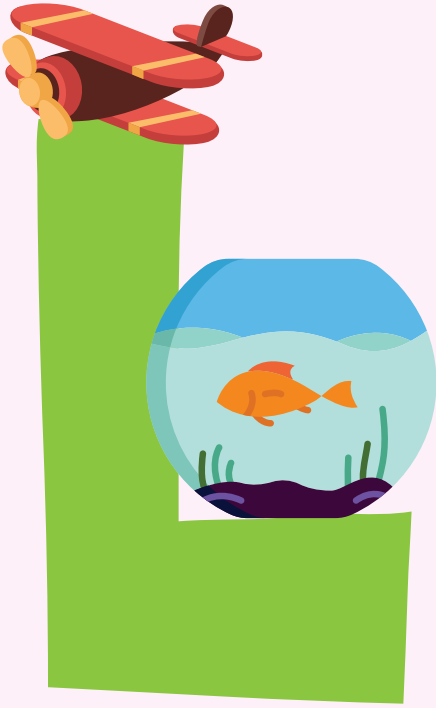




**358**  
ADULTS

**401**  
PEOPLE SERVED

**43**  
CHILDREN



# 6

## DAVID'S PLACE

David's Place is bustling in the mornings from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., filled mostly with single individuals who have dealt with chronic homelessness –people who have been on the streets for months or even years.

**Individuals can take a hot shower, wash their clothes, lock up their valuables in private lockers, check voicemail services, pick up mail, and use the Wi-Fi or public computers.** David's Place clients can also receive referrals to other services, like local food pantries, and can work with our permanent supportive housing case manager to move into permanent housing.



# 100

PEOPLE SERVED

# 12

INDIVIDUALS

MOVED TO AN  
EMERGENCY SHELTER  
OR PERMANENT  
HOUSING IN 2024.

## 7

## MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Instead of having to take three buses to get to a therapy appointment, clients can simply walk into the Therapeutic Services Director's office at The Hoffman Center or ACS. Residents have said that the close proximity of care makes a huge difference.

In therapy, the Therapeutic Services Director can assess and care for adults and children who have diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health issues, substance abuse disorder, or are in acute distress. **Residents have connections to long-term, community-based treatment, which continues after transitioning from shelter.** Our therapist also conducts training for staff on mental health and substance abuse issues.

...we are

SAFE

136

PEOPLE SERVED  
THROUGH 287 SESSIONS

## 8

## CARPENTER'S CLINIC

Carpenter's Clinic is hosted by a volunteer team of medical staff—a volunteer doctor, physician assistant, and nurses who provide routine medical exams, prescription medications, and referrals to community healthcare partners for shelter residents who are mostly uninsured. The clinic is open every Wednesday evening from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Also, a psychiatrist joins the volunteer medical team and coordinates with our Therapeutic Services Director. By providing ongoing access to healthcare for uninsured shelter residents and uninsured community members experiencing homelessness, **we help stabilize diseases and improve health conditions that can contribute to the cycle of homelessness.**



122

APPOINTMENTS  
HELPED 49 INDIVIDUALS

## 9

**PERMANENT SUPPORTING HOUSING**

We provide housing and support for individuals who have experienced homelessness for many years and have long-term barriers to achieving independent, stable housing. Carpenter's Shelter operates ten units of permanent supportive housing at The Bloom—which is located above the Hoffman Center emergency residential shelter—and an additional five units in scattered sites throughout the community.

**16****PEOPLE SERVED**



# Volunteers



## 35 Years Strong: Powered by Volunteers, Driven by Impact

Since 1988, Carpenter's Shelter has stood as a beacon of hope—and at its heart are our volunteers! **More than 1,200 individuals have stepped up this year**—not just to lend a hand, but to change lives. Their time, dedication, and unwavering support have shaped our shelter into more than just a place to stay. It is a nurturing environment for catching one's breath, rebuilding, growing, and thriving.



"I love volunteering at Carpenter's Shelter. The staff is wonderful, friendly, and helpful. It is a joy getting to know the residents in my small way and I rejoice every time they successfully find permanent housing."

**Elizabeth Bradley**  
Wall of Honor Awardee & Volunteer



The Numbers Tell One Story. Our **Volunteers** Tell Another.

- **5,500+ hours of answering calls, offering guidance, and ensuring no one seeking help was met with silence**
- **850 meals prepared and served, turning nourishment into comfort, one plate at a time**
- **Hundreds of hours mentoring kids—from homework help to life skills—ensuring young residents have the support they need to dream bigger**

**But the impact did not stop there.** Our volunteers led the charge on key initiatives and special projects that reached beyond our shelter walls:

- **Back-to-School Drives: because confidence starts with the right supplies**
- **Winter Coat Drives: keeping families warm through the harshest months**
- **Holiday Gift Sponsorships: turning wish lists into moments of pure joy**
- **Thanksgiving Holiday Support: providing meals, dignity, and the chance to celebrate together**
- **Special Event Support: showing up to assist staff in making events a success**



## Carpenter's Shelter 2024 Distinguished Service Award Winners

### Bob Douglas Awardees

The Bob Douglas Award for Service is given annually to one or more volunteers at Carpenter's Shelter who fulfill critical ongoing responsibilities with consistency, humility, and dedication. In memory of Mr. Douglas's exemplary service, this award honors the unsung heroes at Carpenter's Shelter.



**Rick Evans**



**Philip Sunderland**



**"Carpenter's Shelter is a great place to volunteer because it's all mission. The logistics and scheduling for volunteer activities is so well planned and organized, I just show up and get right to work—whether that's serving a delicious meal, being a welcoming voice at the front desk, or introducing a child to the joys of reading or how to make a sock puppet. The Carpenter's Shelter staff all work hard behind the scenes so that our volunteer time there is rewarding and directly serving the residents."**

**Rick Evans**

Bob Douglas Awardee and Volunteer since 2001



## Wall of Honor Awardees



**Anna Sudha**  
**Community Kitchens**



**Elizabeth Bradley**



**Mike Lyden**



**Jim Taylor**



# A Success Story

**Jai\* worked remotely in the medical claims department of an insurance company. In a domino effect, things started to fall apart. In 2020, she lost one of her staunch supporters when her father passed away. Jai was in an abusive relationship with her boyfriend, which ended when he became incarcerated. Jai tried to shield her children, Tom\*, eleven, and Jazmin\*, nine, as much as possible from the harsh reality that was setting in.**

"I was living in my car, and my kids were staying with my sister so they would have a permanent place to stay," said Jai. "I would just tell them, 'Oh, Mommy is working at night. I will see you in the morning.' So, in the morning I would come and make sure they got on the bus." Jai waved goodbye every morning as the school bus pulled away.



While her children slept at her sister's house, Jai would sleep in her car during the summer and spring months. If it was a cold night, she would sleep at her cousin's house or anywhere else she could stay. Jai wanted and needed her kids to have some stability in their lives.

This new routine went on for four years until, one morning, Jai woke up with pain in her left leg. She went to urgent care, where she was prescribed muscle relaxers for a sciatic nerve. A few days later, Jai was in crippling pain and rushed to see her doctor.

An MRI scan revealed a herniated disc that was sitting perfectly on Jai's spinal nerve. At this point, Jai could not feel her toes or put on clothes. Her daily life was in shambles. It was painful to use the bathroom or take a shower.

Jai eventually underwent surgery at MedStar Hospital and went on short-term disability at work.

"I was in so much pain, and I just wanted the pain to go away. I didn't realize how much of a difference my checks would be," said Jai. Her salary was cut in half, and then it was cut again. Meanwhile, health insurance, dental insurance, 401K, and life insurance payments were still being deducted from her paycheck. Jai was out of work for six long weeks.



*\*Names  
changed  
for privacy.*

One by one, the medical bills started to come in. The MRI bill was \$2,000 and surgery was \$17,000 out-of-pocket. Jai had to meet a \$2,500 deductible on her health insurance and pay 20 percent of the surgery cost. Frustratingly, Jai did not qualify for hospital financial aid because of her income level.

The final blow came when Jai's brother accidentally totaled her car. The decision was made to get help, and she arrived at The Hoffman Center. She brought her children with her and told Tom and Jazmin, "Oh, it's like a hotel." Jai did not explain what the homeless shelter was or the background of why they were there.

"I was very hesitant because it was like, 'Oh, you're at Carpenter's Shelter?' I didn't tell anyone what I was doing. I just had to do it. I'm at rock bottom," said Jai.

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**"Once I arrived at the shelter, everybody was nice—as far as the intake, getting the room—if I needed anything, everybody that I had an interaction with, I can say was awesome. I didn't feel ashamed or scared to ask for anything that I needed."**

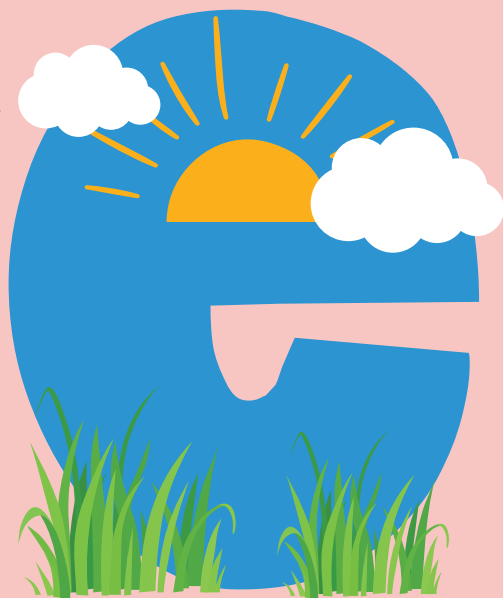
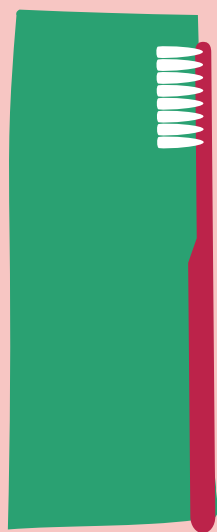
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Jai's case managers, Debra and Judith, and housing locator, Lisa, helped her apply for housing. Jai was able to work with Judith on a budgeting plan, and she paid off some of her medical debt while she was at Carpenter's Shelter.

After having her rental application rejected four times, Jai found a private owner willing to lease her a two-bedroom condo in Springfield, VA, despite her credit history with medical debt. Her two children were excited to sleep in their own beds in a home of their own and to finish the school year.

Jai's future goals include building a sizeable emergency fund to be prepared for whatever comes her way and going back to college to finish her bachelor's degree.

...we

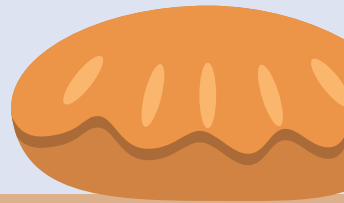


# Special Events

## THE 2023 COOK-OFF ALL STARS:

### A Celebration of Community, Flavors, and Impact!

What do you get when you mix 35 years of impact, 18 top-notch restaurants, live music, and a whole lot of community spirit? The 2023 Cook-Off All Stars! This wasn't just any fundraiser—it was our biggest birthday bash yet, and we took it **back to where it all started: The Birchmere!** Presented by **Passport Auto, our top sponsor**, the night was packed with delicious tasting bites and samplings, exciting silent and live auction battles, and feel-good moments that reminded us why we do what we do. Ronshetta Martin, a graduate, made that connection for the attendees by telling her story and sharing her current successes.





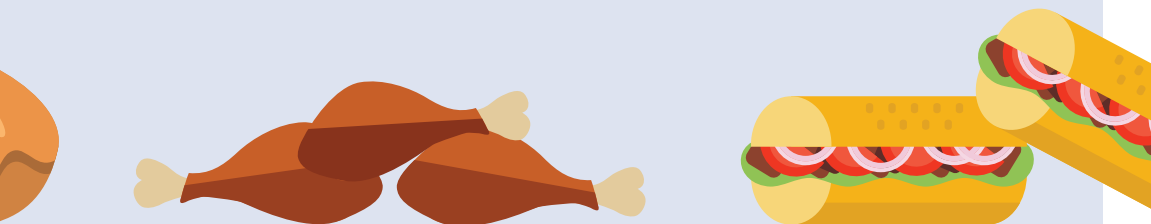


The competition was as fierce as the flavors! Awards were presented:

- The Warehouse took home People's Choice
- Nando's Peri-Peri won the hearts of our youngest critics for Kid's Choice
- Ruby's Jamaican Kitchen delivered a knockout for Best Savory Dish
- Bittersweet Catering satisfied every sweet tooth with Best Sweet Dish

To top it off, we proudly honored **Neil Gillespie, our Cook-Off Chair for the last seven years**, with the 4th Val Hawkins Award, celebrating his dedication to our mission of serving Alexandria's most vulnerable.

With Jones Point rocking the stage, the live and silent auctions keeping guests on their toes, and an atmosphere bursting with generosity and joy, it was a celebration of community, resilience, and 35 years of life-changing work.



## LUXURY SWAG BINGO

On November 5, Carpenter's Shelter hosted a new Luxury Swag Bingo event at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center. In celebration of our 35th anniversary, Shay Holman, Carpenter's Shelter board member and chair of the event, wanted to include something a little different to help attract new friends to our mission. **It was an afternoon of bingo fun with luxury items as prizes, including designer handbags by Louis Vuitton®, Coach, Kate Spade, and more.** Everyone had a fantastic time!







**Time flies when you are doing the important work of serving families and individuals experiencing homelessness every day. Before you know it, it's time to celebrate another milestone. Yes, we made it to Carpenter's Shelter's 35th Anniversary. During the year:**

- We designed a special 35th Anniversary logo
- Hosted intimate cultivation events and cocktail parties
- Gave numerous tours of both shelters
- Raised funding through special 35th Anniversary campaigns
- Hosted the new Luxury Swag Bingo event
- Added a little flavor to the 35th Anniversary Big Birthday Bash (annual Cook-Off)
- Held our Volunteer Appreciation Reception
- Celebrated past and present residents, volunteers, board members, and staff

We also honored some of those ambassadors who helped pave the way but are no longer with us: Kerry Donley, Lee Fifer, Jr., William Willis, Mary Martin, and Bob Douglas to name a few.

**We couldn't have made the last 35 years purposeful or successful without the hard work of dedicated volunteers, staff, and the unwavering generosity of the community.**



# 2024 Financials

Support and Revenue

# \$4,952,143



40%

Individuals, Corporate, and  
Foundation Giving



44%

Government Funding



11%

Net Investment Income

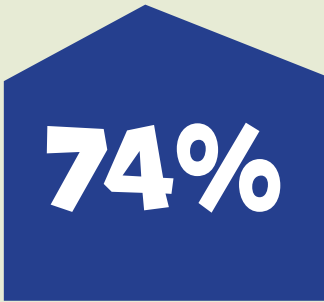


5%

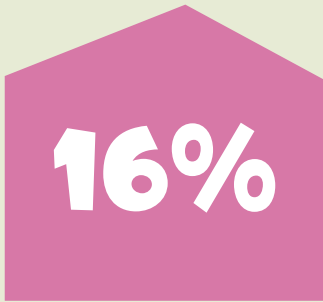
In-Kind Donations or  
Contributed Services

## Total Expenses

# \$5,027,527



Program



Fundraising



Management  
and General



"It's incredible to see Carpenter's Shelter celebrate such a significant milestone. Thirty-five years of service speaks to the profound impact we've had in the community, providing support, care, and resources for individuals facing homelessness.

Carpenter's Shelter has been a lifeline to so many, and its continued dedication to helping those in need is something that I deeply admire. Carpenter's Shelter has empowered individuals to build better futures."

**Dyneka Miller**

Housing Stabilization Case Manager



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CarpentersShelter.org  
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Images courtesy of Carrie Keene Photography,  
Tim Devine, Vicki Diesing, and Michiko Yoon

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